

BCMWorld

An Inside Look at BCM Global Ministries

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"I Will Build My Church..."

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BCM International is a global Bible-Centered Ministry dedicated to making disciples of all age groups for the Lord Jesus Christ through evangelism, teaching, and training so that churches are established and The Church strengthened.

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From the Editor

In Scripture's very first use of the term church, Jesus Christ assures His disciples, "I will build my church, and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it!" (Matthew 16:18). Note that gates are neither an offensive weapon nor an invading army. The image Christ gives is not of a church huddled protectively behind fortified ramparts while the gates of hell batter themselves futilely trying to break through the wall. On the contrary, it is the gates of hell that are the defensive position. The church is the invading force, the offensive weapon.



When the Body of Christ is functioning as intended, it will not be consumed with defending itself from enemy siege, but on the march, taking the battle to the enemy, clad in the armor of God wielding the Sword of the Spirit, which is the Word of God (Eph. 6:10-18). And as it does so, hell's denizens cowering behind their wholly inadequate barricades have every reason to tremble.

Reaching Children and Developing Churches Worldwide has been the commitment of BCM International for the past 75 years. To date, its global ministries have planted almost 20,000 churches on five continents. In this issue you will read of BCM missionaries who are pressing deep into Satan's territory from South Africa to Nepal, Haiti to Eastern Europe. In Nepal, a prayer meeting in a rice paddy has led to a beacon of light on a hilltop. An elderly woman's vision for an Eastern Cape shantytown is now a church. In Poland, today's youth ministries are raising up tomorrow's Christian leaders. Five thousand gather in Orissa to celebrate the rebuilding of churches demolished by persecution.

And so much more.

Christ is building His Church. God's people are on the march. BCM International is privileged to be a participant. And the gates of hell have not a chance of prevailing against the onslaught.

Jeanette Windle
Editor



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FROM THE PRESIDENT



Greetings in Jesus' precious name!

In March of this year, I stood with others of the BCM Holy Land Tour group in the shadow of the stone cliffs of Caesarea Philippi in northern Israel. There the Jordan River bubbles out of the ground, coursing down the valley toward the Sea of Galilee. Around us were the ruins of the Temple of Pan and scattered stone remains of the city.

As we stood there, we were reminded that this was the place where Jesus Christ asked his disciples the question recorded in Matthew 16:13-20: "Who do men say that I am?"

"You are the Messiah, the Son of the Living God!" Peter responded, to which Christ declared, "You are blessed, Simon son of John, because my Father in heaven has revealed this to you... You are Peter (which means 'rock'), and upon this rock I will build my church, and all the powers of hell will not conquer it" (NLT).

The city of Caesarea Philippi is gone. Pan's Temple has crumbled away. But the church is still here and growing! This issue of BCM World Magazine is about Christ building His church and the exciting global role BCM is privileged to play in that process. I hope that you both enjoy these accounts of God's blessing and rejoice in the fact that truly Christ is building His church.

Also in this issue, you will find several items of personal interest. Note the announcement for our March, 2011, Holy Land Tour. I would like to invite you personally to join us. It will fill up quickly, so do consider making early reservations. If you've received this by mail, you will also have received a letter regarding some current needs of BCM. Enclosed is a self-addressed envelope if you'd like to participate in meeting those needs. Also, for many who have inquired about the possibilities of future planned giving, we've included some helpful suggestions that should make the process more understandable.

Blessings,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Martin Windle". The signature is stylized and cursive.

Dr. Martin Windle



From Rice Paddy to Light on a Hilltop

by Jeanette Windle

In late 2007 when BCM Nepal director Rev. R. Vaidhya knelt with other ministry leaders and BCM president Marty Windle in a rice paddy outside Kathmandu to dedicate land for a church, there were many reasons this seemed humanly impossible. A landlocked country high in the Himalayan mountains, Nepal was perhaps most famed for possessing the planet's tallest peak, Mount Everest. It was also the world's only remaining Hindu state, a monarchy whose king was deemed the incarnation of a Hindu god. Preaching any other faith was against the law. Permission to build a church would be out of the question.

Then there were the necessary funds. Nepal's remoteness and the difficulty in transporting materials up steep mountain roads made construction costs several times what they were down on neighboring India's flat plains. If God wanted BCM Nepal to build a church, He would have to provide a miracle.

BCM's ministry in Nepal had begun almost two decades earlier. The Nepalese monarchy could prohibit the overt preaching of Jesus Christ in their kingdom, but they could

not seal its borders. India held any number of excellent Bible colleges where Nepalese Christian leaders traveled to study God's Word. There they came in contact with BCM India's exploding ministry of church planting and children's outreach. By the early 1990s several Nepalese graduates of Indian Bible colleges (*names withheld*) had organized to form BCM Nepal. Sharing God's Word was risky. Churches met in homes or the open air. One BCM ministry leader shares of his own visit to a Kathmandu house church when the police burst into the service. Arresting the pastor, they hauled him away.

"Don't worry," the church members assured the BCM ministry leader. "This happens all the time. He should be released by evening."

Sure enough, the BCM ministry leader managed to track down the pastor that night. The police had warned him to do no further preaching of Christian beliefs, or they'd be back to arrest him again.

"What will you do?" the BCM ministry leader asked.

"The same as I have done," the pastor replied. "Preach God's Word."

While proselytizing youth was also illegal, inviting neighborhood children to classes on morals and ethics was permissible. Through Christ's parables like the Prodigal Son or biblical stories, children learned not only ethics, but of a Creator God who loved them enough to send a Savior. As children returned home to share stories they'd heard,

curious parents came to see what was being taught. Some removed their children, but others returned for the worship services. By the time Rev. Vaidhya knelt with local and international leadership in that rice paddy, BCM Nepal's five pastors along with many more volunteers were spearheading dozens of house worship services and children's ministries in four districts of Nepal. To dedicate this land was an act of faith that one day the door would open to construct a public testimony of God's church in their community, however impossible it now seemed.

Then the humanly impossible happened. In 2008, a ten-year Maoist insurgency ended with the abolishment of Nepal's long-reigning monarchy. Under the new Communist coalition, the Hindu state was proclaimed a secular republic. While official restriction on religious freedoms remained, these were no longer being enforced. The door was now open to construct a church building.

Then another miracle. Through BCM's first President's Council in October, 2008, a gift was designated for church construction in Nepal. On November 29, 2009, more than 180 local believers joined BCM Nepal director R. Vaidhya, President Marty Windle, and an international leadership team to dedicate Milestone Church on the outskirts of



Kathmandu, Nepal. The final construction did not end up in the rice paddy where the believers had originally planned, but atop a nearby hillside, placing the church building beyond reach of monsoon floods.

As BCM Nepal leaders sums it up: "A dream and prayer that began in the middle of a rice paddy is

today a light on a hilltop."

In 2009, more than five hundred new believers prayed to accept Christ through BCM Nepal ministry. The doors have opened wide for gospel preaching, youth and women's outreaches, teacher training, and other ministries, and BCM Nepal leadership is taking full advantage of this new freedom. But there is still much need for prayer: pro-Hindu nationalists, including the deposed king, have been agitating violently for a return to a Hindu monarchy. Maoist insurgents in contrast are agitating for stronger communist control of the government. A new constitution has yet to ratify official freedom of religion in Nepal.

Please pray together with BCM Nepal leadership:

- That whatever God permits in their nation's future political landscape, they will remain faithful in boldly sharing the gospel.
- That like their first church building, BCM Nepal will be a "light on a hilltop," shining the radiance of Christ's love into the heart of this Himalayan nation.





A Church Rebuilt

by Jeanette Windle

Thousands thronged the open field, sleeping under precariously erected tarps, standing in long lines for a plate of food from a communal kitchen. Tall jungle trees spreading leafy boughs here and there offered the only shade from a blistering sun. It was the last week of March, 2010, and this was Khandmal District in the heart of Orissa, India. From here two years earlier, a tidal wave of violent persecution from Hindu radicals had swept across the region, leaving more than a hundred thousand Christians homeless, their schools, hospitals, and every church building demolished. Eighteen BCM Orissa church buildings had been razed along with hundreds of BCM church member homes. Sixty-two BCM pastors and their families had fled for their lives, taking shelter in two refugee camps (see “Refined by Suffering,” *BCM World*, Spring, 2009).

Exactly one year ago in March, 2009, the refugee camps had closed. Shouldering small bundles of possessions, the Orissa pastors and their families returned to their home villages and ministries. Two months later, India held its most closely scrutinized election in a decade. Much was at stake — some would say India’s very claim to be called a democracy. Battling it out for supremacy were the subcontinent’s two most powerful political parties. The “UPA” or Congress party ran on a platform of a secular, democratic India with guaranteed freedom and protection for religious minorities. The Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP)’s platform had been simple, unwavering and distressingly popular: *Hindutva*, or a forced return to Hinduism and caste rule.

A decade earlier, the BJP dominated India’s federal government. In 2004 the UPA knocked them out of national power. But it was the BJP’s control of states like Orissa that had led to such violence against the region’s small Christian minority. As India headed to the voting booth, concerned Christians around the world were praying. The election results stunned even those with great faith and hope. Nationwide, the UPA won 2-1 over BJP, giving the moderate secular party a sweeping majority in parliament. In Orissa itself, not a single BJP candidate won a seat at either state or national level. India’s voters, whether Christian, Hindu, or Muslim, had issued a strong rebuke to religious extremists and affirmation that they wanted a free, secular state.



By mid-2009, the new Orissa government had taken significant measures to restore peace, even compensating affected victims with some provisions and cash reparations to restart their lives. While sporadic incidents of violence against Christians have continued in the region and indeed across India, daily life for the Orissa believers returned to normalcy with surprising rapidity. A once scattered leadership reorganized for improved ministry coordination, dividing Orissa into four zones, each with its own regional director under BCM Orissa director Rev. D.K. Nayak. In homes, under tarps, in the open air, beneath shade trees, congregations began meeting again. New house churches were started.

So when 5000 Christians crowded for three days into an open field, this was no refugee camp, but the BCM Orissa Annual Church Convention. For the past two years, the churches had not been able to hold their annual assembly. Now they sang, listened to God's word, ate, and fellowshiped with great rejoicing.

A highlight of the convention was dedicating the first three rebuilt BCM church buildings in Pazidanga (where the convention was being held), Bopalmandi, and Boddimaha villages, one each in three of the four zones. BCM's Senior Executive Vice President of International Ministries, Dr. Vararuchi Dalavai, traveled with BCM India Coordinator Rev. Adrasta Rao and other leadership to Orissa to officiate the dedications. Dr. Dalavai shares how as he looked out over the gathered thousands, tears filled his eyes to see brothers and sisters in Christ who such a short time ago were running for their life through these very surrounding jungles, now living fearless, free lives.

Can tragedy and loss hold anything positive? BCM Orissa leadership concurs that a definite fruit of this ordeal has been strengthened faith and powerful spiritual cleansing within the local church. Dr. Dalavai summarizes:

“The Orissa crisis and the love of Christ shown through our BCM missionaries and pastors towards the unfortunate during this time has brought the Spirit of God once again into the local Christian community to make them more faithful to God's Word and in their testimony to those who live around them. Today the believers can be much stronger to face even more persecution if necessary, God forbid.”

Certainly, while the Orissa church is experiencing a season of peace and freedom, they realize fully it may not always be this way. To worship and pray, sing and dance together as the Body of Christ is one freedom the Orissa believers will never again take for granted.



ON THE ROAD THE ROAD AGAIN!

by Jeanette Windle



The pilot's arrival at the gravel airstrip, lying flat and groaning in the back of an army jeep, had not been an auspicious beginning. Now, packed with eight others into a military prop plane intended for six, the young foreigner covered in the copilot's seat as the aircraft wobbled erratically through the clouds. Still celebrating last night's fiesta, the pilot sang at the top of his lungs, occasionally emphasizing the beat with a shove on the throttle. Periodically, he pounded on the dashboard, trying to shake the altimeter and compass into use. His girlfriend, without a seat, leaned over the young foreigner's shoulder, whispering drunken caresses into the pilot's ear.

Suddenly, the pilot shouted, “Anyone want to see what this thing can do?”

Pulling back on the throttle, he sent the airplane into an aerobatic loop. Amid screams, the pilot’s girlfriend announced loudly, “I’m going to be sick!” The young American tried to leave the danger zone, but the pressure of packed bodies was too great.

“Well, if you don’t like it!” the pilot grumbled, reluctantly leveling off the plane. Glancing at his green-faced girlfriend, he opened a side window. The blast of cold air swept the curtains out the window. Releasing the throttle, he grabbed for the window. The plane tilted ominously.

A Hollywood comedy? No, just a missionary flying home from a jungle Bible conference.

A unique experience? Hardly. BCM International’s ministry personnel around the world cover literally millions of miles and put in hundreds of thousands of traveling hours each year as they share the gospel. They journey by plane, boat, motorcycle, train, underground subways, dugout canoes, bicycle, on foot. Not to mention, every kind of motorized vehicle imaginable. Their travels range from super highways to jungle mud-holes and treacherous waterways to the un-railed precipices of the planet’s highest mountain trails. Most could share at least one story of heart-stopping adventure on the road.

One missionary tells of taking Bible Institute students on an evangelistic trip high in the Andes. The rutted track was only wide enough for one vehicle. Sheer cliffs broke away inches from the tires of his elderly Volkswagen pickup. It was late when the evangelistic campaign finished. By 2 a.m., the passengers were sound asleep.

The missionary driver was blinking away his own drowsiness when he suddenly realized he had no control over the vehicle. He spun the steering wheel, but it came loose in his hands. As he slammed on the brakes, the pickup swung erratically across the road before jerking to a stop. Wide awake now, the passengers climbed out to discover the pickup had slid into a shallow ditch.

“Only God could have stopped that vehicle at one of the few spots not bordered by a precipice,” the missionary shared afterwards. He found out later that the road’s washboard ruts had jolted the steering pin loose.



Two missionaries describe their first train ride to teach at a leadership conference in a less-developed country. “By the time we got our tickets, the train was moving out. Running to catch the train, we pulled ourselves aboard. But the cars were already packed so full that passengers were hanging out the open doors. We scrambled onto the roof. There was nothing to hold on to so we just braced ourselves as the train jolted along at forty miles an hour.

“Nor were we the only ones. Whole families, including small children huddled against the wind. Young men were playing cards. A few vendors hawked chewing gum and stale cookies. It never occurred to us anybody would collect our tickets up here. But soon the conductor strolled up, stepping over sprawled bodies as he clipped tickets.”

As children, my four siblings and I traveled much with my missionary parents in the Colombian Andes. I was eight years old the last time I took any pleasure in watching the spectacular mountain gorges below the jeep windows, clouds nestling in their depths. My mother was driving that day, the engine complaining loudly as our jeep puffed its way up steep, tight mountain curves. We had just rounded a hairpin bend when the engine died.

As my mother struggled frantically to restart the engine, the jeep began rolling backwards toward the precipice. There was no time to get out. The brakes were not responding to her efforts. We children knew we were

going over that edge. I remember clearly thinking: “I wonder what heaven is like?”

At that instance, a large cargo truck rounded the bend. Seeing our predicament, the truck driver slammed to a halt. Jumping out of his truck, he ran over to the jeep, and yanked open the driver’s door. Pushing my mother aside, he grabbed at the gears. What he did, I have no idea. But the jeep was only feet from the cliff edge when the engine flared to life. An angel in disguise? Again, I have no idea, because he immediately returned to his truck and drove away.

Other missionary friends tell of crossing a river in a launch so loaded the water level was even with the gunwale and only frantic bailing kept them afloat.

Of course travel hazards aren’t found only in developing nations. A missionary colleague wrote from Germany: “I am writing this letter as we cruise down the autobahn at 120 per hour. No, that isn’t kilometers, it’s miles! And it’s more dangerous to slow down than to stay with the flow of traffic.”

Nor do all hazards come from nature. Ministry personnel on the road around the world routinely face danger from warring factions, guerrillas, opponents to the gospel, or just old-fashioned “bad guys.”

A missionary in eastern Colombia set out with a national pastor to preach at a town some distance away. On the way, they stopped at another town to deal with a problem that had arisen between two believers. The situation proved serious enough to make it too late to





go on to the scheduled meeting. Returning home, the missionary discovered the next morning that a group of armed guerrillas had staked out a junction between the two towns, boasting that they were going to make an end of the *evangelistas*.

“If God had not used those believers’ quarrel to delay us,” marvels the missionary today, “we would undoubtedly have been gunned down.”

So why chronicle such traveling adventures? Well, of course, they are an undeniably useful source of exciting tales for church deputation and fund raising!

But these hours of travel are also an essential part of reaching the lost millions who hear the gospel of Jesus Christ every year. And despite all the above tales, missionaries and Christian workers are no more immune to the accidents and dangers of travel than anyone else. As the author, I personally have had missionary friends and colleagues kidnapped by guerrillas, lose their lives going over those mountain precipices in a bus, their ministry plane go down over jungle and never to be found, their own lives or loved ones taken by assailants on what began as an ordinary ministry trip. We cannot take for granted the safety of our brothers and sisters in Christ as they travel to share God’s Word and love.

So what can the Body of Christ do to help?

Foremost of all, we can pray. Our God is All Powerful, but He has chosen to work in accordance with the prayers of His people. When our jeep almost backed over a cliff, when my missionary father narrowly escaped ambush by

bandits, when the pin flew out of my husband’s steering wheel as he drove Bible institute students on an Andes dirt track, there were Christian friends back home, pleading God’s protection over our family.

So whether cruising down the Interstate at 70 miles an hour or just relaxing in your own back yard, take a moment to pray for God’s protection—and an entire battalion of angel wings—over our BCM missionaries and Christian workers on the road, the water, or in the air as they carry the gospel of Jesus Christ to the farthest corners of this planet.





No Coincidence, but Everlasting Arms

by Jeanette Windle with Esther Zimmerman

When Esther Zimmerman arrived in Nairobi, Kenya, she'd assumed arrangements were all in place for a trip to the Democratic Republic of Congo. Her passport held a laboriously obtained visa. Flight connections had been confirmed months ahead. Congolese church leaders were awaiting for her arrival to hold

As BCM's International Children's Ministry director, Esther was in Nairobi for Littworld, a global conference for developing indigenous Christian publishers and writers, held November 1-6, 2009. The event was being hosted by Kenya's Christian publishers, among them Jeff Gathu and Sam Chebe of Cistern Publishers, who had recently produced 15,000 sets of BCM's *Life of Christ* children's curriculum in Bangala and Swahili. The material had been printed for the Democratic Republic of Congo's largest evangelical church association, CECA (see "*Footsteps of Faith in War-torn Congo*," *BCM World*, Spring, 2009).

With two million adult members and at least as many children, the CECA (a French acrostic for the Evangelical Church in the Center of Africa) churches needed the

curriculum urgently. But the DRC's political turmoil had repeatedly delayed the 15,000 volumes from crossing the border. After teaching workshops on curriculum writing at Littworld, Esther planned to fly to Uganda, then take a Mission Aviation Fellowship Cessna flight to the DRC. This would permit Esther to hand-carry the first installment of curriculum as well as hold a one-day Christian Education conference with CECA church leaders.

But when Esther opened her email the night before flying out, she discovered plans had changed. The MAF flight had been rescheduled for another airport a considerable distance from where Esther was landing in Uganda—and two hours earlier. It was too late to change Esther's own travel plans. Nor could she contact the MAF headquarters. They were closed for the night and would not reopen until after Esther's flight was scheduled to leave in the morning. Should she even bother making the 4:30 a.m. trek from Littworld to the Nairobi airport?

Then Esther remembered her parents, Bob and Sandy Barber, BCM missionaries in Scotland, mentioning an encounter at a birthday party in Edinburgh just two months earlier with a Scottish MAF pilot stationed in Uganda. Would there be some way they could contact the

pilot from Scotland? A Skype call put Esther in contact with her parents. As it turned out, Esther's parents had told the Scottish pilot of their daughter's upcoming MAF flight, and he'd just happened to scribble down his cell-phone number for them in case of any problems. Perhaps he could help Esther make other arrangements?

Calling the number, Bob and Sandy discovered that their new Scottish pilot acquaintance not only could help, he was the MAF pilot assigned to Esther's flight! In fact, the plane he flew had been donated to MAF by Scottish churches. Esther had been in Scotland for the dedication. She'd never expected to fly personally on the *Caledonian Connection*.

A coincidence too unbelievable to pass muster in any fictional storyline, but Esther has come to learn there are no coincidences in God's economy. This was definitely divine intervention!

The pilot arranged to land at Esther's original destination, Entebbe, Uganda, and wait for her flight. But when Esther arrived, she discovered the reason there'd been confusion the day before. The DRC was suddenly refusing permission for Mission Aviation Fellowship planes to fly internationally across their borders. A temporary solution was to fly north to Arua, a major Ugandan commercial center only twenty kilometers from the Sudan, where Esther could cross the border by truck to the small Congo airport of Aru on the other side, then take another MAF flight to her destination of Bunia.

The MAF flight landed safely in Arua. Two hours later a truck appeared to ferry Esther and several other passengers across the border. A mud hut housed the Uganda exit checkpoint. This was followed by a four-mile trek through a no-man's land. But when the truck reached the DRC entry checkpoint on the other side, things degenerated. Confiscating Esther's passport,



the Congolese police insisted Esther's hard-obtained visa wasn't valid (it was!). Speaking neither French nor Bangala, Esther could hardly argue. Only when a fellow passenger, a humanitarian doctor working in the Congo, interceded was Esther allowed to proceed. But not before paying a fee for new "identity papers."

By now the day had grown hot, long, and increasingly tense. Esther was thankful for survival rations of a bottle of water and granola bars tucked into her bag. When the second flight, a tiny five-passenger plane, finally landed at Bunia's small, dirt-packed airport, the Congolese officials demanded another round of payments. But after further disbursement of funds, two CECA pastors arrived to escort Esther to her lodging. One spoke excellent English, so was able to serve as Esther's translator. The next day when some thirty CECA leaders gathered, their excitement over the curriculum's arrival and enthusiasm for Esther's Christian Education workshops made all the obstacles and long trip worthwhile.

An added bonus, by the time Esther headed back to the airport, the DRC had granted MAF permission to resume international flights so that Esther's return trip was a





direct flight from Bunia to Uganda, though not before being stopped by a Congolese army patrol and a final shake-down of fees at the airport.

“The return flight was uneventful, and Uganda felt like such a haven of civilization, security, honesty, and friendliness when I arrived,” Esther shares. “It’s amazing how much perspective can change in two days!”

A reminder to pray for the Congolese Christians left behind—A continued civil war, government corruption, millions of refugees, and scarcity of food and other basic necessities make daily life a challenge. Church leadership expresses their greatest concern for the next generation. Over half of DRC’s population is under fifteen. Today’s church leaders were disciplined during an era of relative peace with a strong network of Christian missionaries, pastors, and Bible institute training. The new generation, born into instability and turmoil, have little grounding in Scripture. Religious education, once common in public schools, has now been prohibited, leaving the local church as the only place community children will ever hear of Jesus Christ—A challenge the Congolese church is taking seriously.

“The only long term solution to the challenges of Congo,” CECA leaders state adamantly, “is to disciple a new generation—starting with the children.”

Which is why 15,000 curriculum sets of the *Life of Christ* are so important. Just after Esther left DRC, 300 Swahili *Life of Christ* copies arrived in Bunia. One of the pastors

who’d attended Esther’s training immediately organized distribution and training sessions to use the curriculum. Since then, through a tortuous and truly miraculous succession of events and the help of many of God’s people (best left unspecified for future reuse), the rest of both Swahili and Bangala material crossed the Uganda border into DRC, where they are currently being distributed among the CECA churches.

Meanwhile, if Esther admits to some nervous moments, she would do it again in a moment. In fact, she hopes to return soon for more extended Christian Education training with the Congolese church. She says that it was a verse shared with her by a fellow delegate when she said goodbye at Littworld that kept her calm on the ground and in the air. “The eternal God is your refuge, and underneath are the everlasting arms” (Deuteronomy 33:27).

A comforting truth on any continent!



Cistern Publishers Jeff Gathu and Sam Chebe

When Dreams Come True in Eastern Cape, South Africa

by Jeanette Windle

The elderly woman was troubled for her community. The shantytown in Fort Beauford, Eastern Cape, South Africa's poorest region, had changed little since apartheid days. Shacks of scrap lumber, cardboard, tin housed an all-black population whose only sustenance was occasional day labor as farm hands or factory laborers. Unemployment topped 50%. Lack of running water, electricity, medical care or adequate food had led to widespread malnutrition and sickness.

But of even greater concern was the spiritual poverty. Even among those who claimed nominally to be Christian, sexual promiscuity, drunkenness, drug abuse were to blame for one of the world's highest HIV/AIDS rates. Unemployed youth, rebellious and desperate, roamed the streets. A population explosion meant that over half the shantytown residents were children, many of them orphans, their future as bleak as their present impoverishment.

Only the Person of Jesus Christ changing hearts could turn this community around. So the woman prayed. And as she prayed, she saw a vision so vivid she knew it was sent from God. Someone was coming to her community to teach the people God's Word.

Eight hundred kilometers away in Durban, BCM Africa director Rev. John Peters had received what he terms his "Macedonian call." A faithful handful of Eastern Cape believers who were acquainted with BCM ministry elsewhere in South Africa had contacted John Peters to ask for help. One of them, Pastor Fullman Masasake, had begun visiting the Fort Beauford shantytown. Would BCM consider partnering to start a church in the shantytown?

So in January, 2010, John Peters and BCM missionary Rev. Harvey Kodi along with a South African church leader Danny traveled the eight hundred kilometers from Durban to Fort Beauford to meet with Pastor Masasake and other believers. As they walked through the shantytown, visiting families and praying with them, a woman approached, excited.

"I know who you are," she told them. "I received a vision from God just yesterday that you were coming to teach us God's Word. And now here you are."

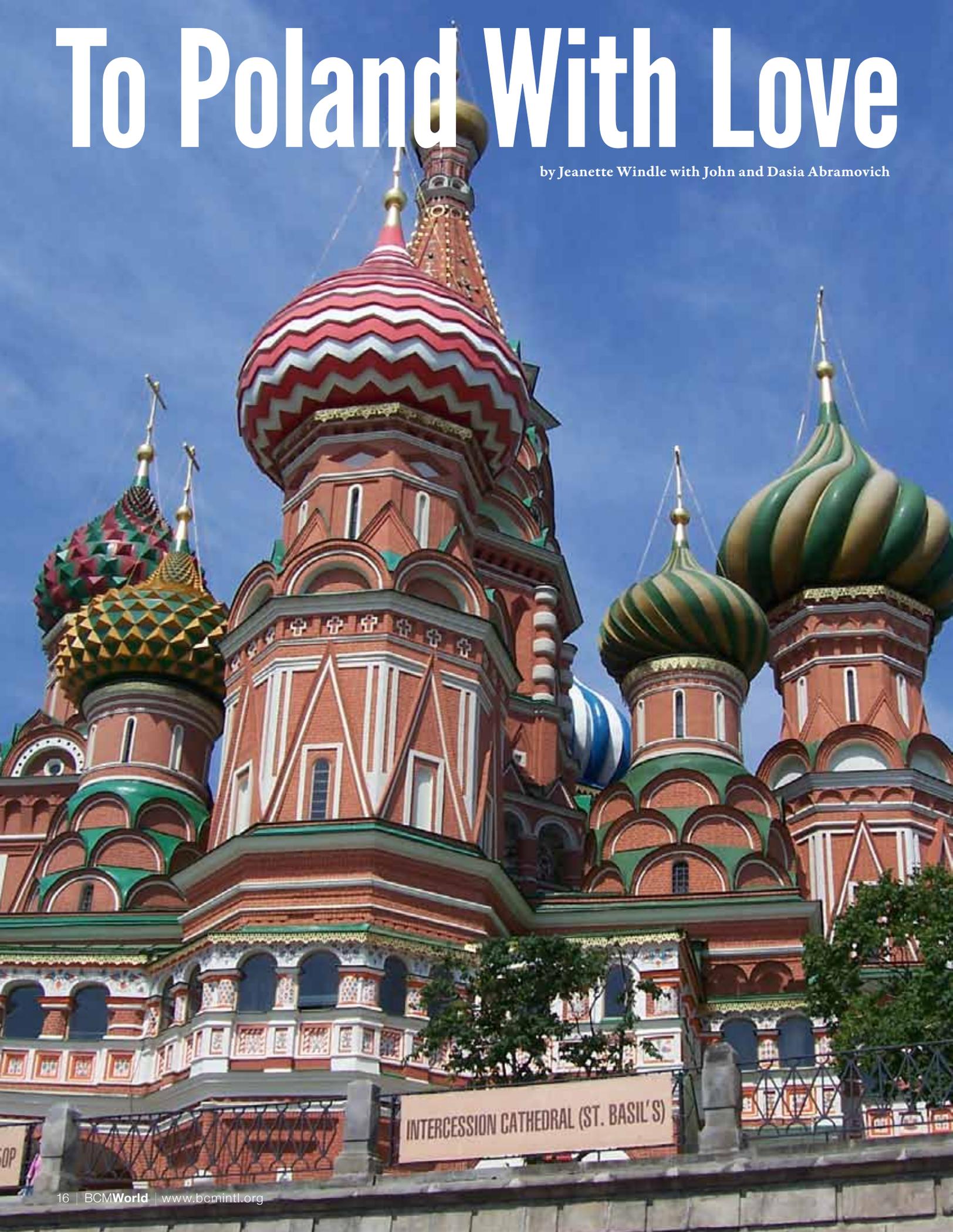
The very next afternoon, Saturday, January 30, H Kodi led a two hour teaching session on developing relationships with God and others. Sitting in the session, rejoicing with all her heart, was the elderly woman who'd prayed that God would send Bible teachers to her community. That evening an evangelistic meeting was held in a believer's home. When Rev. Kodi gave a message of salvation through Jesus Christ, eight people responded to accept Christ into their hearts. On Sunday, January 31, 2010, a worship service drew more than 50 people to hear Rev. John Peters teach God's Word. After the service, a feeding was held to offer hungry shantytown children a nutritious meal.

Today a church continues to grow in the Fort Beauford shantytown. While feeding, *crèche* (child care), and other practical outreaches minister to physical needs, Sunday school classes and Bible clubs are raising up a future generation in the knowledge of God's Word. And an elderly woman has a front-row seat to watch God's exciting answers to her prayers.



To Poland With Love

by Jeanette Windle with John and Dasia Abramovich



To Danuta (Dasia) Zipser, God was always important.

Born in Wisła, Poland, on November 19, 1961, Dasia grew up in the nearby village of Harbutowice. Poland was a Communist regime at the time. While believers were often harassed and persecuted, established denominations were allowed to practice their faith openly. Most churches are Catholic, a dominant influence on Polish society. The combined Protestant churches make up less than point-five percent of the population.

Dasia attended an evangelical church, going to Sunday school, reading the Bible, hearing about God from family. But though from childhood she'd been exposed to the basic gospel of salvation through Jesus Christ, she does not remember being disciplined on how to live the Christian life.

"I remember many times when our Sunday school teacher asked us to pray and to ask Jesus Christ for forgiveness of our sins," Dasia shares. "Many times I prayed, 'Dear Lord Jesus, please clean my heart.' But after this prayer nobody talked to me and taught me what I had to do next."

Attending college in Opole about 180 kilometers from her home, Dasia visited a local evangelical church, where she was invited to teach Sunday school. That was when she realized she neither knew how to teach children, nor was she even sure Jesus was her Savior.

"I prayed, and asked my Lord: 'I need you and I want to live for you and serve you.'"

The experience left Dasia with a lifelong conviction of how important it is to disciple children solidly in God's Word and the Christian life. Dasia began teaching Sunday school, learning along with the children as she studied her Bible and prepared lessons. Returning to her home town after college, Dasia continued working as a volunteer with children and simultaneously attending



teacher training courses. She also became a public high school teacher.

Four years later the Soviet empire started to crumble. In 1989, under pressure of the independent labor movement Solidarity, led by electrician Lech Walesa, the Polish Communist regime collapsed. This began a domino effect of peaceful transitions from Communist Party rule in Central and Eastern Europe. In 1990 a free democratic election chose Lech Walesa as Poland's first post-communist president.

The fall of communism opened doors as well for expanded Christian ministry. In 1990 Dasia became a full-time home missionary with the Polish MED children's ministry "Misja Evangelizacyjna wśród Dzieci" (English translation: Evangeliza Mission among Children), later to become "Miłość Edukacja Dojrzałość" (English translation: Love, Education, Maturity). She taught Bible Clubs for children, conducted teacher training courses, did office work, and was involved in youth work, women's ministries, and seasonal camps. In 1992 Dasia became the director of MED.

Meanwhile across the Atlantic Ocean, John Abramovich was born on February 11, 1956, in Harrisburg, Pennsylvania. At the age of 10 he moved with his family to New Jersey, where he also grew up attending an evangelical church. He came to Christ as a young teenager—not in one dramatic moment, but simply in the process of realizing that all he knew about Jesus Christ applied to him personally. By the time he finished high school, he knew he wanted to serve God in any way he could.





John found himself very much impressed with the Polish MED ministry workers, their commitment to God, and the opportunities they had to proclaim the gospel, even in public schools. At the end of two weeks John said goodbye to Poland and Dasia, but he promised he'd be back. Sure enough, John returned two months later in November, during which time he was given opportunity to speak at meetings for children and teenagers. By the end of another two weeks John sensed that God was leading him into full-time ministry in Poland—and with Dasia.

Graduating from the university with a degree in Mathematics, he got a full-time job as a computer programmer and continued leading volunteer youth and young adult ministries in local churches and para-church organizations in the South Jersey area.

“I had thought about missions or pastoral service,” John elucidates, “but as I grew older and more settled in my current ministries, I gave up these considerations. God had placed me in good and needed local ministries, and I was content to serve out the rest of my days in inner city ministry as a volunteer.”

But God had plans for John beyond New Jersey borders. During the 1980s Dasia and many others in Poland had received training from Child Evangelism Fellowship workers from abroad, most notably Sam Doherty, then CEF European Director. Full-time mission work outside of a church or denomination was still something new in Poland, financial help from the local church scarce. While speaking in the USA, Sam Doherty raised prayer and financial support for the MED ministry.

John Abramovich came across MED director Dasia Zipser's picture and a description of her ministry on his church's Missions Bulletin Board. John began financially supporting Dasia and MED. Then a MED newsletter came with an invitation to visit the ministry. In September 1994 John traveled to Poland to see for himself what MED was doing.

When Dasia came to the airport to pick up the ministry's foreign visitor, she brought a friend to interpret, concerned that her six years of English language studies would not be enough to communicate. However, to her own surprise (and everyone else's), she found herself able to communicate with John better than her interpreter! Over the next two weeks of showing John around Poland and the MED ministry, Dasia's English improved with lightning speed.

John and Dasia were married October 28, 1995, in Dasia's home church in Skoczow, Poland. The couple then moved to John's home in New Jersey. But they were already praying about and preparing to serve God together in Poland. Prior to this time God had brought John into contact with Bob Evans, then BCM European Director. BCM had no missionaries in Poland, but the board quickly authorized opening up a new field there affiliated with MED.

In August 1996 John and Dasia Abramovich attended BCM Missionary Candidate School, where they were approved for BCM ministry in Poland. After almost 19 years as a computer programmer, John resigned from his full-time job in May, 1998. A month later, he and Dasia relocated to Poland where they have been ministering ever since with BCM International in partnership with the Polish MED ministry.

'Miłość Edukacja Dojrzałość focuses on children's ministry through Bible Clubs, Vacation Bible Clubs, Summer Bible Camps (three for children, one for the mentally handicapped, and a Climbing/English Camp for Teenagers), along with various other youth outreaches. MED conducts meetings in public schools, hosts events for parents and church workers, and prints Christian teaching material. MED has also developed teacher training courses for children's workers and Sunday school teachers.



INVESTING IN ETERNITY

We are thankful for the growing number of churches and individuals who pray for and support the global ministry of BCM International. But in order for us to expand our ministry and reach more people with the gospel, we need more partners to stand with us.

- We need friends who will commit themselves to pray regularly for our International Ministry and Missionary Family.
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For more information contact our Ministry Advancement Department and request the brochure, "Are You Investing in Eternity?"

Phone Number: 717-859-6404

E-mail: giving@bcmintl.org

"The Communists did not approve of teaching the Christian faith to children," explain John and Dasia. "In addition, some people think you should not evangelize children because they cannot understand the gospel. MED and BCM do what they can to reach the 10 million children in Poland with a clear presentation of the Good News of Jesus Christ."

Dasia served as director of MED from 1992-2004, then was reappointed as director in January, 2010. She is involved in their teacher training program and directs Summer Bible Camps for children and the mentally challenged. She helps with a local Bible Club for children, disciples some of her former Sunday school students, and counsels women. She assists other MED workers in meetings for children, the annual MED Winter Bible Conference for children's workers and parents, and two yearly workers retreats.

John leads Bible studies for teenagers, teaches in Bible Clubs and summer camps, and conducts English Conversation meetings for students in the community. He teaches God's Word in four different local churches, a Home Fellowship Bible Study group, and two Community Bible studies.

Some of the churches that we have contact with have no full-time pastor and few trained lay leaders, so whenever possible, John accepts other invitations to preach and teach, including in the nearby Czech Republic. He assists the Polish MED workers to prepare English versions of their correspondence, publications, and newsletters. John also serves as BCM's Eastern Europe Regional Coordinator.

John and Dasia are only two people, and sometimes the days don't seem to hold enough hours to accomplish their work. But as John expresses, "We do not have a 'solo' ministry but cooperate with many other servants who love the Lord and His people in order to bring the Good News of Jesus Christ to unbelievers."

How can you become a part of God's team in Poland?

John and Dasia Abramovich summarize: "Pray for us, BCM International, and our Polish MED co-workers. Pray that the people in Poland will open their hearts and lives to the Good News of salvation in Jesus Christ, and that God will raise up others in Poland to work with children and young people. Financial support can also be given to this ministry through BCM. If you would like to receive our quarterly newsletter or to find out more about us, please write to us and let us know at: jdabra@poczta.onet.pl."





WE NEED
HELP!
WATER/FOOD

Heaven Reigns Over Haiti

by Dawn Moore

As Haitian pastor Jean Louighins put it, “In 36 seconds, everyone was made equal.”

Despair was written on every face, defeat in the droop of shoulders. Signs, written both in Spanish and English pleaded, “Necesitamos Ayuda. We Need Help.” As each passing kilometer revealed the extent of devastation, BCM missionary Tommy Gambrill questioned, Where to begin?

The small Caribbean nations of Haiti and the Dominican Republic share the island of Hispaniola, situated between Puerto Rico and Cuba. On Tuesday, January 12, 2010, at 16:53 local Haitian time, a catastrophic earthquake measuring 7.0 on the Richter scale struck Haiti’s capital, Port-Au-Prince, in western Hispaniola. The quake and its aftershocks left more than 200,000 people dead, 300,000 injured, 1.3 million displaced. Much of Port-Au-Prince was leveled, thousands more buildings destroyed or damaged across southern Haiti. Mass graves became the final resting place for tens of thousands as casualties overwhelmed local morgues.

Over subsequent days, international relief efforts began pouring into Haiti. On the eastern side of Hispaniola, Bolivar Cuevas, a BCM missionary serving in the Dominican Republic, had long been burdened for neighboring Haiti, where he traveled to minister whenever possible. Bolivar began immediately assessing what BCM could do to help and got in contact with Tommy Gambrill, who serves in disaster relief with BCM International.

Two and a half weeks after the earthquake, Tommy Gambrill flew into the Dominican capital, Santo Domingo, bringing with him a suitcase of medical supplies as well as funds donated through BCM for Haiti relief. In Santo Domingo he was briefed on current conditions by Bolivar Cuevas. Since the Port-Au-Prince airport was not yet operational, he then headed overland with a hired vehicle and driver, translator, and medical student Kidmon Jerome across the Haitian border to Port-au-Prince.

“The devastation was sobering,” Gambrill describes. All electricity had been knocked out, so once the sun went down it was pitch black. Piles of rubble were everywhere. Tarp and tent communities had replaced homes, schools, and churches. People walked around with a bag or whatever they could carry, but there was no place for them to go. No one slept inside, even if building structures were still standing, for fear of collapse and aftershocks.

In Port-Au-Prince, Bolivar Cuevas had arranged for Gambrill and his team to stay with Dr. Jean Dorlus, president of the Seminary of Theology and Evangelism (STEP), whose home was still intact, though a possibility of further aftershocks necessitated everyone sleeping outside on the ground and in tents. A high perimeter wall and iron gate, standard home security in Haiti, offered protection against looters.

Dorlus was already sheltering a number of pastors and their families. When the pastors found out Gambrill was in Haiti to assess the disaster for BCM International as well as provide immediate help, they eagerly invited him to see their communities and the damage wreaked upon them by the earthquake.

At Pastor Joshua’s church, the team met Immacularoque, a woman who despite a broken leg, had managed to dig herself and her children out of the debris when her home collapsed on top of them. When the team visited the five-by-five tin shack on a steep hillside that housed the woman and her children, Immacularoque was sitting on a dirt floor, a soiled rag covering a severely infected cut on her foot. A broken bone in the lower part of her leg had reset itself incorrectly and was pressing painfully against nerves. A medical examination showed Immacularoque was in danger of losing her leg or even her life.



“We knew God had led us to her,” Gambrill shares. “We needed to do something to get her to a hospital for proper treatment.”

Port-Au-Prince’s devastated medical infrastructure was already overflowing. So medical student Jerome, along with the hired driver and translator, drove Immacularoque back across the border to a hospital in the Dominican Republic while Gambrill remained behind with Pastor Joshua. The funds BCM donors had sent along provided for her hospital stay. Gambrill learned later that both Pastor Joshua and Immacularoque had been praying for God to send help for her. The BCM team’s arrival had been a miracle sent from God!

Arranging for a new rental car to replace the hired vehicle that had returned to the Dominican Republic, STEP president Dorlus cleared his schedule to travel with Gambrill, visiting pastors and church plants throughout Haiti.

“All of the pastors I met had lost their homes, churches, and schools in the earthquake,” Gambrill discloses. “And





the surrounding communities they minister in were all completely demolished.”

And yet amidst undeniable human suffering, a palpable sense of hope is evident these days in Haiti as well as a strong working of the Holy Spirit in calling Haitians to repentance. One month after the earthquake, on February 12, 2010, Haitian President Préval cancelled the annual Mardi Gras celebration and called his nation to three days of fasting and prayer. As he called upon God to heal his nation, one million-plus Haitians praised God, read Scripture, sang songs of worship, prayed for forgiveness, were baptized, and publicly renounced voodoo.

“Many people are coming to a saving knowledge of Jesus Christ as a result of this disaster,” Gambrill said.

If the earthquake was a stunning blow to an already impoverished and desperate Haitian people, the aftermath has been cause for wonder. Wonder at the amazing grace and compassion of God who sent relief workers to minister to their physical and spiritual needs. Wonder at the outpouring of love from God’s people around the world. Wonder at plans for new churches, schools, and hospitals to be built according to modern engineering codes for disaster zones. It was with a sense of both wonder and hope that Haitians proclaimed God as sovereign over their nation on February 12th.

The ongoing needs in Haiti are large. Rebuilding will take years. Secondary effects of the earthquake are already being felt as earthquake victims face the future with nowhere to live, nothing to eat, and few opportunities for employment. BCM International plans a continued partnership with Haitian ministry leaders, including STEP president Dr. Dorlus, in recovery efforts.

Since many remain without shelter against the upcoming monsoon and hurricane season, one project already

underway is the collecting of family tents and tarps by several local churches with which Tommy Gambrill is associated. The first pallet of these shelters has already been flown to Haiti through Mission Flight International, an aviation ministry that flies from Ft. Pierce, FL, to Haiti three times a week. STEP graduates, now pastors in the earthquake zone, are distributing the collected shelters to needy families in their communities.

“These are people with nowhere to go,” Gambrill elucidates. “Meeting their needs for shelter is also opening the doors to share the gospel with these families.”

More tents will be sent as they are collected. BCM is also organizing short-term ministry teams of six to twelve people each. Openings range from the fields of medicine to construction, meal preparation to teaching, public health to logistics, and counseling.

Long-term needs and opportunities include building orphanages and community centers, evangelistic outreaches, drilling wells for water, health and medical clinics for displaced Haitians, sponsoring seminary students, and helping rebuild churches, pastors’ homes, and schools.

Please contact Gambrill via email at tommyg91@verizon.net to discuss short-term mission opportunities in Haiti or long-term partnership. Support for Haiti can be sent to BCM International, PO Box 249, Akron, PA 17501 or through the BCM website www.bcmintl.org.

Tommy Gambrill serves in disaster relief with BCM International wherever natural disasters such as earthquakes, tsunamis, and volcanic eruptions occur. He has assisted in the Ukraine, Sri Lanka, Indonesia, and India as well as Haiti. Seventeen years of responding to disaster situations has given him the experience and knowledge to serve in his current ministry position. Gambrill is married to Kelly and they have six children.

BCM INTERNATIONAL HOLY LAND TOUR

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RESERVATION DETAILS

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New Missionary Appointees



Stan Tyson – Director of Special Projects

Stan is a graduate of Messiah College and Asbury Theological Seminary and has served in various assistant pastoral roles for over 25 years. His primary ministry has been in the areas of youth and discipleship. He comes well prepared and recommended for a similar role with BCM USA. Stan and his wife, Mary Ann, have two adult children – Jeff and Janelle.

Craig Vincent - Streamside Camp and Conference Center Executive Director

Craig is a graduate of Fort Wayne Bible College with a BA in Christian Education and a minor in camping. He has served at The City Mission (Cleveland, OH) for 26 years, most recently as Chief Program Officer. His experience in leadership, urban ministries, and camping will serve him well in leading Streamside Camp. Craig and his wife, Peggy, have four children - Randy (19), Renee (16), Reyna (12) and Robyn (1).

Dan Rhoda - Cortland Bible Club Camp Director

Dan attended the University of Maine, with a major in Psychology. He comes to us with over 15 years of camp leadership experience. Prior to accepting the position of Director at Cortland Bible Club Camp, he was active in his local church youth ministry, Awana, and worship team. Dan and his wife, Jeannette, have three children – Tyler (13), Julie (11), and Joel (8).