



# WINDOW



ON THE WORLD

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# THINK GLOCAL

**Y**ou have probably heard the phrase, “Think Globally, Act Locally.” I don’t think there are many phrases that sum up the work of the Evangelical Congregational Church more appropriately. Whether we are ministering to those who attend our local congregations, sending missionaries around the world, or identifying and caring for the alien, orphans and widows in our own communities, we are called to be a Glocal denomination.

I’ll be the first to admit that this is no easy task for many of our church communities. Budgets are tight, man-power is even tighter and it seems that the moral barometer of our nation is sinking by the minute, and our courage and heart too often sink with it. It seems so hard to reach out when there is so much inside our own churches and nation that still needs work. But I argue that this is not the way God operates. If the early church would have waited to get its act entirely together, the gospel may have never left Jerusalem. No matter how small we may

feel or burdened we may be, God believes we have something to give to others.

I was recently reminded of one such church that faced this challenge nearly fifty years ago. The St. Paul’s E.C. Church in York, Pa was doing well in the early sixties. Yes, it had the usual challenges associated with a growing church but

rather than focusing only on its own internal needs and opportunities, it decided to launch into a new church plant in a small community on the outskirts of York City called Weigelstown. They invested a great deal of energy,

time, funds and most importantly, people into that endeavor. It was hard for St. Paul’s to send some of its best and brightest to take part in that church plant.

Little did they realize, however, the impact their step of faith would have. The church at Weigelstown blossomed and just a few years later, my own family started attending there and my father came to know Christ under the ministry. I was carried into that church at two weeks old and was disciplined for the next two decades by, among so many others, a dear brother named John Stough. John was one of the men released by St. Paul’s to share the gospel with those “foreigners” on the north end of town. I doubt if St. Paul’s could see the impact it would have so many years ago when it decided to step out and believe God for that Church Plant. They couldn’t see then that St. David’s Church in Weigelstown would grow to become the “home church” for twelve missionaries who have served alongside Global Ministries over the last fifteen years. It has contributed four pastors to the ministry over that same time period.

As I stood in the pulpit of St. Paul’s just a few weeks ago, I had a tear in my eye as I thanked them for stepping out of their own comfort zone fifty years ago. I would not be an E.C.er if it weren’t for them, and I may not even have come to know Christ. They show us what it means to be part of God’s Glocal plan. Because they cared for their own in Jerusalem, and reached out to neighboring Samaria, God has blessed them with an inheritance among the nations. That’s what I mean by Glocal. This issue is dedicated to those people in our denomination who believe that God can use little-known, un-named nobodies to change our communities and ultimately, our world. 🌍



Jim Ehrman

**W**hether we are ministering to those who attend our local congregations, sending missionaries around the world, or identifying and caring for the alien, orphans and widows in our own communities, we are called to be a Glocal denomination.

EMPOWERING NATIONAL CHURCHES  
FACILITATING MISSION WORKERS  
MINISTERING TO THE MARGINALIZED

# Serving in the City

Rev. Gus Al-Khal

New Bethany E.C. Church, located at 224 N. 6th Street, Allentown, PA 18102, is an inner-city, multicultural church with a heart for the poor, sick and lost. Restarted in 2000, New Bethany is now a fast growing, community oriented house of worship for any and all who come. The congregation under Pastor Gus Al-Khal is made up of a vast majority of individuals who are all unique and different, yet are united through Jesus. It is truly a "colorblind" church that shows the sincere love of Jesus Christ, no matter the color, race, or financial situation. New Bethany reaches out to the lost showing them that everyone can have a place in the kingdom of God if they only accept Jesus into their heart. Regular services are every Sunday at 10:00 a.m., and Bible Studies are every Wednesday at 7:00 p.m. With the addition of its own parish nurse, New Bethany holds free health screenings with qualified nurses every Tuesday from 9:00-11:30 a.m. On top of these,

New Bethany also holds many valuable partnerships that allow it to stretch God's arms even farther. In partnership with Everlasting Life Ministries, New Bethany hosts a food bank every Saturday from 9:00-11:00 a.m., and a clothing bank every Tuesday from 10:00-11:00 a.m. Also, a low cost pre-school is held during the school months in association with Bethany United Methodist. The newest addition to the New Bethany ministry is a free clinic in partnership with Community Professional Services. The clinic is staffed by professional doctors and nurses and is open to those who are without any private or governmental insurance every Saturday from 9:00-11:00 a.m. New Bethany is a specialized instrument used by God to reach into the inner city and



make Himself known to those who would otherwise be forgotten. We at New Bethany know how awesome it is to serve our gracious God. With the help of the Holy Spirit, New Bethany continues to thrive and grow, opening the arms of God even wider, sowing the seeds of His love, and introducing countless multitudes to their savior, Jesus Christ.

The Arabic Living E.C. Church, located at 527 7th Ave., Bethlehem, PA 18018, is a church that serves the needs of Arab-Americans who have a sincere love and desire for Jesus Christ. Services are in Arabic, with translation to English if necessary, and the children's ministry is totally in English. As we know most of the Arab world is bound by Islam. Arabic Living E.C. Church strives to reach out to those who may be Muslim or have no spiritual foundation whatsoever, giving them a home church where they can worship the Lord in their native tongue. There are monthly fellowship dinners in which the congregation dines together after service. Also the Arabic church provides Everlasting Life Ministries with another distribution site where canned goods are distributed every other Thursday. Jesus

(continued on page 7)



# Opportunities for Urban Harvest

Rev. Ramon Mendez

There is no doubt that the mission field is at our door step. Just in our own congregation in the city of Reading, we have 12 different nationalities. It is a big challenge to be able to have the right interaction with a broad scope of backgrounds, ideas, and cultures. Recently we had a variety of outreach events designed to embrace the city and to share the gospel with the lost. Creativity is a needed component today if you want to be relevant and provide the necessary care for people's needs.

Through the years we had been implementing a variety of programs oriented to help those in need of

integration into this society, providing classes such as ESL (English as a Second Language), basic computer skills, and citizenship classes. We have learned that it is not easy for an immigrant to adapt to the new language, culture and environment. We understand that the church's priority task is to present the gospel of salvation but it is also our responsibility to help the poor, the neglected and the foreigner.

As Vida Nueva has been growing through the recent years we have transitioned those programs to a more intentional evangelism and discipleship approach, due to the fact that more and more programs in

the community have been developed to provide social care for the inner-city families. However the need is overwhelming and the lack of resources and volunteers limit the scope of our ministry. Some of our other E.C. churches in inner cities are also providing this kind of assistance that I mentioned before, such as Iglesia Cristiana in York and Buenas Nuevas in Hazleton.

Our churches in the inner city are the link for suburban churches to become active in the place where the root of a lot of social issues is located. Partnering through a variety of ways can make the difference in someone's life.

Creativity is a needed component today if you want to be relevant and provide the necessary care for people's needs.



## LITTLE DID YOU KNOW...ABOUT LIBERIA



The United Nations Department of Public Information began keeping a list of "Ten Stories the World Should Hear More About" in 2004. Topping the 2006 list is the story of Liberia:

**#1 LIBERIA: Development challenges top agenda as the nation recovers from years of civil strife.** Setting off on an obstacle-strewn road of transitioning from a vicious war to stable peace and development, the nation grapples with an array of critical challenges that often escape the glare of world media.

- **LIBERIA RANKS IN THE TOP TEN POOREST NATIONS IN THE WORLD.**
- In the second half of the 1990s the average per capita income in these countries [i.e. Liberia], when measured in terms of current prices and official exchange rates, was \$0.72 a day and the average per capita consumption was \$0.57 a day. This implies that on average there was only \$0.15 a day per person to spend on private capital formation, public investment in infrastructure, and the running of vital public services, including health, education, administration, and law and order.
- In the United States 66 people out of every 100 persons own a home computer compared to less than 1 (.72) out of every 100 in India. The statistic is ungatherable for Liberia.
- **The E.C. Church of Liberia has 39 church communities and over 3,200 members. Computers or not, they are motivated and poised to help in the rebuilding of their own country! Pray for them and contribute to our Launch Liberia Effort.**

(source: infoplease.com)

# WAR

ANNIHILATION, DEVASTATION, TRAGEDY, GRIEF

- ✘ 65% of the population have been (and in many cases remain) refugees
- ✘ Almost every family in Liberia has been a victim or perpetrator of indescribable acts of violence
- ✘ Upwards of 200,000 people (50,000 of whom were children) were killed during the civil unrest

- ✘ Children have been brainwashed and forced to act as soldiers—trained to carry guns and kill on demand
- ✘ Families are broken
- ✘ Children are orphaned
- ✘ Hunger, homelessness, uncontrollable violent tendencies, and constant fear plague this nation regarded by the original settlers as the “promised land”

**FOURTEEN YEARS OF CIVIL WAR** (1989-2003) have made the Republic of Liberia, literally meaning “Land of the Free,” one of the world’s most impoverished nations. Established in 1822 as a colony for free-born and formerly enslaved African Americans, Liberia has been plagued by ethnic issues and hostility between people groups since its inception.

Though Liberia boasts natural resources such as iron, diamonds, rubber, and timber, war and political corruption have left the nation destitute with infrastructures in shambles, unkempt farmlands, and worst of all, people traumatized and scarred by a country that has known so much conflict.

# PEACE

RESTORATION, PROSPERITY, HOPE, JOY

- ✘ The war in Liberia has ENDED and the nation has enjoyed 4 years of combat-free existence
- ✘ A new, effective governmental leadership team was elected in 2005
- ✘ Awareness, efforts, and prayers of people around the world bring hope for recovery in Liberia

- ✘ There are 39 resolute E.C. Churches in Liberia with over 3,000 members
- ✘ The gospel is being preached on every street corner
- ✘ Hundreds of people, including ex-combatants, are accepting Christ and his deliverance.
- ✘ Healing is taking place

## The E.C. Church as a Bridge for Change

### HOW CAN I HELP?

#### COMMIT TO BE INFORMED

Liberia may seem a world away and lifetimes apart from anything you’ve ever known or experienced. Many people don’t care about what is happening in Liberia because they simply don’t know. Change begins when we get informed. Take the time to find out what is happening in the nation of Liberia by visiting the international churches page of our website at [www.ecglobal.org](http://www.ecglobal.org).

#### COMMIT TO PRAY

*“Prayer does not fit us for the greater work, prayer is the greater work.”* (OSWALD CHAMBERS) We need your prayers! Launch Liberia is a restoration project that will be supported and sustained by a foundation of prayer. Commit to pray for the nation of Liberia and for the Launch Liberia project.

#### COMMIT TO GO

Would you like to see first hand what your prayers for this nation have meant? Do you think you can imagine just how much change \$1 can make? Do you want to kneel beside a child whose hope has been restored and pray together to a loving God that he now knows because you cared about a nation in need? If so, then begin to think about traveling with us to Liberia in the summer of 2009 for a time of worship, intercession, and ministry.

# Launch Liberia

**T**he Global Ministries Commission is committed to supporting the E.C. Church of Liberia in their wide-reaching efforts to help

bring healing to their homeland by spreading the love of Christ. Currently the church in Liberia offers rudimentary programs such as the Evangelical Children Rehabilitation Program (ECREP) which caters to the holistic needs of Liberian children who have been brutalized by the effects of war, and the Evangelical Women Assistance Training Initiative (EWATI) which helps to provide single-parent women with the tools necessary to survive by offering micro-loans and training programs. They are doing so much. Yet there is still so much more that needs to be done.

So, the GMC has partnered with OMS International in a three-year church planting and development project which would help

the E.C. Church of Liberia to continue their current ministries, while providing training to support them into financial independence, growth, and sustainability. Our efforts are aimed at rebuilding the infrastructure of our current church community in Liberia and initiating a church-multiplication movement. Alongside OMS, we will be purchasing local farming equipment, starting a micro-business loan program, providing educational initiatives, and planting churches. For more detailed information on other OMS church multiplication initiatives, go to [www.omsinternational.org/ecc/churchplanting](http://www.omsinternational.org/ecc/churchplanting). To stay informed on the progress of the GMC/OMS partnership project in Liberia, keep checking the Liberia pages at [www.ecglobal.org](http://www.ecglobal.org).

### COMMIT TO GIVE

**TO MAKE THIS PROJECT HAPPEN, WE NEED TO RAISE \$110,000 BY THE FALL OF 2009.**

That seems like a HUGE amount of money...how could we ever come up with those kinds of funds? We’re asking you, the faithful E.C. Church body to make a commitment to be a part of helping to raise the money necessary to Launch Liberia. We have faith that we can do this if:

- EVERY E.C. youth group commits to raising between \$1,500 and \$5,000
- EVERY Adult Sunday School class commits to give
- EVERY Bible Study and small group organizes a small fundraising event
- EVERY E.C. Church steps out in faith and gives above and beyond their normal mission giving



We are a greatly blessed people, called to help those in need. Let’s work together, each giving a little, so the people of Liberia can gain a lot!

# From Persecution to Promise

By Kay Moldenke

The government's soldiers move systematically through the jungles, attacking the villagers, burning homes and fields, confiscating goods, raping women, laying land mines to prevent return. Those who can't flee fast enough are cut down. Others are taken as slave labor for the army. Children are used for target practice and mine sweepers.

The country? BURMA (Myanmar today). For decades the brutal junta military has targeted the Karen people for ethnic and religious cleansing. Largely the world has been silent about this genocide.

I was there three years ago with Christian Freedom International. I heard the stories of survivors, our brothers in the Faith, who are constantly "on the run". Three times we crossed the Moie River undetected and were led to hiding places. We spoke to those who gathered in makeshift shelters. We prayed with the sick. We played games with the children. We listened, and there were times when we wept.

The fortunate ones make it over the river to one of nine refugee camps along Thailand's border. "Fortunate" is a relative term. Even there Burma's mortar fire strikes. We visited Mae

La and Umpium. There is no freedom and conditions are deplorable. No running water, no electricity, no work. Just long empty years of waiting and hoping that their cries will be heard. They have no country, no citizenship. Only recently has the UN come in to give them ID papers.

Then in January, it happened. The USA opened a door for the Karen to come to America—over 100,000 in the next five years.

That's where YOU come in. Congregations are needed to co-sponsor with the state Non-Governmental Organizations. This is one of the largest refugee resettlement efforts in our nation's history.

Trinity E.C. Church in Lititz, PA will receive a family of five in September. Under the direction of our Missions Committee, members are enthusiastically coming together on teams: housing and furnishings, food, clothing, school and ESL, orientation to American culture, employment, publicity, and transportation. We are praying, praying, praying. The need is our motivator and the Holy Spirit our Enabler.

Our E. C Church plants churches among



marginalized peoples. Why not a Karen congregation? If several churches in a given area would sponsor, that could become a reality. Check with Church World Service in your state to find out what NGO has been assigned to Karen resettlement and begin praying about your role. All states may not be receiving Karen refugees, but perhaps yours is.

Unaccompanied minors need foster parents. Many children in the camps have seen their parents slaughtered. Others have become separated from them in fleeing and have no idea if they are living or dead. With no official death certificate there can be no legal adoptions. But foster homes? Yes!

Read Don Richardson's "Eternity in Their Hearts." God prepared the Karen through their earliest legends for the Gospel. They are the People of the Golden Book. It's thrilling!

And now the Karen are coming here. God is bringing them to us. Get your congregation on board. The Karen children in CFI's vocational school sing a song: GOD WILL MAKE A WAY! Believe it for them and believe it for yourselves.

For more information call the Global Ministries office. ☎



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THE GLOBAL MINISTRIES COMMISSION is the international ministry arm of the Evangelical Congregational Church. With 72 workers in twenty nations, 460 churches in six fields, and several strategic initiatives, it is dedicated to mobilizing the worldwide Church into acts of love, service, and gospel proclamation.

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## FIELD UPDATES:

**JAPAN** > Jim Ehrman, Bishop Sigman and Bishop-elect Kevin Leipensberger will visit Japan in November and meet with the church leadership. Jim will deliver the balance of the funds from the 2006 VBS offering to the Sagami-hara Church which intends to use the funds for much-needed church expansion projects.

**MEXICO** > Rev. Elias Martinez met with Jim to discuss plans for the E.C. Church of Mexico to begin operating a Bible Institute that will serve educational needs within the denomination and beyond.

**INDIA** > Jim will be traveling to India in December with Joel and Michelle Kime, from our Faith church in Lancaster. Current plans have them visiting our church plants in Nepal and then Jim will be speaking at a three day Youth Rally hosted by our churches in Churachandpur. Keep this in your prayers as large numbers are expected and many from outside our own churches.

**LIBERIA** > The Launch Liberia development project is gearing up and you can read about it in the center section of this magazine.

**COSTA RICA** > A recent flash flood swept away the home of one of our pastors in this rain-drenched nation. Fortunately, no one was hurt and we were able to send some financial assistance from the World Emergency Fund. Rebuilding will begin soon.

**MYANMAR** > As you may know from the news, Myanmar (Burma) has been making headlines. We are expecting reports from our Churches in India who carry out mission work in that region. We will post that information under the International Churches section of our web page. [www.ecglobal.org](http://www.ecglobal.org) ☎

(SERVING IN THE CITY continued from page 2)

gave all believers a mission when he said "Therefore go and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit" (Matt. 28:19). The Arabic Church helps the body of Christ reach out to others who have come from or may be all the way around the world.



Trinity E.C.

Church in Slatington is one of the newest restarts in the Evangelical Conference. Restarted in 2006, Trinity is a community based church open to anyone who comes. Trinity provides assistance to a variety of young and elderly congregants not only providing them a place of worship, but also helping them to live their everyday lives, providing canned goods through Everlasting Life Ministries. Slowly growing, Trinity has a bright future in serving the Lord.

Every ministry has its place and its

purpose. Suiting the needs of the community is the biggest outreach a church can have. Additionally, every church is different, just as its community is. The local church has a responsibility to show the kindness, power, and love of God to its community; what better way than to give them what they need in the name of Jesus. Most importantly, a church must show love. Without love, a church will have no ministry. The methods must change, but the message never will. Be "fishers of men"; sow the gospel and reap a harvest that glorifies God. ☎

## SOME E.C.ERS MAKING A DIFFERENCE...

- Conestoga Bethel (PA)** > operates a food bank
  - Lakeside in Transfer PA** > hosts AA meetings
  - Kimball Ave in Chicago IL** > has a youth/community garden project and food pantry
  - Akron (OH) Cottage Grove** > operates a Food pantry
  - Youngstown Wedgewood Park (OH)** > operates a Daycare/preschool
  - Hooppole (IL)** > hosts Pioneer Clubs and "Friendly Citizens" a Seniors' monthly fellowship luncheon
  - The UE church of Tallmadge, OH** > no longer exists in that form but People Serving People, cooperating with RSVP (Retired & Service Volunteer Program) meets in the Tallmadge church building.
- Let us know what your church is doing...**



## VBS 2007 UPDATE

**K**ingdom building and house building – it’s all coming together in Nindeware village in the jungles of Papua New Guinea. Our VBS project for this year is to raise monies for Jonathan and Kathy Wilson, so they could build a much-needed new village house, one that is (relatively) termite proof. As of September, almost \$15,000 has been raised – PTL! The goal is to raise as much of the \$30,000 cost as possible, and you have certainly helped to do that. If your church hasn’t sent in your VBS offering yet, or would like to send a love gift for the Wilsons’ project, it would be appreciated if you could do so before the end of this year.

Despite many setbacks, Jonathan and Kathy have notified us that the home is well underway. No small feat for materials that needed to be flown in by plane and helicopter, and then transported overland on large trucks in an area with poor (or no) roads. In fact, a large portion of the price for the village house was to transport materials. Some of the logs wound up being cut by hand (the generator didn’t work) 🌍

## HOPE FOR THE CHILDREN

**H**ope for the Children is a non-denominational agency that was created by concerned E.C.’ers to help orphans in third world countries. Right now Hope for the Children is sponsoring children in two orphanages in Northeast India, both of which have ties to our E.C. Church of India. ECCI also directly supports two orphanages in NE India, and Hope for the Children has graciously agreed to help find sponsors for those children as well.

Bethel Children’s Home is supervised by Frontier Mission Society, whose director is Rev. Dr. Lamboi Vaiphei. Currently they are caring for 62 children. Sang-Ga Moun Inn is directed by Mrs. Lhingnu Touthung and cares for 52 orphans. There are 12 children who need sponsorship at each of the NE India orphanages which are managed through ECCI.

While there is a strong E.C. presence on the board of Hope for the Children, it is not under the auspices of the Global Ministries Commission. This organization is partnering with us to cast a wider net in order to help those who have no voice in their own society. Unfortunately, many of the countries where our international E.C. churches are located have experienced civil war in recent times. Many children have been injured, physically and emotionally, and have lost both parents. Our churches in those countries are doing their best, but they too are struggling to survive in a fractured society. The War Orphanage in Liberia has almost 40 former boy soldiers; children who were forcibly taken from their families and given drugs and guns, then sent out to kill. Most have no idea where their families are or if anyone is still alive. They need not only food and shelter, but also counseling and rehabilitation back into society.

Watch for our Giving Catalog this fall, which will provide you with numerous opportunities to multiply the effectiveness of your gift overseas. Hope for the Children is one of many organizations that are acting as the hands and feet of Jesus to those who need Him the most. 🌍



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