

Fascinating History: Past to Present

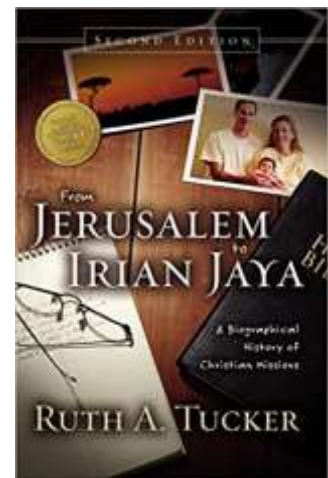
By Bill Moberly

From the Editor, October 2022

Global Mission History is Fascinating

Global Mission history is full of adventure, joys and sorrow, sacrifice and loss, all rooted in the call of Jesus to make disciples of all the nations! He promised with this call that “...surely I am with you always, to the very end of the age!” (Matthew 28:21).

Some years ago, I spent time on vacation reading *From Jerusalem to Irian Jaya: A Biographical History of Christian Missions* by Ruth Tucker, which is a classic and worth a read! Her book covers the broad scope of the global spread of the Gospel over nearly two millennia since Jesus’ resurrection. It also ***clearly captures the reality that global mission history is always the story of faithful servants who one by one answered the call to GO.***



Eternal destiny literally hangs in the balance as Christians go out to share the Good News – some whose names are remembered with stories passed along through the years, and untold thousands more whose stories may be lost, but whose names and service are fully known by the One who called them and prepared a place for them.

David Lerseth’s excellent article in our April CGM “Meet a Missionary” feature drives this point home powerfully. The work in Madagascar over many years was done through hundreds of faithful people over many years! We recognized the same truth reflected at a cemetery in China where hundreds of Lutheran Missionaries who served in Henan province over the years were buried. God calls; some say yes, and lives are changed for His glory!

The history of WMPL is much more than the story of John Carlsen and Ernest Weinhardt, their first missionaries sent to Bolivia 85 years ago. WMPL began with ordinary people serving an extraordinary God gathering to pray, committed to finding a way to send and go.

The modern Bible translation movement traces back to 1917, when young missionary Cam Townsend took to heart the question “*If Your God Is So Smart, Why Can’t He Speak My Language?*”. LBT and the Lutheran Bible translation movement organized in 1964, from the leadership of Rev. Morris Watkins. Daniel Nelson left the farmland of central Iowa behind in 1890 with his family, answering God’s call to go to China.

And check out the powerful story in this edition's History of Mission about a mission revival at Luther Seminary 60 years ago!

Closer to home, our friend Karen returned from a short-term mission trip to Latvia with us in 2007 and offered to develop Christ-centered craft projects for our ministry. A busy wife, mother, church member and medical professional, she answered the call, found the time, and now her craft projects have been used in six countries by thousands of students over the past 15 years!

Our friends Sandy and Judy used their professional experience as teachers to develop an excellent four-year series of English Bible camp curriculum for me when I was EEMN Director that has been used, at my last count, in six countries with thousands of students!

Global Missions Still Making History

As we journey forward as followers of Christ with the pandemic receding, and in the midst of present challenges such as war, inflation, political division and drifting morality, ***global mission history is still unfolding.***

How?

As Christians like you and I choose to answer God's call and walk through the doors He sets before us that connect us more directly to what He is doing to reach the nations.

Will you go on a short-term mission trip? Serve on your church mission team? Simply read a good missionary biography?

We always start where we are, with the doors and opportunities that are often close at hand. Hudson Taylor, pioneer missionary to China, once said, "God isn't looking for people of great faith, but for individuals ready to follow Him."

The people named above didn't set out to make history, but they did answer the call of the Lord with tough choices and steps of faith, trusting God in the midst of real-life circumstances.

What about you? What is your role in God's global calling? Are you investing part of who you are in taking the Gospel to the nations? Are you a pray-er, a sender, and or a go-er?

We all have choices to make in the lives we lead. As followers of Christ we are called to ground our lives in His Word, His plans, and His purposes!

"People who do not know the Lord ask why in the world we waste our lives as missionaries. They forget that they too are expending their lives ... and when the bubble has burst, they may have nothing of eternal significance to show for the years they have wasted." — Nate Saint, missionary martyr

My prayer is that the articles you find in CGM mag - whether this edition, past or future - will stir your heart to prayer and greater involvement in God's call to make disciples of all the nations!

Global Mission Conference

Earlier this month we held our first CGM Global Mission Conference! It was co-sponsored by Ascension Lutheran Church (ALC), Ames IA. I want to thank Sr. Pastor Roger Twito, the Ascension EM Team and their leader, Dr. Phil Gassman, for their prayer, strong support, hard work and planning over the past year!

The Theme was: ***"We Are Still Called to the Nations:
New Global Mission Strategies for the 21st Century"***

The four CGM partner agencies (FOMM, LBT, WMPL & ALWM) shared in several different sessions and breakouts, as well as Paul & Lea Eldred, former missionaries to Turkey under what was at that time EEMN, and some of the missionaries supported by ALC. Several other mission agencies provided displays as well. It was an excellent first conference, which included a special evening of prayer for global mission led by WMPL. One of the participants wrote afterward:

"To sum it up from my viewpoint, I kind of felt just a bit like Peter (maybe this a stretch) when he said in Matt. 17, "Lord, it is good for us to be here," and then having the feeling of just wanting to stay right there! There were many specific things I appreciated, but overall, I was totally blessed! Thank you again!"

In addition, our current four CGM mission agencies forged new and deeper relationships, as well as a collective strong sense that we need to do this again in 2023. There is currently no other venue at the national level in the Biblical, confessional Lutheran church bodies represented there (LCMC, NALC, TAALC) that has an intentional focus on global outreach, which includes time to equip, encourage and support the important work that goes on at the congregational level. Some of us have already met to look ahead at next year.



Some of the Conference participants



Chris McWeeny – WMPL



Emily Wilson – LBT



David Lerseth – FOMM



Meeraj Ekka - WMPL

See more conference photos at www.cgmmag.com/events/

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