



History in the Making

By **SUE PATT**

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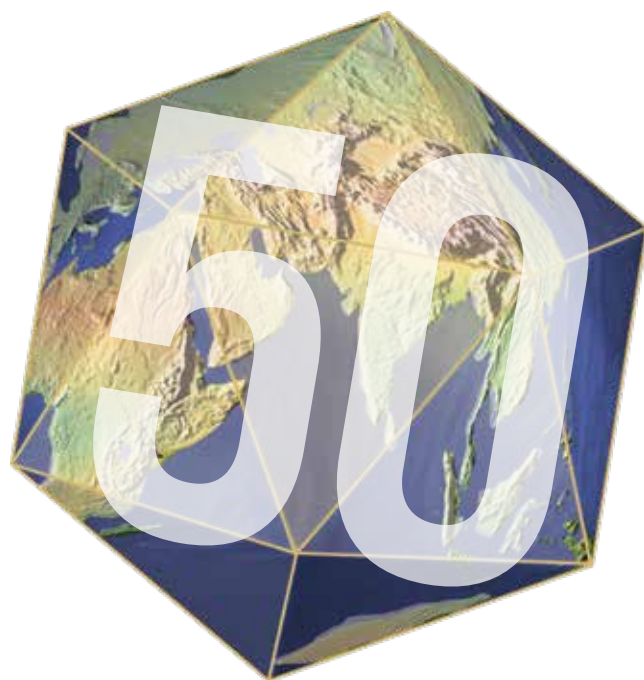
Dear *Mission Frontiers* Reader,

This issue tells a story 50 years in the making, and that story is still unfolding across the globe! I can't imagine that the students in the first Perspectives class could have envisioned just how their own lives would be shaped by this class and the ideas they would encounter. One student from that first class tells his story in these double-issue pages. Even so, that leaves many more stories from that class and so many others untold.

My own story intersects this timeline 44 years ago, when in 1980 at Penn State University, I enrolled in the first Perspectives class by extension. The content in this groundbreaking survey class already had radically changed the lives of college students who took the class. Still, most Christian students on secular college campuses could only gain access to this material if the class could be made reproducible. That's what the 1980 Penn State class was about.

Over the next many years, those working behind the scenes created training resources for multiplying coordinators and creating infrastructure to empower what would become explosive growth. I completed my degree in Human Development and interned at the US Center for World Mission (USCWM, now Frontier Ventures), working in the Perspectives office. I joined staff after graduating so that I could continue building infrastructure for the growing network of coordinators. I co-coordinated my first two classes in 1984 with a regional Frontier Ventures staff person who later became my husband! I'm a witness to an amazing view of how the Holy Spirit breathed life into the work of a few dedicated people.

That theme is echoed in each article of this issue. Regular people grasp ancient ideas that are new



to them. The Holy Spirit empowers them to live a life after God's purpose to build a family from all the families on earth. They also become witnesses to the ongoing ways the Holy Spirit empowers others through them. It's a remarkable story by all accounts.

Those early days pre-date the internet or personal cell phones. There initially was one computer terminal in the Perspectives office where class registrants were put into a central database by a couple of different staff people, including me. Records were sent through the mail from classes popping up around the country and coordinated mostly by rugged entrepreneurs who didn't need rails to run on to pull together a class. There were no rails.

A curriculum created for the Christian students on secular college campuses quickly migrated into the church world where missions pastors offered the life-changing ideas to their congregations. Much later, when a few rails were being developed and refined, we coached coordinators to integrate multiple church fellowships into each class. Mission-sending agency staff recognized the significance of participating in the growing opportunities presented by Perspectives, serving as instructors and coordinators. Listen for those stories in this issue.

Still, the rails were being built, then refined and refined again. That's why Perspectives has been able to shift in minor and major ways, leveraging new technology and overcoming new challenges. Listen for stories that include how teams shifted during the COVID-19 pandemic. Innovation has been of high value all along the way. Challenges always have been present, too. Credit-granting institutions, curriculum revisions, coordinator training, instructor training, class enhancements, leadership structures, money management, and transparency are all just some of the challenges that have taken turns at the top of the priority list. Even so, regular people have continuously been empowered to see their life purpose through the lens of God's purpose—blessing all peoples with the fullness of life in Christ, reorienting people as individuals, churches, communities, regions, agencies, and even continents. Look for Latin American and African stories in this issue!

From Urbana 1973, we saw growing openness among college students to become involved in missions.¹ What began as a response to that phenomenon has grown to a multi-lingual, multi-cultural, multi-country, multi-continent movement of God entirely focused on God's glory among all peoples. The translation of the curriculum into Spanish touched off explosive growth throughout Latin America. Today, we're poised for another chapter of explosive growth with the translation of the curriculum into French now being positioned for release into Francophone Africa. Watch with awe for what the Lord of Glory will do in the next decade!

It sounds easy as I write words on a page, but between each line, I see the faces of those who put their shoulder to the plow and gave the best years of their lives to what they could not see fulfilled in their lifetime. They now join the cloud of witnesses cheering as we continue to run our race. Through it all, the USCWM provided essential structures to support the Perspectives team. For the past nine years, since the renaming of USCWM to Frontier Ventures, the support has continued,

¹ See Yvonne Huneycutt's article in this issue, which adapts the introduction of her book *Propelled by Hope*.


through leadership changes, budgets, personnel needs, financial reports, and annual audits. The undergirding support of Frontier Ventures has been extensive and often invisible to the students, volunteers, and even Perspectives staff.

There remains no doubt in my mind that Perspectives has flourished for reasons beyond human understanding, but that the support of Frontier Ventures has been essential. It has been a joy for Frontier Ventures to be such an integral part of the Perspectives story, and we look forward to seeing the story unfold. Our apostolic missional community continues that original innovative spark of catalyzing movements to Jesus worldwide.

Through our numerous global initiatives, we provide similar and powerful points of purposeful connection for the global body of Christ. In all that we do, we build on a growing foundation of relationships at the very edges of the kingdom of God to witness Holy Spirit-led blessing for all the families of the earth. We need your help to continue this flow of the gospel to the frontiers of mission. In partnering with Frontier Ventures, you are allowing the same collaborative and innovative spark that birthed Perspectives to continue flourishing around the globe. Won't you join with us in God's purposes to all peoples? Scan the QR code below (qrco.de/FVgive) to partner with Frontier Ventures financially. We are immensely thankful for all your support, and we covet your prayers!



Do you have a story to tell about outcomes from Perspectives over the past 50 years? This double issue is bulging with stories from many different points of view, but you can tell us your story by writing to editor@missionfrontiers.org. You, too, are a witness to the amazing work of the Holy Spirit!

For the glory of God among the nations,
Sue Patt, a regular person
Chief Strategy Officer, Frontier Ventures 



Porque así como las aguas cubren los mares, también se llenará la tierra con el conocimiento y la gloria del Señor.



