

What's Happening in the Global

Perspectives Family?

Bruce Koch

Have you ever met distant relatives for the first time and were astounded by how you are very much alike? Yet this is no mystery, for we share DNA with family members.

In Amsterdam in April 2003 some of us working to mobilize the Church – using *Perspectives* and courses inspired by it – recognized that we share the same missiological “DNA”, so we began to refer to ourselves as the *Perspectives* family. In December 2003 we met again in Pasadena to build upon and expand the network of relationships begun in Amsterdam. We agreed to extend the “family” motif to formally recognize a “*Perspectives Family*” of curricula that also share the same missiological DNA.

Since occasional face-to-face gatherings are necessary to maintain a sense of identity in any extended family, the *Perspectives* Roundtable (our partners in the United Kingdom) offered to serve the rest of us by hosting a *Perspectives Family* “Global Huddle” in High Wycombe December 10-13, 2006. The 27 participants in this huddle represented 21 ministries, 12 countries of ministry, eight languages, and seven *Perspectives Family* curricula.

Program Reports

We received reports from established programs in Indonesia, India, Australia, New Zealand, Nigeria, Romania, Korea, North America, and the United Kingdom. We heard representatives from Thailand and Brazil share their vision of what they hope to do in their contexts. Each program is unique because

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each context is unique; there should be little surprise that a course that emphasizes contextualized ministry is itself the object of significant contextualization. For instance, in Korea the focus is on mobilizing students who are potential missionary candidates, but in Nigeria the target audience is church and mission leaders.

We brainstormed on how to advance the movement in different contexts – for example, how to simplify

materials originally written for well-educated, native speakers of English so that they are easier to understand and translate. We readily acknowledged that the history section of *Perspectives* needs to be adapted to include more detail about mission to and from each region, and we reviewed a working document to further that purpose.

Curriculum Reports

We received updates on the development of standard curricula in Chinese, Spanish, Russian and Arabic. (Standard curricula are the dynamic equivalent of the *Perspectives on the World Christian Movement* as we know it in North America.) One of the highlights was laying hands on one of the newly-printed Chinese *Perspectives* books and praying for the development of study guides and programs to utilize this resource within diverse Chinese contexts.

In addition, we received reports from five specialized curricula of the *Perspectives Family*. (Specialized curricula are inspired by and/or complementary to standard curricula.)


- ◆ *Kairos* is an eight-lesson curriculum formerly known as the *Condensed World Mission Course*. *Kairos* is used in 17 countries and eight languages to introduce church leaders and laypeople to the foundational ideas found in the *Perspectives* course.

- ◆ *Blessed to be a Blessing* is an Indonesian course similar in weight to the Kairos course, but contextualized for predominantly oral learners.
- ◆ *Encountering the World of Islam* is similar in size and weight to a standard *Perspectives* course, but is focused on understanding and engaging Muslim peoples.
- ◆ *God's Heart for the Nations* is an eight-lesson Bible study designed to walk believers through the Bible to discover God's global purpose for themselves.
- ◆ *God's Heart for the Muslims* is an eight-lesson study that uses the Bible to help participants to reflect on how to share the love of Jesus with Muslims more effectively.

Keeping our Courses on Course

Many forces in global mission today are working against the frontier mission movement's focus on reaching the unreached. Jason Mandryk, the current editor of *Operation World*, summarized for us the arguments against frontier mission that he encounters as he travels the world gathering fuel for prayer, and Jason encouraged us to stay the course. Steve Hawthorne also helped us to re-examine the biblical foundations of the paradigm of "mobilization by hope."

We explored ways to use the Internet to extend the value of our face-to-face gatherings and to give further opportunity for interaction within this extended family.

To learn more about the *Perspectives Family*, see www.perspectivesfamily.org. 

Remembering Jodie Van Loon



Following a fall, our co-worker, Jodie Van Loon, went to be with the Lord October 21, 2006. For 27 years Jodie was a key asset to the USCWM. Her gift of hospitality touched our community and

campus in many ways. Jodie was an extraordinary networker, a persistent prayer warrior and a mentor to younger women. She had an unusual grasp of mission information and a strong commitment to unreached peoples. Her most recent contribution was the creation of displays of international artifacts all over the campus. Jodie will be dearly missed by the USCWM community and friends all over the world.