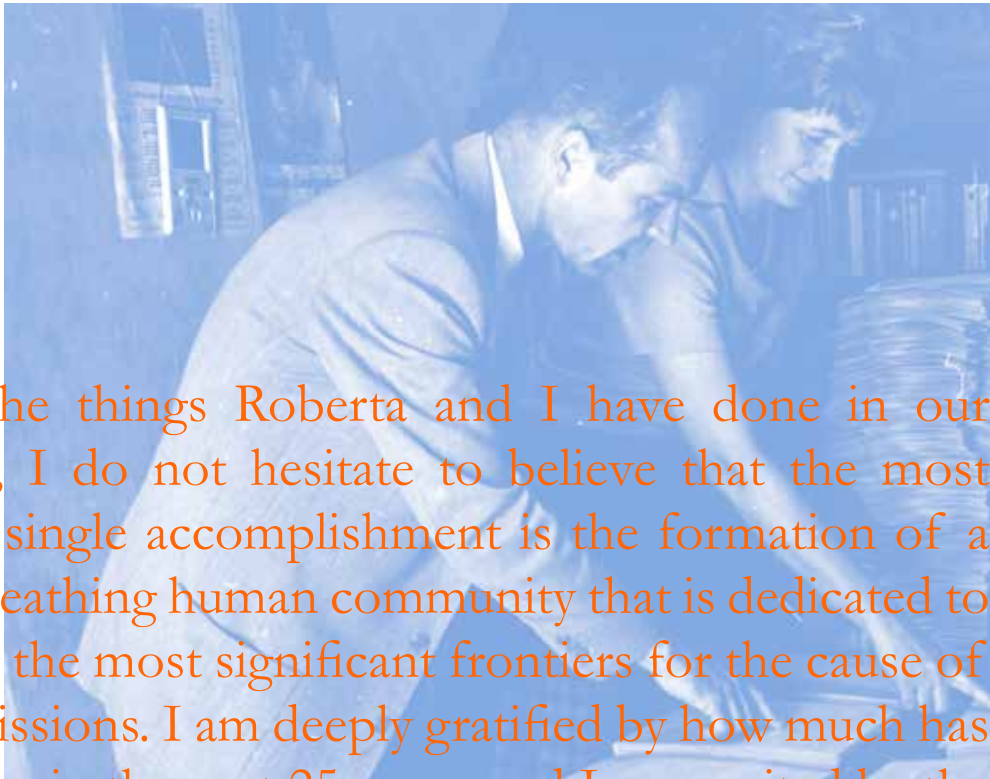


FOR GOD'S GLORY IN ALL PEOPLES

FEATURE ARTICLE

This article adapted from the 25th USCWM anniversary booklet published in 2001

CELEBRATING 40 YEARS OF THE U.S. CENTER FOR
WORLD MISSION/FRONTIER VENTURES AND THE
UNREACHED PEOPLES MOVEMENT



Of all the things Roberta and I have done in our lifetimes, I do not hesitate to believe that the most valuable single accomplishment is the formation of a living, breathing human community that is dedicated to pursuing the most significant frontiers for the cause of global missions. I am deeply gratified by how much has been done in the past 25 years, and I am excited by the present strength of our organization. But I am most impressed by the big tasks in our future, which may easily eclipse all of our past.

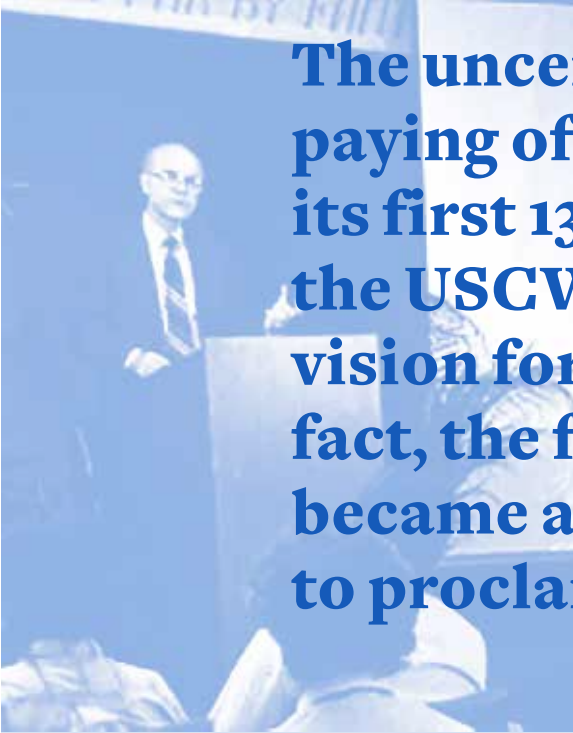
- Ralph D. Winter, at the 25th Anniversary of the USCWM

There are turning points in history where certain people and events dramatically alter the direction of human history and the destiny of millions. Ralph Winter and the founding of the U.S Center for World Mission (now Frontier Ventures) played a major role in the launching of the movement to reach the unreached peoples. This movement has now impacted thousands of people groups and altered the eternal destiny of untold millions of precious human souls.

Dr. Ralph Winter would be the first to tell you that people like Cameron Townsend and Dr. Donald McGavran were the real instigators of this new era to reach the unreached peoples. But few mission scholars today would deny the impact that Ralph Winter had in bringing the plight of the “hidden” or “unreached” peoples to the forefront of the evangelical missions agenda and forever changing the focus of modern missions.

THE LAUSANNE CONGRESS ON WORLD EVANGELIZATION 1974

In July 1974, Ralph Winter gave a plenary address to the Lausanne Congress on World Evangelization. This address literally changed history. His address to this congress can be read today in the 4th Edition of the Perspectives Reader under the title of The New Macedonia. In his address he pointed out that the vast majority of mission efforts at that time were being spent on assisting the established church within reached people groups. Little attention was being paid to the dire need of an estimated 17,000 unreached people groups that were “hidden” from the Church and its mission efforts. This address became the starting shot that launched the race to reach the unreached peoples.



The uncertainty and pressure of paying off the property during its first 13 years didn't deter the USCWM from spreading vision for the unreached. In fact, the financial struggles became a soap box from which to proclaim the vision.

THE FOUNDING OF THE U.S. CENTER FOR WORLD MISSION

Through teaching other missionaries, Ralph and Roberta Winter gained an unprecedented overview of the remaining missionary task. They discovered that only half of the world's population could hear the gospel from believers in their own culture and language. To make matters worse, they found there was no major mission effort focusing on these unreached peoples. New missionaries were almost exclusively following in the footsteps of earlier missionaries to already established fields.

Through these discoveries, God led the Winters to take a radical step, leaving a secure tenured position at Fuller Theological Seminary to call attention to the plight of the unreached peoples.

In November 1976, Ralph and Roberta Winter founded the USCWM with no staff but their secretary, and no resources but God and their reputations.

Through God's faithfulness, the USCWM has grown to over 100 members. Its 35-acre headquarters in Pasadena is complemented by 25 regional staff in North America and a dozen in other parts of the world. About 50 organizations share facilities with the USCWM in Pasadena.

THE CAMPUS IS PURCHASED

The uncertainty and pressure of paying off the property during its first 13 years didn't deter the USCWM from spreading a vision for the unreached. In fact, the financial struggles became a soap box from which to proclaim the vision. As the USCWM focused on building a movement to reach the unreached, God honored their faith and brought thousands of donors, large and small, to meet the USCWM's financial obligations. See the article, Three Miracle Years, on page 11.

In the 1980s, many organizations and individuals joined the movement promoted by the newly-birthed USCWM. Mission agencies and denominational mission efforts focused on unreached peoples. The USCWM and other mobilization and research organizations highlighted the essential role of behind-the-scenes workers. Local church members continued to pray and support mission work, and workers and intercessors embraced the vision to break Satan's power over the still unreached people groups.

THE MOVEMENT MATURES

The 1980 global conference of mission leaders in Edinburgh was the first to give prominence to the challenge raised at the USCWM: A Church for Every

People by the year 2000! By the late 1980s a global movement had emerged. By the mid-1990s it had become a global phenomenon. National initiatives in nearly every country of the world gave priority to "A Church for Every People." The foundation was laid for the final thrust to disciple all nations.

As the challenge of unreached peoples continues to spread increasingly on its own, the USCWM/Frontier Ventures devotes more attention to addressing other important obstacles and to gathering and refining insights about how to more effectively establish viable, culturally-relevant church movements among the rapidly diminishing number of unreached peoples.

MOMENTUM BUILDS

God has accomplished far more than could have been achieved through the efforts of the USCWM alone. We want to gratefully acknowledge some of the many other ministries, both past and present, that God has raised as part of this movement.

AD2000 & Beyond Movement - Act Beyond - Adopt-A-People - Advancing Churches in Mission Commitment - African American Mobilization

Division - All Nations Literacy - Anglican Frontier Missions - Antioch Network - Episcopal Church Missionary Community - Fellowship of Artists for Cultural Evangelism - Finishing the Task - Frontiers - Global Evangelization Movement - Global Mapping Intl. - Global Opportunities - International Journal of Frontier Missions - International Society for Frontier Missiology - Joshua Project - Korean American Center for World Mission - Latin American Mobilization Division - Lutheran Society for Missiology - Network for Strategic Missions - No Place Left Coalition - Paraclete - Pioneers - Presbyterian Center for Mission Studies - Presbyterian Order for World Evangelization - South African Missiological Society - Teaching English as a Second Language - YWAM Strategic Frontiers - Zwemer Institute for Muslim Studies.

Along the way, the faith and vision of many prayer and financial supporters have provided the USCWM /Frontier Ventures with the essential resources to play a key role in this burgeoning new perspective. The USCWM/Frontier Ventures staff, and the unreached peoples, are deeply indebted to all who have become involved. Your sensitivity and obedience to the prompting of God's Spirit are profoundly appreciated!

THE VENTURE CENTER



Purchased in 1977 by Ralph and Roberta Winter and The U.S. Center for World Mission now Frontier Ventures



Many were calling for a moratorium on missions claiming that the missionary task had been completed.

Unreached peoples are widely a accepted reality fueling the most significant advances in the mission effort.

Missions typically focused on saving individuals.

Missionaries focus on establishing multiplying fellowships.

Mission strategies once centered on political nations (countries).

Missions recognize the strategic significance of biblical nations (people groups).

The mission effort often tried to motivate people by emphasizing the hopeless plight of two billion lost souls.

Missions look with anticipation toward God receiving glory among the last 7,000 unreached people groups.

Missionaries often assumed that the church around the world should look like the church in North America.

We increasingly recognize that the church must fit the culture of the people group where it is being established.

Of approximately 24,000 distinct people groups worldwide, an estimated 17,000 were not even on anyone's radar nearly 2,000 years after Christ.

Of the 7,000 or so groups remaining unreached, almost all have been selected for current or future outreach by one or more mission agency. And for each of these 7,000, there are at least 650 times as many local congregations.

A DEDICATION IN MEMORY OF ROBERTA H. WINTER


1930-2001

After a courageous and defiant struggle against multiple myeloma (a rare form of bone cancer), Roberta Winter passed away on Sunday, October 28, 2001.

Along with her husband Ralph Winter, Roberta was co-founder of the U.S. Center for World Mission. Ralph recalls her as a “beautiful, intelligent, vivacious, loyal, affectionate, and utterly honest person, who was always ready for anything.

Roberta filled many roles at the USCWM, but the two that endeared her to the most people worldwide were her celebration of the historical expansion of God’s kingdom (teaching Perspectives classes), and her book,

I Will Do a New Thing, the story of the USCWM. Even today, people reading her book for the first time feel like they have come to know her personally.

The Roberta Winter Institute has been established in her honor with the purpose of raising awareness of disease as a major hindrance to the global understanding of God’s glory. Disease kills prematurely and God, not Satan, is often blamed for disease. But with major advances in medical research there is hope as believers unite to work toward eradicating the very pathogens of disease for the glory of God. 

THREE MIRACLE YEARS

AUGUST 1976 TO AUGUST 1979

This article is reprinted from the July-August 1979 issue of Mission Frontiers entitled: "Founder's Reference Issue."

BY **ROBERTA H. WINTER**

Three years ago three people stood on an empty campus, wondering if perhaps, for His glory, God would do a miracle in this place. The cause was stupendous—3.5 billion people still to meet Christ. Could those three trust God for so much? This is the story of the U.S. Center for World Mission and those three miraculous years.

AUGUST 1976

Campus for Sale

We had no money, no following, nor even a well-known name. Why should the college board even listen to us when we asked them to hold this \$8 million campus for us? Other groups had tried to buy it over the 3 years it had been vacant. Now a well-heeled cult desperately wanted it. But God held it for us. This was the first miracle.

JANUARY 1977

Angels Unawares

"Only \$10,000? That's easy," and this perfect stranger pulled out his checkbook and started to write.

We had just been jolted into realizing

we had to ask for a legal option without which we could not be assured we could buy the campus. This piece of paper should have cost us at least \$150,000 (1% of the expected down payment), yet a friend, knowing our financial straits, suggested we offer \$15,000 and see what God would do. He gave us the first \$5000 himself.

That was the beginning of another miracle.

APRIL 1977

The Cult or the Center?

It had felt like a see-saw, back and forth for 3 months. The college board voted to give us the option; then the cult offered \$75,000 for one. The board voted in our favor again, so

the cult offered \$1.5 million as an immediate down payment. It was a test of faith for both the college and us. We still had no money. This college desperately needed money! How we rejoiced at God's grace when on April 15th we received the option in the mail.

JUNE 1977

Who Will Help?

"How can we ever do it?" Ralph groaned. "There's only 3 of us full time. Volunteer, part-time help is great, but we've got to have people we can lean on."

God must have heard his cry, because in late May staff started pouring in. Some moved 3000 miles across country. Some gave up well-paying jobs. We had no money to pay them even a penny—yet they came! A tremendous provision from God's hands.

JULY 1977

Before You Call

"Will \$50,000 help?"

We gasped. Would it! Speaking was a newly converted, rich young man whom our daughter and her husband had met at a retreat.

A few days later we received another call: "Our church will raise \$100,000." We knew that church was quite small, and yet God had touched their hearts and would surely bless them.

SEPTEMBER 1977

Pat Boone Concert

"Pat has only one night in September that he will be in town. That is the 22nd." "And that is the

only night we can get the Civic Auditorium," Mercedes replied.

That concert was full of miracles. First: Pat Boone is tremendously gifted and so vitally, genuinely interested in missions. He was spelled off by Nancy DeMoss, a beautiful young concert pianist whose heart and soul were in missions. We "just happened" to have someone on staff who was experienced in putting together crusades and concerts, someone else with experience in putting together slide shows, someone else who just happened to know all sorts of professionals who "owed" her a favor and volunteered to help, etc. It was God, obviously, who put it all together.

What a miracle night of rejoicing!

OCTOBER 1977

God's Provision

"If you need any extra money, I can loan you some." Three sources of funds called with the same offer. We casually noted their names, but trusted that the Lord would bring in all \$850,000 needed in outright gifts. But on October 1st we still lacked \$300,000. We could see that it was a miracle when the college extended our deadline one week. But it took a lot of prayer and fasting to realize that we should not turn away these loans, these expressions of faith. They also were a miracle, God's own provision for our need.

NOVEMBER 1977

Foundation Blessings

"Dr. Winter, I'd like you to come talk to the head of our

foundation. It may be we can get you some more money." That was another miracle, following closely on the testing of our faith. And what rejoicing when a check for \$200,500 arrived in the mail,

SPRING 1978

A Book, A Chart, A Film

Six hundred and fifty thousand! And due in just another few months. We had worked hard- since November, yet all our efforts at fund raising had failed, spectacularly! Did God have any other plan?

To top it off, we now felt we should ask only for a one-time gift of \$15.95. It was God's business if some felt constrained to move the decimal point, as one lady did and gave \$1,595.00, or give a \$200,000 piece of property, as another did. We would accept all with thanksgiving.

God also gave us three tools: a film *Penetrating the Last Frontiers* entirely narrated by Pat Boone, a wall chart of the same theme, and my book *Once More Around Jericho* God had His hand on these in a very special way that summer.

SEPTEMBER 1978

Last Minute Miracles

"How much do you lack?" Every day for a week this farmer from the plains of Canada had called with the same question. Every day the number had been less, but it was still over \$100,000 two days before our deadline.

"What can I do?" was his question. He sent us \$16,000. Four thousand more mysteriously appeared on our desk. And again

from all over the money came, much of it in \$15.95 amounts, but also much in far larger sums. Again God made it clear that it was not our great skill which had brought it in. Only His grace.

DECEMBER 1978

Graduated Grace

“So soon? We’ve just begun to recover from that last deadline. And now this?”

It was the first of our quarterly payments, set at \$460,000. And we had on hand only \$50,000. How could God pull us out of this one?

But He did. The college decided to graduate the amounts so that at the beginning it would not be so tough. We had to pay \$50,000 in December and again in March with another \$100,000 due in June and \$360,000 in September 1979.

That was a miracle—another tight one. But now we could breathe.

FEBRUARY 1979

“A Test of Faith”

“It is too much for us,” many of our staff said. “We just can’t do it.” No, our next campus payment was not yet due, but the first part of the down payment on the off-campus houses was. We needed those houses for three reasons: for staff and married students, to prevent the area from becoming a slum, and for endowment from rentals. The price was excellent, but at the Jordan, the courage of many now failed.

Money we had been promised did not materialize, and two days before the due date, we suddenly

realized we were in a severe crisis. Again, various friends, learning of our need, came to our aid with loans, \$45,000 of which had to be returned in just two weeks. But God knew that! Just three days after paying the money, a check for \$50,000 came from the estate of a woman in the East.

JUNE 1979

More Testing

Our most severe test of all. We couldn’t make both the second half of the housing down payment and our quarterly \$100,000 payment on the campus. But, praise the Lord, the college board agreed to extend the option on the houses for another year, releasing the money already paid for us to use on our quarterly campus payment. We were delighted at the relatively small additional cost that extension would involve and thanked the Lord that all was not lost.

JULY 1979

Do It Again, Lord!

It has been almost three years since we stepped out in faith—three years of severe testing and tremendous miracles. We have come through times of despair, doubt, even unbelief. And God has chastened us, but brought us through, always. As we look back over the miracles, we wonder, “How can we doubt Him?” Yet, like Peter, we find ourselves often looking down at those waves dashing against our bare feet, and we cry, “Lord, save us.” And like Peter, we look up into the face of Him who is all sufficient, and take courage.

That’s where we are as we face our last really large quarterly payment—\$660,000 on Sept. 15th. It is \$300,000 more than we had anticipated because property given us last year still has not sold. There will be other quarterly payments after this one—\$175,000 every three months. And we will need to trust God for those also. But September 15th is our watershed.

Is God able? Yes, He is! Our job is to keep our eyes fixed on Him and go forward, in faith. This is a continued story. Each time we give some solid information about things that are happening in regard to a new era of a new kind of missions. Then we also tell where we stand as an organization because this organization, in spite of its spacious campus, is hanging by a thread. (Our entire future will actually be decided in the next few weeks, and perhaps because of what you yourself actually do or don’t do!)

Editor’s Note: How did the story end? There were many more twists and turns over the next 10 years culminating with the burning of the mortgage in January 1989. You can read the cliff-hanging account of this amazing saga in the book, *I Will Do a New Thing*, by Roberta Winter.