

M I S S I O N TM FRONTIERS

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Arts, Worship, and Mission in Today's Church

Celebrating 20 years of the Global Ethnodoxology Network

Renato Leuto Sanuma blows the shell horn on the opening night of the 2012 CONPLEI Congress.

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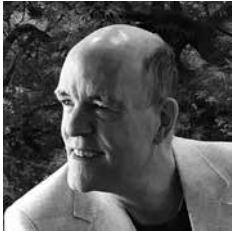


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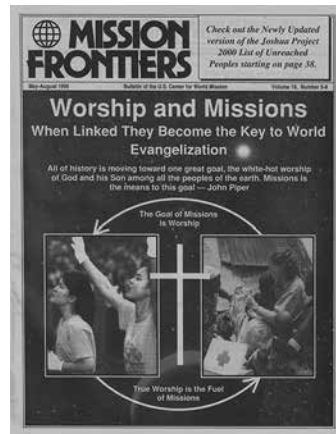
Why Is Indigenous Worship Essential?

By RICK WOOD, Editor

Have you ever wondered about the impact *Mission Frontiers* makes in missions? Our May–August 1996 issue of *Mission Frontiers* was the first time we featured the topic of Worship and Missions. Like every issue of *MF*, we trust God to take what we do and multiply it to change the course of world evangelization so all the unreached peoples may have access to the Gospel. In the case of this May–August 1996 issue, God has done far more than we could have asked or imagined. Unbeknownst to me for many years, people like Dr. Robin Harris and Jo-Ann Richards Goffe were reading this issue—and it greatly impacted their lives. They in turn have changed the course of mission history.

Dr. Robin Harris was the guest editor of our Sept/Oct 2014 issue, and she stated in her editorial at that time:

This issue of *Mission Frontiers* holds extraordinary meaning for me. Not only do I love featuring some of my favorite articles from the *Ethnodoxology Handbook and Manual*, but God launched my personal journey into ethnodoxology with the 1996 July/August edition of *MF*. In the late 90s I was beginning a decade of cross-cultural service with my husband and family in Siberia, and that *MF* issue, hand-carried to us on the field, rocked my world. Its seminal articles by pioneers in arts and mission served as a clarion call to service for me and others in this movement. The issue presented a vision for combining worship and local arts in ministry—an idea that changed our lives forever.



Jo-Ann Richards Goffe tells her story, starting on page 11, by saying, “I remember that 1996 July/August *Mission Frontiers* issue like it was yesterday. When I read Tom Avery and Jack Popje’s articles, light bulbs went off in my head. I immediately said to myself: “That’s what I want to do!” I had already accepted God’s invitation to join Him in global mission, but I had no idea specifically what my role was until I read those two articles.”

This new vision imparted to people like Robin and Jo-Ann led to the creation of what is now called the Global Ethnodoxology Network. With this current issue we celebrate their 20 years as a vital network of hundreds of practitioners who are working tirelessly to bring meaningful, heartfelt, indigenous worship to all peoples. This network has literally changed the course of world evangelization—and they are just getting started. At *MF*, we are overjoyed to have played a small part in the creation of this essential network. We look forward to seeing what God will do through GEN in the coming years.

Over the last 27 years since 1996, we have featured this topic two other times: Sept/Oct 2014 on “Ethnodoxology,” as mentioned above, and June 2001, “Worship that Moves the Soul.” Check them out and be inspired. Go to www.missionfrontiers.org and click on Past Issues to access these editions.

Should Everyone Worship Like Us?

As followers of Jesus, it is tempting to think that everyone should worship like we do. Because after

all, we do it the right way, right? And so, shouldn't missions be about taking that right way of doing things to every people? This is not just a western phenomenon. Every mission worker from every culture is prone to teach new believers to believe and do things the way the mission worker thinks it should be done. Certainly, there are basic doctrines of biblical faith that must be maintained. But the problem is we often confuse our culture with biblical truth. As we go to the unreached peoples, we often bring our "cultural baggage" as we are trying to bring the Gospel.

As followers of Jesus, it is tempting to think that everyone should worship like we do.

The classic example of this problem is the missionaries of past centuries who sincerely went out to bring the Gospel to the lost but taught the people to do church exactly as they did back home in the U.S. or Britain. Oh yes, they translated the hymns into the local language, but the music was still foreign to the people. But the people accepted it anyway, because that is what you had to do in order to be truly Godly. They built church buildings like the ones back home and the men were taught to wear suits and ties in the stifling heat. Women were taught to wear the style of long dresses that the women back home wore. No wonder some in these unreached people groups got the idea that the Gospel was a tool of colonialism and a "foreign import." To this day, you can go to places in Africa and around the world on Sunday morning and see the tragic results of these practices play out in real time.

As we seek to obey Jesus and bring the biblical essence of the Gospel to every people, we must understand that we need to de-culturate the Gospel before it can become truly indigenous (normal and natural) to a people. This is the essence of the missionary task and *ethnodoxology* is a critical part of the process of making the Gospel indigenous to a people.


When new Jesus followers in an unreached people are permitted to use their indigenous arts and music, under the direction of the Holy Spirit, to worship Jesus, not only are the believers able to worship in a passionate, heartfelt way, but unbelievers are much

more likely to be interested in learning more about Jesus and the Gospel. Evangelism is empowered and not hindered by foreign customs and music.

Regardless of the background culture of the mission worker, this process of de-culturalization must take place. When it does not, the Gospel is seen as foreign, and the Gospel does not spread virally as it should. Even worse, the people we are trying to reach can become hostile and resistant to the message of the Gospel. Our job is not to go into all the world and make every people worship like us. It is our job to enable every people to discover a normal and natural way for them to worship Jesus in a way that is meaningful to them.

This can be an uncomfortable process for us because an unreached people's indigenous forms of worship are not natural for us—but they are for them, and that is what is important. Whether in our own culture or in the culture of an unreached people, we must all trust the Holy Spirit to guide us into the styles of worship that are pleasing to Him. New believers will sometimes have to make tough choices as to which form of worship is acceptable or not, but it is their choice to make—not ours.

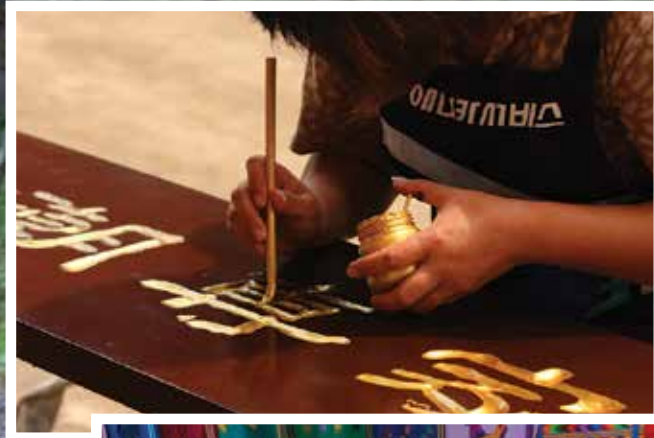
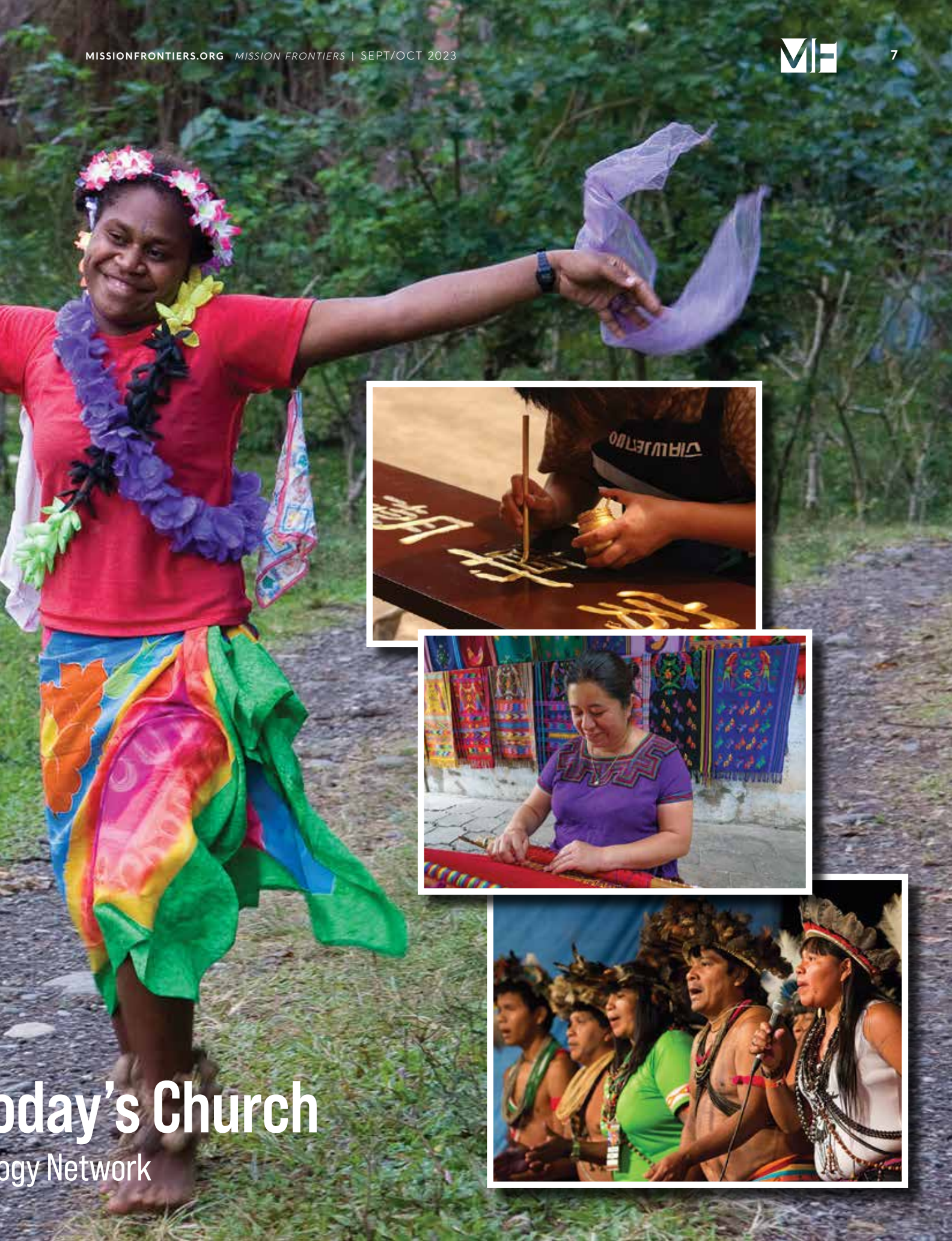
Giving Jesus the Worship He Desires

In the familiar passages of Rev. 5:9 and 7:9, we see people from every tribe, language, people, and nation are worshiping Jesus. He is worthy of all our worship and praise, but what will that worship look like? Is there a standard hymnal for heaven? Will we all sing the same songs? Will all the distinctive cultures of the world's peoples, their arts and music, etc. dissolve into a homogenous heavenly "culture" and worship? We can't be certain, but it seems clear from Scripture the creation of the diverse languages and peoples of the world was God's idea—and thousands of different tribes, languages, peoples and nations bring God more glory than if there was just one. Each people offers God something unique and special in terms of their worship. I believe the ethnodoxologists represented in this issue are helping prepare a symphony of worship and praise for Jesus that all of us will be able to enjoy for all eternity. 



Arts, Worship, and Mission in T

Celebrating 20 years of the Global Ethnodoxolo



Today's Church

Technology Network



By **JAMES R. KRABILL**

James R. Krabill is the board chair of Global Ethnodoxology Network and is the senior editor of *Ethnodoxology: Global Forum on Arts and Christian Faith*.

Arts and mission have not always been the best of friends. Many young people today and virtually all secular academics are quick to claim that Christian mission has too often dismissed, demeaned, or even destroyed local arts expressions around the world in an effort to impose the West's imperial project of "The 3 Cs"—Commerce, Christianity, and Civilization. This is a harsh assessment, requiring a more nuanced analysis. Some Gospel communicators have, in fact, given their entire lives to preserving indigenous languages through literacy work and Bible translation. Others have conducted music workshops or developed arts programs to encourage believers in producing new artistic creations deeply rooted in and inspired by locally embraced arts genres and aesthetic values.

But in too many instances, Western artistic expressions have been elevated and promoted over local ones. Commonly employed terms for arts of European origin, such as "fine arts" or "high culture" imply that some arts are better than others, superior in aesthetic content, quality, and performance, and perhaps even closer to God's plan and desire for humanity. In many parts of the world, Western arts expressions have long played the privileged, authoritative role of defining, shaping, and judging local arts, labeled condescendingly as "folk arts" and thus as inferior, incompetent, and a grade below the Euroarts standard of excellence.

A growing number of Majority World pastors and church leaders are aware of this challenging situation and wish to change the current trajectory of things by

rediscovering and embracing local artistic expressions in the daily life, worship patterns, and mission activities of the church. At the close of a 2006 music composition workshop in the Democratic Republic of Congo, workshop participants issued a “Declaration” in which they stated:

We have noticed with regret the remarkable absence of traditional music in our churches. This was caused by the arrival of the first missionaries, traditional music has been erased, leaving in its place modern music, which has given youth the feeling of being despised, wronged. Yet God wants to be praised with various musical instruments, Western as well as African (Psalm 150:3–4).

By the end of this workshop, we have been able to discover that we have incredible, multiple musical riches in our different African languages. Let us recognize that a song inspired and composed in one’s mother tongue touches the heart and can change the life of a person, console him, make him joyful and lead him to accept Jesus Christ as Savior and Lord.

May this workshop, the first of its kind, not be the last. We desire that the God who is the Master of time and circumstances open other opportunities so that this good initiative may contribute to the proclamation of the Good News and Salvation by songs in our heart languages, for our Lord is enthroned upon praises and adoration (see Revelation 7:9–10).¹

Inspired by a similar vision, a group of Christian artists, coming from the disciplines of anthropology, missiology, visual arts, ethnomusicology, and worship studies, gathered in 2003 for the first Global Consultation on Music and Missions (GCoMM). Many participants at the consultation had experienced a lack of full support and enthusiasm for their arts-focused ministries from their own mission

organizations and churches. They came hoping to find a kindred spirit with people passionate about the vital role the arts could play in Christian ministry and the rapid growth of faith communities around the world.

Emerging from that gathering, marked by invigorating camaraderie and fresh hope, a new network was born—the International Council of Ethnodoxologists (ICE), more recently renamed the Global Ethnodoxology Network (GEN). Combining two Greek roots, *ethnos* (peoples) and *doxos* (praise or worship), the ethnodoxology movement has focused from the outset on working toward a future in which communities of Jesus followers in every culture might engage with God and the world through their own artistic expressions. Not limited to any one art, GEN embraces the vast array of artistic expression and encourages local creativity through the arts in the church’s life, worship, and witness to others. In the words of Brian Schrag, an early GEN founder and supporter, ethnodoxology encompasses “all the arts, from all the world, for all of God’s purposes.”²

For the past two decades, GEN has worked to support and equip ethnodoxologists in local contexts and ministries around the world. Three primary activities characterize GEN’s principal contribution to the arts and mission world—networking, training, and resourcing. *Networking* has been key to GEN’s identity from the beginning through its free email newsletter (every four to six weeks at worldofworship.org/newsletter) and its members-only web-based email forum where several hundred associates interact regularly on wide-ranging arts-related topics and enjoy access to a Virtual Library of resources. To participate at this level of GEN engagement, one can sign up to be a one-year, five-year, or lifetime member (worldofworship.org/signup), with an option of sponsored membership for international scholars and practitioners from under-resourced countries. In addition to these virtual connections, “GEN and Friends” share networking meals and enjoy arts tracks at various global conferences, such as the Calvin Worship Symposium, the Global Consultation

¹ From a forthcoming article by Muriel Swijghuisen Reigersberg and Brian Schrag: “Ethnodoxology,” in *The Oxford Handbook on Music and Christian Theology*, edited by Steve Guthrie and Bennett Zon (Oxford: Oxford University Press).

² From Schrag’s preface to *Creating Local Arts Together: A Manual to Help Communities Reach Their Kingdom Goals* (Pasadena, CA: William Carey Library, 2013), xv.

on Arts and Music in Mission (GCAMM), the Evangelical Missiological Society (EMS), and the American Society of Missiology (ASM).

The *training* aspect of the network has seen the development of two popular training courses—*Introduction to Ethnodoxology* and *Arts for a Better Future (ABF)*—both of which have been embraced and adopted by mission, arts, and educational organizations worldwide. The one-week ABF course has enjoyed particular growth with over 1,100 participants to date from more than 60 countries on five continents. Two-fifths of these participants have been from churches and ministries in the Global South, including Africa, Asia, the Pacific Islands, Latin America, and the Caribbean. To facilitate the growing number of training initiatives occurring in other-than-English languages, GEN has taught and developed course materials—in partnership with William Carey Publishing (WCP)—in French, Indonesian, Portuguese, Spanish, Chinese, and Korean, with Russian and Mongolian currently in process.

Resourcing is the third GEN area of activity. In addition to the course materials described above, the network has produced two larger volumes, likewise published by WCP—*Worship and Mission for the Global Church: An Ethnodoxology Handbook* and *Creating Local Arts Together: A Manual to Help Communities Reach Their Kingdom Goals*. The 580-page *Handbook*—featuring over one hundred authors from twenty countries—provides biblical and theological foundations for the ethnodoxology movement and offers global case studies, practical tools, and online materials with media clips, relevant books, journals, and other resources for arts and mission practitioners. In 2013, GEN developed a journal, *Ethnodoxology: Global Forum for Arts and Christian Faith* (artsandchristianfaith.org). This open-access, peer-reviewed journal features academic articles, working papers, and book reviews of interest to the network.

The GEN network is a dynamic movement and continues to learn with and from its many relationships around the world. The content of the current *Mission Frontiers* magazine is one such example. It celebrates the 20th anniversary of GEN and the ethnodoxology

movement and features GEN’s “Seven Core Values for Arts and Mission” that have emerged after two decades of experience. The seven values presented in this issue—Christian Worship, Potent Arts, Historical Awareness, Human Agency, Locally-Grounded Methods, Academic Rigor, and Confident Hope—are accompanied by stories through the voices of ethnodoxology instructors and practitioners around the world. It is our conviction that the synergistic relationship between arts and mission has never been more relevant or more important.

As you read and reflect on the following pages, it is important to remember that the Incarnation is the ultimate example of the Gospel’s ability to be articulated, received, appropriated, and reproduced into an infinite number of cultural contexts. Benjamin M. Stewart writes:

The incarnation of Christ includes Christ’s honoring of local cultural patterns including dress, language, cuisine, time-keeping, gesture, and relationship with local ecology. [...] The Church as The Body of Christ rightly honors each local culture in which it is incarnated by similarly assuming the givenness of local patterns, grounded in the scriptural memory that, in Christ, God comes to the world ‘deep in the flesh’ of local culture.³



May the following stories inspire you to keep that scriptural memory alive! 📖

³ Stewart, Benjamin M. 2014 “What, Then, Do Theologians Mean When They Say Culture?” In *Worship and Culture: Foreign Country or Homeland*, Gláucia Vasconcelos Wilkey, ed. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans Publishing Company, 46.

Seven Core Values That Guide

GEN



By **BECKY ROBERTSON**

Becky Robertson is a former field worker (Africa and the Middle East), now a World Arts PhD student at DIU

GEN's Central Commitment

The Global Ethnodoxology Network (GEN) seeks to remain faithful to a biblical vision of the future by encouraging communities of Jesus followers in every culture to engage with God and the world through their own artistic expressions. GEN offers networking, training, and resources to support the growing movement furthering these goals. Sound theology undergirds each of the values summarized in this document.

1

Christian Worship

GEN celebrates the stunning variety of Christian worship patterns in the global Church.

Ethnodoxology's central focus is worship. Worship is the act of adoring and praising God, ascribing worth to Father|Son|Spirit as the one who deserves homage, allegiance, and faithful service. From individual to corporate devotion, worship denotes a lifestyle of being in love with God. The global Church exhibits an astounding array of worship patterns, demonstrating the enormity of God's creativity and the diversity of the Body of Christ.

Grateful—Jo-Ann Richards Goffe

I remember that 1996 July/August *Mission Frontiers* issue like it was yesterday. When I read Tom Avery and Jack Popje's articles, light bulbs went off in my head. I immediately said to myself: "That's what I want to do!" I had already accepted God's invitation to join Him in global mission, but I had no idea specifically *what* my role was until I read those two articles.

Who knew that both writers would become my dear friends and supporters? When my home church commissioned me to serve with Wycliffe in Burkina Faso in 2002, Jack was Wycliffe Caribbean Director and spoke at my commissioning service, and Tom Avery, then-SIL Ethnomusicology Director, would become my mentor. That was more than twenty years ago!

Music is my passion, and worship music comes with lyrics. So, my field assignment, first in West Africa, and then in the Americas, was to work alongside translators, helping church musicians to write Scripture-based songs that incorporated both their own languages and music genres.

It wasn't until I returned to Jamaica two years later that I realized I was equipping others to do what my own Jamaican people needed—to create church songs in our own language and music. Yes, we could always adjust the music to make it ours, but the language itself was an issue. Its associated stigma caused many to reject it completely, especially in the holy worship space.

My own Jamaican mother raised us to speak English only, and we were good obedient children. She even went as far as to fine us (yes, she charged us money) for speaking anything but “the Queen's English”! I fell in love with the Jamaican language, Patwa, but for me, practically, I couldn't get it to fit in with the worship experience.

But God had a plan. The Bible Society of the West Indies was working on translating the New Testament into Patwa. As I waited for my new assignment, I ministered in Jamaica using Patwa Scripture portions. The responses were powerful! My own mother got to see for herself how important, necessary, and powerful it is to receive the Scriptures in your own heart language, and through songs, too!

When my mother passed away in November 2021, she was reading through the Jamaican New Testament for the third time. She used it for devotions with her caregivers, and while she had the strength, she danced to the rhythms of the songs I had since produced: “*Laad Yu Gud!* [Lord You Are Good!]” and “*Notn no De We Gad Kyaahn Du!* [Nothing is Impossible with God!]”

The progress seems slow and sometimes discouraging, but more and more Jamaican worshippers are being set free to express their worship to God in Jamaican language and musical genres. *Kom Mek Wi Worship!*



JO-ANN RICHARDS GOFFE is a Jamaican Christian Cultural Advocate and member of GEN since 2003. Speaker, Author, and Singer/Songwriter, she is Founding Director of CREW 40:4, a Jamaican based non-profit focused on culturally relevant expressions of worship.

Multicultural Worship—Joy Kim

“We're all so different. We come from all these places and backgrounds. But nevertheless, we worship. It's all in the nevertheless.”



What makes the worship in the multicultural Proskuneo community of Clarkston, Georgia, somehow richer? The diversity in their gathering, language, culture, generation, and religious background traditions, demands a higher and deeper sense of community of those present. When people bring all that they are into the worship space, give themselves to each other and to God, and feel safe to bring themselves, they can fully contribute, listen, receive, and create together. They share leadership and like to imagine what is possible with the wealth of perspective, language, and skill in their group.

The group started with two families gathering for potluck and worship together. From there, it grew organically until they asked themselves, “Is this worship? Are we a church?” They hadn't intended to plant a church, but their relationships, shared context, and their response to each other birthed something special.

People might attribute this specialness to their refugee and immigrant context, but, more aptly, they are a third-culture space created by the interplay of different cultural influences. Proskuneo Ministries attracts bicultural people of all kinds, sympathetic to a life of moving around, who appreciate and navigate diversity in their lives, by choice or necessity. They share a sense of uprootedness, but that's not “it” either. They are greater than the sum of their parts.

Most people prefer to worship within a shared language and culture, not with “others.” But this community leaned into each other because they had to. Their differences afforded them no presumptive common ground, except their desire to be together. “As we brought together the new ingredients, the process became ours and we felt we belonged to it,” Joy said. It’s unique, and each week’s service brings something new: a song they learn, a new language, nuance, or perspective on Scripture. Middle Eastern members highlight rich cultural connections in Scriptures too. Syrian and Ethiopian members bring their ancient church history. It’s their special embodiment of unity in diversity.

In each culture and language, God has imprinted His image. There’s just so much to learn about God. Art is kind of like breathing in and out—so integrated that they don’t even know who created what sometimes. “Whose song is it?” Joy asks. “It’s just ours.”

God is community in and of Himself. We must worship Him from all of ourselves. Joy is bilingual, so she can worship well in one of her languages, but rarely both at once. Joy’s community doesn’t simply sing a YouTube song in that language, but deeply looks at who is in their midst, and what is meaningful to them. This multicultural group brings more of themselves because they are both welcome and willing to.



JOY KIM

studied piano, church music, and music education before graduating from Dallas International University with a Master’s degree in World Arts. She currently works as an ethnodoxologist in Clarkston, Georgia, with

Proskuneo Ministries. Joy works with diaspora artists from diverse backgrounds to engage in global mission through building multicultural worshipping communities.

2

Potent Arts

GEN recognizes arts as indispensable to human thriving.

The arts are integral to personal and individual expression, and in initiating, transmitting, and reinforcing interpersonal and group communication. They permeate communities, marking messages as important, embedded in, and separate from everyday activities, drawing not only on cognitive, but also experiential, bodily, multimodal, and emotional ways of knowing. Arts instill solidarity, reinforce identity, and serve as a memory aid. They inspire people to action, provide socially acceptable frameworks for expressing difficult or new ideas, and open spaces for people to imagine and dream.

The Power of Arts in Mission— David Oluseyi Ige

On a bright, sunny, Sahel day, four university students came to visit John¹ while the newly produced Fula song played from his phone. Intrigued, they were surprised to hear this story song. “Where did you find this? This is our song.” They asked more about this prodigal son mentioned in the song, and he invited them to learn more such stories from the Bible. Eventually, they became followers of Jesus and are baptized disciples today.

The arts powerfully and effectively communicate and transform. Particularly, music plays a significant role in various societies, from soothing lullabies to mournful dirges. In oral contexts in Sahel countries, I have seen that music conveys the truth of God’s Word in a non-threatening manner.

The arts connect people and foster understanding and acceptance. New missionaries of the past often downplayed or avoided artistic genres, or worse, condemned them as ungodly. Through these very arts,

¹ (not his real name)



though, many oral-preference learners in the world now have received the Gospel, especially through technological advancement and accessibility.

Yoruba people believe that when words fail to communicate complex ideas or emotions, proverbs can step in to bridge the gap. Arts catalyze social change through their ability to challenge practices, provoking thought and inspiring action. Yoruba kings are addressed as *Kabiyesi*, or, “Who dare ask or challenge you?” But the poet may send coded messages to challenge the king or send an unpleasant message indirectly by means of socially acceptable artistic frameworks for expressing difficult or new ideas beyond mere words. Nathan’s parable so challenged King David in the Bible.

Additionally, arts serve as memory aids, reinforcing identity and helping people remember the message, as God commanded Moses to do in teaching a song to the Israelites, ensuring the message would be remembered by future generations. Arts also preserve cultural heritage and celebrate the unique identity of different people groups. Many countries have policies favoring the broadcast of local productions on national media platforms, including Christian content in local genres. This not only promotes the national culture and heritage but also provides an opportunity to share the Gospel. When the communication medium aptly fits a people, that people perceive the message as their own, and a significant hurdle in sharing the Gospel is overcome.



David Oluseyi Ige

is a worship leader and a cross-cultural missionary. He is deeply committed to seeing nations worship the Lord in their unique and indigenous ways. He is an Arts Advocate and coordinates the Worship from the Nations initiative, a project of

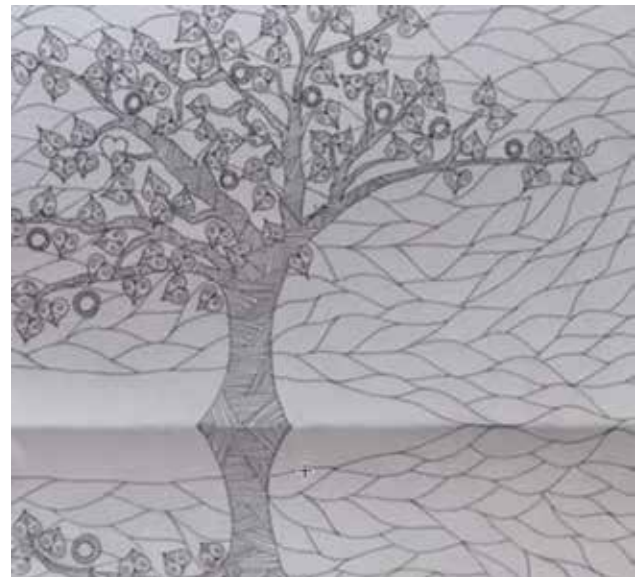
Declare Global Outreach Mission that seeks to

produce 1,000 indigenous songs, 300 music videos, and 100 evangelistic films for 100 unreached people groups in the Sahel of West Africa. He has a Master’s in World Arts from Dallas International University.

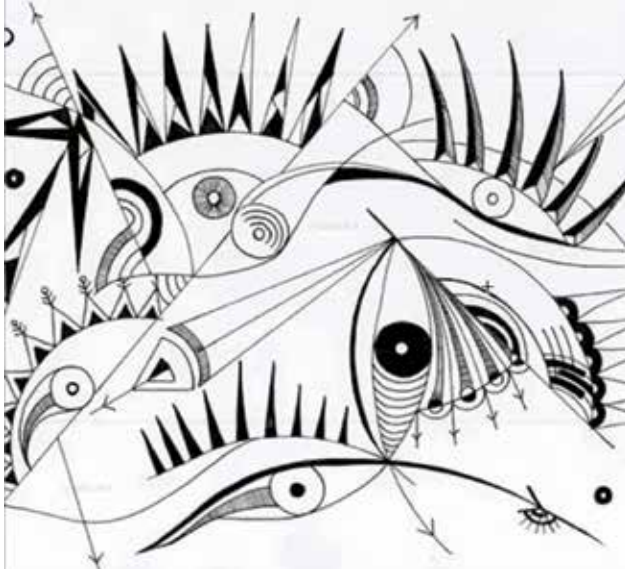
Visual Art and Spiritual Formation— Sujatha Balasundaram

As a child in Indian school, Sujatha struggled with memorization. A friend encouraged her to draw her response and describe her drawing, and it worked! So, she drew all her subjects: History, Chemistry, Physics, Biology—everything. Soon, she drew to study Scripture and pray too. Ever since, she has encountered God through drawing.

Sometimes Sujatha starts drawing with no plan. In drawing #1 (tree), she started with just the tree trunk on folded paper before she saw the impression on the other side and began to trace it carefully, in stillness. As she worked, she remembered Psalm 46:10: “Be still and know that I am God.” The free process taught her that reflecting God’s image requires stillness. Another improvised drawing (#2, eyes) brought to life Proverbs 15:3, “The eyes of the Lord, are everywhere, keeping watch on the wicked and the good.”



As a new mother, she’d grab a few minutes as she could between feedings and naps to connect with God by continuing a drawing on a napkin or scratch paper, each time picking up where she left off. As the children grew, she would put crayons and paper in front of them as she read to them. By the colors and shapes



they drew, Sujatha realized they were processing what they heard. As they grew, she'd ask them about their drawings and saw familiar connections at work in them. Sujatha pondered her children's drawings as an opportunity to sit with the Holy Spirit and sink deeply in those Scriptures. "We shouldn't take that lightly. The power of art is very compelling," she said.

She shared her drawings with other kids and parents. When others urged her to share them online, too, her online following surprised her. Some of the motifs Sujatha used resonated with a lady from Iran and when she asked what it meant, Sujatha was able to give a reason for her faith. In addition to aiding processing, Sujatha found art to be a powerful conversation starter, especially for spiritual themes.

Sujatha posts her works and devotional thoughts online in webinars. During COVID, a group formed a collaborative devotional in which they would begin some art on a name of God and then pass it around the group for each person to develop, discussing it each time. They learned from each other as they drew. The group created seven Advent devotionals with requests for more. Other contemplative Lenten devotionals are available for download at [Artresponses.com](https://www.artresponses.com).

During COVID, Sujatha developed a coloring activity based on some cognitive behavioral therapy exercises—processing what we're in control of, and what we're not—which helped several schoolteachers navigating mandatory online teaching. People seek



ways to relax, and Sujatha says that increasing that space in God's presence is our privilege.

In spaces where people are displaced or struggling, Sujatha hopes to see art direct those struggles to God. She works through various churches and ministries, keeping discipleship as the priority, and art as the means. We don't learn from our experiences as much as we learn from *reflecting* on those experiences. Art enhances that reflection.

Sujatha Balasundaram

engages people with Scripture and in prayer using visual art, especially line drawing heavily influenced by folk and tribal art from India.

Finding Beauty in Local Fashion and Visual Art—Younhee Deborah Kim

The first time Younhee helped with a song workshop in Africa, she saw firsthand the power of local, authentic language and art to connect people to God and Scripture. After a few days of composing songs in the regional language, participants switched to their local language and music style which created a night-and-day difference. Authentic praise simply flowed. Since then, Younhee wanted to see that extend into the realm of her own fields, visual arts and fashion, especially in places like Africa with such vibrant and colorful fabrics.

The creative process happens differently at the level of local culture. Younhee led a visual arts workshop



among women in Africa using fabric local to their rural setting. As they discussed the role of creativity in everyday life, the women struggled with the concept to perform their task of creating something with their local fabric, especially when it seemed to them quite ordinary. They thought of art as something that required a snazzier pattern like those in city fabrics of other people groups.

Younhee kept encouraging them, though. She asked, “What can you make with this fabric, apart from clothing?” The women began to think up various souvenirs, jewelry, bags, or hairbands to make. As they began to work with their own fabric, they discovered something important: beauty exists in what was theirs, too. When they discussed art—music and dance and fashion—they hadn’t considered that their own singing, dancing, and fabric could also be beautiful. That’s the power of art and creativity.

A 2012 arts camp in Benin featured a painting art camp for children and a fashion program for adults, mostly Beninise young ladies, which culminated in a runway experience in which the women modeled their creations with their own bodies. They dressed in their own creations from head to toe, proudly presenting their art with newfound confidence and pride in their local designs as beautiful. In the future, Younhee hopes to help women to create small businesses with their fashion designs.

At a different workshop, regional Sunday school teachers in Tanzania studied Scripture in the mornings to create teaching songs, paintings, drawings, and fabric art, and taught them to children in the afternoon.



Through teaching with their art, they discovered the high value that exists in arts of all kinds, not only music, and that the creative process brings life to learning, teaching, and engaging with Scripture.



Younhee Deborah Kim is an art advocate and ethnodoxologist. She has worked in African countries since 2009 and in some European countries recently. Also, she is a director of Arts in Mission Korea, which is a mission organization that

mobilizes and trains Korean Christians to use their artistic talents for God’s kingdom and cross-cultural missions. She joined Inspiro Arts Alliance in 2021 and is working as a short-term project manager.



Embracing Local Arts in India— Jacob Joseph

Vestiges of foreign missionary work remain in Jacob Joseph's native South Indian church: benches, shoes inside, a Western organ, and translated Western hymns. The hymnbook does include locally written songs, albeit sung in hymn-style, but mostly the translated hymns are sung. The music, though dear to those who sing it, remains foreign. The church simply has not budged on its music, which is so culturally ill-fitting that secular comedy programs even ridicule the Western music and language of the church.

Jacob studied Western music abroad to train church leaders in India. His direction abruptly changed, however, after attending GCoMM where Chris Hale led worship in Hindustani styles. Jacob found himself completely wrapped up in worship, and he caught the vision for Indian worship. His study focus changed to indigenous music which he set out to implement back in India.



3

Historical Awareness

GEN situates its goals and activities within global, regional, and local histories and in their sociocultural dynamics.

We recognize the complex and constantly changing nature of every individual's and community's artistry and worship practices, including our own. Because Euro-American art forms have largely accompanied the spread of Christianity in recent centuries, local artistic traditions—especially those of ethnolinguistic minorities—often remain outside the church. Ethnodoxology seeks to redress this imbalance by retaining a robust engagement with representatives of local, older, often rural artistic histories. We also celebrate urban multicultural, multiartistic identities and creativity that mark more and more Christian communities, developing resources to help them craft unique worship practices.



Jacob went to work planning a worship service at his college with Indian music and poetry to worship the Trinity with local dance and preaching style. The tambura drone opened the service, and some of Chris Hale's songs followed. People began walking



out, even from the front row! Dozens more exited during the dance, and by the end, only fifty people remained of four hundred. Students shouted, “devil!” and pushed on Jacob’s chest, calling shame on him in an uproar. The next day, classes were cancelled amid student protests demanding Jacob’s dismissal. Finally, the college founder and principal gathered the students to preach a long sermon on biblical foundations for local music, offer public support for Jacob and for more indigenous worship.

People calmed down, but the tides had not yet turned. Jacob recognized the bondage of colonialization that continued in his tradition when the most standard Christian songs put to Indian dance suddenly turned “devilish.” Throughout that year, Jacob incorporated indigenous worship into his Theology of Worship course and preached on the topic at every opportunity. He also invited ethnodoxologist Ian Collinge, whom he’d met at GCoMM, to India to present an academic paper and teach a course for the student community.

The next year, Independence Day fell on a Sunday, and a friend urged Jacob to try again with another Indian service. So, this time, worshipers removed their shoes before entering the chapel. Mats covered the floor instead of chairs, and marble chips outlined each state in a large map of India in the center. The service opened when a three-headed lamp was lit, symbolizing the Trinity. A newly composed folk song in a local dance style followed, and a student from every state of India that was represented in the community came forward,

lit a diya (small clay lamp) from the three-headed lamp, and placed it on their state. The group sang “God is so good” in those twenty-eight languages in local musical styles and prayed together over specific requests from every state. No one walked out this time, and people even stayed afterward, weeping in prayer for their state around the map.

Since that remarkable day, Indian music is part of the curriculum and chapel service, and the college even offers sitar training for use in worship. As they go out to minister in unreached areas, they look for ways to incorporate local arts into their work.

“It doesn’t happen overnight,” Jacob said. “I’m not blaming the missionaries,” he insists, noting the immense work of love the songbook compilation and Bible translations displayed. It is time for the Indian church to take initiative to make church more Indian. New cross-cultural work attests that local worship is essential.



DR. JACOB JOSEPH served 23 years at New Theological College in Dehradun and started the first university accredited indigenous church music program in North India. Presently he serves as the Dean of the School of Worship and Music at South Asia Institute of Advanced Christian Studies (SAIACS) in Bangalore. He is married and has four boys.

Indigenous Revitalization in Philippines—Roce Anog Madinger

Among the indigenous groups in the Philippines that Roce has supported in ethnoarts, one Matigsalug story stands out. The story was six to eight years in the making, beginning with the work of the Holy Spirit through Tano, an encouraging mother tongue Scripture translator who was convinced of arts' power to move people's hearts. He invited Roce to conduct a workshop with her outsider voice, which can be heard differently.

The community went through quite a transformation. After an initial ethnoarts workshop, the church invited Roce back three times over the years for further workshops. The community worships using their attire, dances, instruments, and their own language. "We encourage and celebrate this. We affirm this. We want to provide spaces where communities can freely worship God using expressions that are closest to their hearts," said Roce. They began to use their own arts and language more and learned to appreciate the role of culture in understanding and sharing the Gospel.



Their worship now vibrantly displays colorful indigenous dress, enthusiastic traditional movements, and the blended sounds of traditional songs in local language with modern instruments. From child to grandparent, the church connects to God, one another, and their indigenous identity across generations. This transformed church now reaches other indigenous communities with fewer language and cultural barriers to cross.



More than that, their creativity and innovation keep spinning. They sound both modern and traditional, integrating old and new together so members can connect to the worship honoring both past and future. They also feel free to adapt reggae music with their own twists of local language and movements.

Roce saw how elder Nanay (mother) Adelina modeled and taught the ulahing, a traditional spontaneous art-song for use in prayer. The young people didn't know how to do it, but she patiently taught and guided them. The youth tried it out bravely, mistakes and all, laughing together, and rejoicing when they got it right.

One visiting urban pastor who witnessed the lively dancing and singing in worship said he wanted to bring his entire leadership team to come be inspired by the community. In his church, men usually don't dance, but Romans 12:1–2 beseeches us not only to transform our minds, but also to present our *bodies* in living sacrifice. Roce felt invigorated to dance in worship in her own church back home after visiting this church and seeing their example. The urban church could learn so much from this group's knack for crossing generational boundaries and creatively giving room for innovations. "We need more of this in the urban setting as well. There's so much freedom!"



ROCE ANOG MADINGER

serves with her husband at the Institutes for Orality Strategies. She also volunteers part-time for SIL Philippines as an Ethnoarts Specialist.

4

Human Agency

GEN respects the right and capacity of every individual and all communities to shape their own artistic realities.

Artistic products are made, appreciated, and given value by people. We endeavor to encourage the diversity of human artistic ingenuity locally and wheresoever these arts are exported. We acknowledge, honor, celebrate, and value the unique artistic creations and contributions of individuals and communities. Therefore we cultivate these gifts both in our own communities and in those we endeavor to encourage and collaborate with so that they can continue to explore their unique identities and giftings—the dynamic arts that are the heart of the people as individuals and in community.

Local Language Scripture Stories and Songs—Veni Setiawati

Veni Setiawati tells her ethnoarts story from Toraja, south Suluwesi in Indonesia. After Veni's church hosted a Multi-Lingual Education project for children in partnership with a university, a Christian organization, and local government, the positive effects had the church asking for more Sunday school curriculum in the local language. The drastic change was evident in the children's faces when they heard Bible stories in their own Toraja language as they listened enthusiastically and engaged with the lessons. As a result, the adults also began to engage with Scripture stories in their own language.

Later, the church invited an ethnoarts specialist to come train them and made a commitment to create songs not only for the adults but for the children too. After creating more than 70 songs and stories, they arranged to have a jamboree festival. Over 3,000 Toraja children came from all over Indonesia. A full Bible translation had been completed and accessible for 80 years in the

regional language, but it was too difficult for Toraja children to engage with it. The Bible stories when told in the Toraja language were easier for the children to understand.

Local excitement from the jamboree paved the way for a Toraja Bible translation, and now they have completed Luke. Church leaders anxiously await an audio version of Luke as well and want local Toraja church schools to read the Scriptures daily in school. SIL arts specialists are working with the community to continue arts trainings.

Authentic Heart Music—Elsen Portugal

Elsen notes that life and art flow from historical interaction between cultures. In north-central Brazil, outside Brazilian missionaries have lived for over 60 years among the Xerente indigenous people preaching the Gospel, loving the community, and even acting to protect them from demise. The Xerente loved their friends and welcomed them and their strange cultural sights, sounds, and ways, mixing them with their own. But eventually, instruments and song styles—both Christian and secular—derived from inside, outside, and wider regional cultures blended, creating a contemporary Xerente reality. By 2010, Xerente music style settled into a fusion of all these influences. Christians among them worship authentically from these artistic places, although, to outsiders, the fusion likely sounds as if they were simply trying to imitate regional genres.

Enter the purist ethnomusicologists, trying to reverse colonialist history, advocating for indigenous worship with a passion as blind as the predecessors they criticize but now from the opposite angle. It's tempting to criticize the intention of historical predecessors in

The drastic change was evident in the children's faces when they heard Bible stories in their own Toraja language as they listened enthusiastically and engaged with the lessons. As a result, the adults also began to engage with Scripture stories in their own language.

mission, but two centuries back, people held a different perspective, and like us, were a product of their time. We experience intercultural richness they never knew and have learned things they didn't know: that there is beauty in every culture, and culture is *always* in flux.

As Elsen studied this process, he delineated four signpost questions surrounding meaning, function, competency, and agency that help assess whether music, regardless of its origin, truly reflects local identity, or, in other words, is *authentically* theirs. Does the artistic form connect with real meaning to the community and its individuals? Does it fill a role in the community? Does the community have sufficient competent individuals to create, perform, and sustain the form? Does the community have the voice and ability to administer the form without external imposition?

A soundtrack of Xerente life truly includes fusions of the cultural influences that touch and shape it. The Xerente themselves name what is their music, which songs touch their hearts and resonate with their identity. Brazil is all about fusions like samba and bossa nova which arose from experimentation in sound and style mixes which stuck. That's the story of artistic development around the world, and the increase in cultural movement and technological advance have amplified even more the diversity of sounds and fusions.

The Xerente respected the missionaries who had very much become a part of their community, but who also chose not to wield undue influence over artistic decisions that firmly belong to the Xerente. As Elsen researched the Xerente music world as an outsider, he acknowledged expectations that he would return having helped them create indigenous worship music. While his visits did indeed provide them with a biblical foundation for using arts and affirmed the value of their arts, he discovered that the creation of authentic indigenous music was already happening as they asserted their own agency to name what music was *theirs*.

This process beautifully exemplifies what can happen naturally as a community employs their own agency. Outsiders do well to encourage people toward something new and perhaps closer to the core of a

community's authentic self-understanding, but it is the community's privilege and responsibility to name who they are and what parts of the many surrounding influences authentically reflects their reality.

Human Agency in Brazil— Héber Negrão

In my years of ministry with ethnoarts, I have witnessed various forms of human agency. For example, the Bible translation team for the Paypa people in central Brazil had recently finished translating the Gospel of Luke. They wanted portions of it in an artform to engage the people with the recent work. To help them achieve that goal, I conducted a series of conversations using participatory activities that would facilitate detailed reflection on this project.

The team decided to create a video of the parable of the two builders (Luke 6:46–49) with contextualized visual art. They illustrated a good and a bad house following the cultural construction techniques. After that, we created a short video with those drawings, narrated in Paypa. In the process, the team also devised other goals for that artwork; they wanted to encourage people to trust God. Finally, they planned to create videos with different stories from Luke to share in villages throughout the region.

During a song-writing workshop for the Xerente people in central Brazil, Elsen Portugal and I noticed that the church leaders were hesitant to use the *zâ* (rattle) because of its traditional association with shaman healing rituals. After conversations and Bible studies, the church leaders decided to dedicate the *zâ* in prayer for use only in worship to God and subsequently even took it to other villages to use confidently in worship.





Sometimes, however, people decide to go in a different direction than we expect. Our role as arts facilitators is to point the way of cultural validation, like a flashlight that illuminates the way at night, showing what's ahead. We cannot force people to go in a direction they do not want to go. When this happens, we must “respect the right and capacity of every individual and all communities to shape their own artistic realities,”² as GEN value #4 states.

After walking a group of indigenous leaders in Brazil through a week-long course, “Indigenous Music to the Indigenous Church,” I encouraged them to compose new songs based on their newly translated Bible portions. I planned to record the new compositions so they could take them back to their villages. They hesitated, so I asked what they wanted to do. They preferred to record the existing Western songs of their translated hymnals. So, that was what we did.

In contrast, I conducted the same course in East Timor to a completely different outcome. The 25 seminar participants were from seven of the small country's widely diverse language groups. After quick research on local song styles, they composed songs based on the same context as the songs they chose. The result was seven beautiful and impactful new songs in their language.

² Human Agency, in GEN Core Values, <https://www.worldofworship.org/core-values>



HÉBER NEGRÃO

is the anthropology and ethnoarts coordinator at the Evangelical Missionary Linguistic Association (Wycliffe in Brazil) and he is a board member of the Global Ethnodoxology Network. He has been involved in ethnoarts ministry in

Brazil for 16 years. Currently he is pursuing his PhD in world arts at Dallas International University. His passion is to see every people praising God using their own arts in a culturally appropriate way. He is married to Sophia, and they have two children.

5

Locally-Grounded Methods

GEN favors methods that amplify local agency and creativity.

We encourage the development of a wide variety of arts in the life and worship of the church, acknowledging the importance of local decision-making in the choice of art forms. Given our emphasis on individual and community agency, we choose participatory methods like appreciative inquiry in ethnographic research and sparking creativity. We esteem local categories and practices of artistry as primary, rooting our analyses in the practitioners' worldview. This affirms the communicative, motivational, identity-strengthening power of locally-created expressive arts. In short, we embrace a “Find it—Encourage it” model of arts engagement rather than a “Bring it—Teach it” model.





Scriptural Bridges in Local Histories— Jhonny A. Neito Ossa

I directed a group of Field Methods and Research students into the Yanasha community of Peru. Through fielding questions about their artistic genres, community representatives analyzed their own forms and discovered how unconsciously they had been praising God in life and church. Art was everywhere, even in the lines of their suits and the color of men's and women's clothing. Even the local materials and the way their clothing was made reaffirmed their identity as a people, and itself directed others constantly to praise God.

We were amazed at all we had learned as outsiders, but the Yanasha also reveled in remembering their roots. A villager told us how the ancient Yanashas had worshiped a true God but eventually followed others in worshiping the sun god Inti. Once, the community travelled west to meet the sun. They walked for days down the Andes mountains to the Peruvian coast just to see the sun set beyond Pacific Ocean horizon. They concluded that Inti would always be beyond their reach, whereas the true God of their previous worship had always been present among them, day and night. By remembering their stories and through critical reflection, they affirmed their identity as a people and recognized the power of their local arts to redirect their worship to the true God. Peruvian Yanasha worship Him still.

God is also present in the mythology of another group, the Amazonian Ticuna. Biblical typologies abound within local histories, like a Cain/Abel pair of brothers named Yoi and Ipi, and the *huito*, the sacred fruit of a tree of good and evil. Jesus' call to be fishers of men connects to the story of a god who took fish from the Amazon to become men who inhabited the jungle like the first Ticunas. An eternal city with no pain or suffering also exists beneath the Amazon. Sound familiar? Myths I grew up hearing resonate with those I hear in every community I visit. This connection allows me to dialogue with the Ticuna as they examine their worldview and practices and their relationship to their celebrations at festivals, transition rites, and the daily art that characterizes everything they do.

Deep acknowledgement of Jehovah as the eternal God and Creator of the universe requires deep conversations over time. Here, the beauty of ethnodoxology enters as a discipline which allows us to get to the roots to appreciate the cultural wealth of Amazonian peoples. Discovering how God was already present in this community and how He has been working until now has not only reaffirmed their cultural identity with models of worship typical to the jungle. It has also opened a dialogue to construct local theology from ethnographic, theological, artistic, and missiological study, because within its legends lies even a typology of the Great Commission. The disciple Nathanael wondered what good could come out of Nazareth. The Ticunas should not have to ask, "Can anything good come out of the Jungle?" Like Jesus' response to Nathanael, surely God can say to the Ticunas, "When you were under the *huito* tree, I saw you."



Jhonny A. Neito Ossa
is director of ALDEA,
Asociacion
Latinoamericana
de Etno-artes.

Inclusive Creativity in Worship— Ninoshka Gelpi Salas

As a special education teacher, I always look for new and creative ways for my students to develop life skills. Art plays a crucial role in meeting their need. How can these children with special needs come to know the Gospel and choose to follow Christ as Lord and Savior? And how will they praise Him? How can they be included in the life and worship of the Church? My task is to help local churches to consider realities through conversations, talks, or workshops that allow the whole Body of Christ to worship in community, including special populations.

When I teach the Creating Local Arts Together (CLAT) method in the GEN course “Arts for a Better Future,” I share from my experience as a special education teacher to encourage participants to consider creatively how to engage not only the indigenous ethnic groups but all peoples who do not know God. In this way our students are more open to apply CLAT in community development.

What will it take to reach a people? It will take serious investigative work in ethnographic research and creativity in Bible translation, literacy, multicultural worship, church planting, and discipleship. Encouraging creative thinking is the largest part of my joint ministry with my husband as we teach in Bible translation schools in Argentina, Peru, and Paraguay, in churches in El Salvador, Colombia, and Puerto Rico, and in theological seminaries.

As mobilizers we teach the importance of communicating the Gospel in culturally relevant ways. In our Introduction to Missions course, we encourage students to learn from the mistakes of the past which underestimated local art practices in worship. In local worldviews, the communicative, motivating, and strengthening power of expressive arts, created locally, affirms that local identity.

In this way, as an ethnodoxologist, by combining my profession and my passion for art, I fulfill the purpose of praising God, and inspire others to praise Him by finding their identity in Him and creating from their own local experience for the glory of God. In other words, “Find it and Encourage it!”



NINOSHKA GELPI SALAS

is a special ed teacher with a specialization in Autism and dance and body movement. She finished her master’s studies at Alliance University (Nyack, NY). Together with her husband, Jhonny A. Nieto Ossa, they run ALDEA

(Latin American Association of Ethnoarts).

6

Academic Rigor

GEN carefully integrates insights and methods from the many disciplines that contribute to accomplishing its goals.

We value and develop resources that provide holistic views and positions from a variety of disciplines. Among others, these include performance studies; folkloristics; creativity studies; musicology; orality; anthropologies of arts—music, poetics, choreography, dance, theater, visual arts; along with missiology, worship studies, and other theological disciplines. In our research, writing, and practice we endeavor to maintain high academic standards as well as performances and products that best emulate the creative and representative attributes of the works generated by individuals and communities. Ethnodoxologists need not be professional academics, but they must plan and act informed by rigorous, nuanced, analytical ideas.

Scholarship as Love— Anya Ezhevskaya

Since adolescence, I’ve been trying to combine my faith and my commitment to the life of the mind. This desire took different forms. For example, when I led a Bible study, I dove so deep into the exegesis of the Greek that I lost most members of the group. I went

to a large, secular university but majored in Religious Studies. I marveled at God's revelation in nature by exploring biology and the technical sciences. The list goes on. It all felt somewhat right but also—unsatisfying. When I joined Webster Presbyterian Church (my current church) and the pastor spoke of us Presbyterians “serving God well by using our minds well,” I felt I was on the right path. And when I learned about Dallas International University's PhD program in World Arts, I felt like I had finally found an ideal combination.



The program brings together thorough training of theory and praxis as it pertains to the exploration of ethnic arts around the world and offers the students ample opportunities to apply gained expertise to the furthering of God's kingdom on Earth. Humans across the globe use artistic means to relay the deepest elements of their identity and spirit to each other. From the lullabies a mother sings to her child to the ritual dances that send a loved one off when they die, creative means of self-expression bring individuals together across generations. Significantly, people are often best able to connect and relate to their Creator through the artistic media of singing, moving to music, recitation of sacred words, and more. By learning *how to learn and understand* various artforms from around the world, graduates in this PhD program learn to form connections, build bridges, lift up, encourage, and foreground communities.

Graduates, like myself, can also walk alongside community leaders and help them tap into the power of their arts to reach important community goals.



As I went through the PhD program and am now, having completed it, looking for God's guidance of where to apply my newly gained knowledge, I grow increasingly more confident of this: academic rigor integrated into a grounded faith is a powerful thing. Not only have I been able to use my skills already to do research, publish papers, and speak at conferences, but I have been able to serve as GEN's *Ethnodoxology* journal assistant editor. Most importantly, though, I have understood that to learn about a community's artistic expressions, to talk to individuals, to ask them about their experiences, and to seek to understand the depth of their traditions and cultural wisdom—this is an act of love. This is one way that we show care to each other. Listening and asking questions, leaning into, sitting quietly, reflecting back, and doing so with discipline, scholarly integrity, and commitment to accurate representation—this is scholarship and also, this is love.



ANYA EZHEVSKAYA

is a recent graduate of Dallas International University with a PhD in World Arts. She serves as the assistant editor of GEN's *Ethnodoxology* journal and as a Wycliffe volunteer while continuing her job as a translator and interpreter for NASA's

Johnson Space Center, raising her two teenagers with her husband, and serving as elder at Webster Presbyterian Church. In her free time, she enjoys painting, dancing, climbing trees, camping with her family, eating tasty things, and exploring the world.

Local Arts Training for Pastors in Cameroon and DRC—Roch Ntankeh

Music has always fascinated Roch. For decades, he has studied, taught, and composed local African music. As he entered the arena of pastoral training, he worked with Brian Schrag and others in SIL Cameroon to establish ethnomusicology-based principles for application in the local church. Later, these courses integrated more theology to develop into ethnodoxology to supply the training they needed, that fit the reality and context, rather than Western notation courses. Roch also recognized the need in Cameroon to train church leaders to match the local leadership structure. The top of the pyramid has a voice; the bottom doesn't. So, reaching the person on the top of the pyramid means that you have reached those at the base. Who better to train than future pastors who will go out and lead new churches with fresh ideas?

Roch's courses led him to PhD studies abroad where he wrote on restoration of local arts, and later, the *redemption* of local arts. He says, "Just as our lives were changed when we heard the Gospel, so it is with our lives, our identity, and capacity. As we are new creatures now, so should it be with our arts. Gospel

encounter offers our arts that same new identity and capacity, and our art then belongs to God—our instruments, our genres, everything."

After Roch completed his dissertation, he continued teaching, training, and leading composition workshops and using biblical principles to advocate for traditional music in church. He took opportunities to talk with the Faculty of Theology in various institutions in DRC and Cameroon which paved the way to establish five-day intensive courses. Roch wants local Christians to understand that the Bible has nothing against local genres. His courses survey instruments in the Bible, beginning with Psalm 150. In places like Psalm 103:1, "Praise the Lord, my soul, all my inmost being," the Bible commands our innermost expression of praise to God.

Roch began to translate published resources into French for his pastoral training courses, such as *Music in the Life of the African Church*³ and some articles from *Worship and Mission for the Global Church*⁴ among others. He continues to develop local training material

3 King, Roberta, Jean Ngoya Kidula, James R. Krabill, and Thomas Oduro. 2008. *Music in the Life of the African Church*. Waco, TX: Baylor University Press.

4 Krabill, James R, Frank Fortunato, Robin P. Harris, Brian Schrag, eds. 2013. *Worship and Mission for the Global Church: An Ethnodoxology Handbook*. Pasadena, CA: William Cary Library.



in French. No training existed for Roch as a young church musician to develop his own local arts, only to learn foreign music. He continues to create courses to train both artistic local Christians and church leadership alike. Roch anticipates the day when more robust financial and personnel resources open the way for more widespread and frequent training courses.



ROCH NTANKEH, PhD is an assistant professor at the Cameroon Faculty of Evangelical Theology where he teaches missiology and ethnodoxology. He is also an ethnodoxology consultant for several organizations with which he often leads composition

workshops in Cameroon and French-speaking Africa.

Ethnodoxology in Research and Practice—Melanie Henderson

My journey into the world of ethnodoxology began a few years ago at a weekend workshop, not as an academic pursuit but as training for ministry in a multiethnic society. The two days were designed for local church members and artists. Among other topics, we delved into intercultural and multilingual worship, where ethnodoxologist Ian Collinge shared about his research to help Christian communities who desire to move toward multicultural worship.

Later, as a non-credit participant in the Arts for a Better Future workshop (one of GEN's trainings), I was introduced to the trailblazing research and ministry of Dr. Brian Schrag. The outworking of this research, *Creating Local Arts Together Manual*, and its companion *Worship and Mission for the Global Church: An Ethnodoxology Handbook* (edited by Dr. James Krabill) are practical tools which were informed by academic research and innovative cross-cultural practices. These resources are deeply influenced by the realm of holistic community development work and lessons learned and best practices gleaned from a host of ethnodoxologists.

Now, as a world arts PhD student, I'm learning more about the foundational theories which undergird and help us to be effective as we work among the nations. We look up to scholars in our field, like

Dr. Roberta King, Dr. Jean Kidula, Dr. Jay Moon, Dr. Robin Harris, Dr. Brian Schrag, Dr. James Krabill, Dr. Roch Ntankeh, and a host of the movement's global leaders. Their research and contributions have led to the design and development of many resources and tools for ethnodoxologists, including ways to see and learn more about cross-cultural work and creativity—especially those arts that are unique to a community but unfamiliar to us. I have seen the value of this research for contributing to the restoration and redemption of endangered cultural forms that are part of God's redemptive analogies and grace within cultures.

I cherish the interest and concern for the whole person and the whole community exhibited by the network of ethnodoxologists and its high value for interdisciplinary academic research and practice. We aim to recognize and explore (among other things) the connections between neuroscience and worship; the arts in worship beyond music; sociological and anthropological aspects of global migration; refugee movements and worship; trauma healing; and peace studies. We worship together, and aim that our academic pursuits also be submitted as acts of worship in our longing to see God's kingdom here on earth as it is in heaven.

I have seen firsthand the commitment of the network of scholars and practitioners in sharing best practices and new theoretical insights, as we continue to explore the connections between worship and all of life, especially as displayed through culture and the arts. This commitment is evident not only through publications and at academic conferences worldwide, but also as shared worship with local churches and communities, and as mentorship and encouragement of Jesus-worshippers locally and worldwide.



MELANIE HENDERSON

Melanie is a musician and arts advocate who has served cross-culturally in Southeast Asia and North America. As a multi-instrumentalist and church worship facilitator, she has served with congregations in Malaysia, Cambodia, and the US.

Confident Hope

GEN embraces holistic visions of better futures that all communities can work toward.

Ethnodoxologists nurture spaces that are life-enhancing and where people can imagine and plan for better lives. Kinds of ‘better’ include having more justice, health, artistic diversity, love, well-being, creativity, vibrant churches, vital spiritual formation, and awe-inspiring, transformational adoration of God.

Healing and Resilience in Hong Kong—Hoiling Poon

Two new training courses recently began in a Hong Kong seminary: Theory and Practice of Ethnodoxology, and Arts in Trauma Healing. Students in both courses discover what God has already given us in our hearts to use for God’s glory.



The Ethnodoxology course happened in a time of uncertainty, which pandemic restrictions exacerbated. Students shared with voices full of emotion how meaningful it was to use their artistic gifts to serve God’s kingdom. Sweet words also evoked grief that the church hadn’t yet accepted such willing and gifted servants, but the time seems to have come for a fresh wind to blow in the church in Hong Kong.

Arts in Trauma Healing also debuted in Hong Kong’s historical moment of economic hardship, social upheaval, pandemic confusion, and protests that jailed many church members and those connected to them. Amid Hong Kong’s shared suffering, the church has an opportunity to connect those suffering to Christ through the Gospel proclamation.



Christian psychologist Diane Langberg⁵ has suggested that the 21st Century's next big mission field lies in trauma healing. God has laid on many hearts in Hong Kong a shared desire to do something, as the church, to bring people to experience God in suffering. We've long believed God is our healer, yet the church hasn't been a place where people experience that healing. In a critical time of suffering, God has put this faith in the hearts of many. Christians want to bring people to experience God's healing.



Arts in Trauma Healing course participants represented community workers from the areas of social work, arts, therapy, ministry, and medicine, all who themselves experienced healing during their training and want to serve the church. They eagerly embraced the notion that God has created us with a healing mechanism. When trauma shuts down logic verbal centers, artistic creativity can unearth pathways to healing. Facilitators walk through this process with co-journeing groups. The first training filled up quickly and a second is already scheduled. Over half of the first participants are now also being trained as facilitators. The need is great, and people are responding. As more people share their local healing stories, we can develop and contextualize the material even more to the Hong Kong setting.

We can be confident with hope in God. God hasn't given up on Hong Kong, despite the shared difficulties. He is still working here, still calling people to respond to Him. Many in this new field of ethnodoxology have pioneering hearts to prepare the way for others. These courses can help activate people's God-prepared healing mechanisms with creativity and community,

⁵ Langberg, Diane. 2015. *Suffering and the Heart of God: How Trauma Destroys and Christ Restores*. Greensboro NC: New Growth Press, p. 15.

exploring new ways to see God's hope and healing in a suffering world. So, we can be confident that we can face challenges and suffering in our lives. We are well-equipped. We must discover this gift in our lives. We have confidence to walk with God to face the challenges for which God has prepared us.



Hoiling Poon

is an Ethnodoxologist and PhD candidate in World Arts who strives to inspire and equip Asian churches and artists to embody and contextualize kingdom values into their worship and ministry. Alongside teaching intercultural studies, she enjoys singing,

Chinese calligraphy, and art jamming with her nine-year-old daughter.

Middle Eastern Hospitality and Shalom— Jaewoo Kim

I first met Daren and Chadi at The Proskunee School of the Arts in Clarkston, Georgia—a school that provides a safe and creative space for the children and youth in our town. Daren and Chadi were living in Saudi Arabia when the civil war broke out in Syria in 2011. Soon they came to the United States and resettled in Georgia as asylees. They found our ministry's small arts school in Clarkston, Georgia, a city known as the most diverse square-mile in the U.S. for its accumulated number of refugees and immigrants resettled during the past 30 years. Here, the presence of many others from diverse backgrounds helped Daren feel safe enough to serve as a volunteer voice teacher. Here, it was normal to hear heavily accented English. This space allowed and encouraged people to bring their cultural and artistic expressions. No one had to leave their culture at the door.



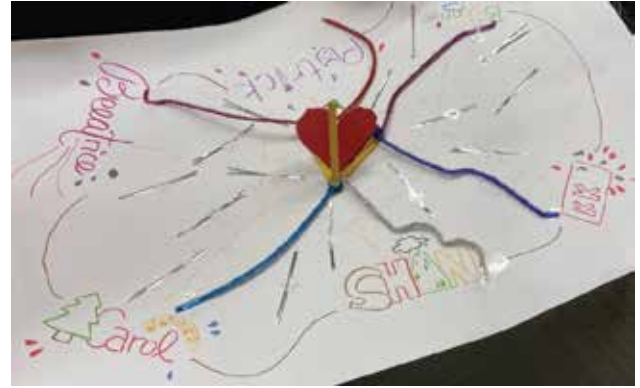
Then I met Chadi, Dareen's husband, who was also an excellent musician and worship leader. They started to come to our weekly worship gatherings and soon our community was singing Arabic songs. When they found people in our community were open to learn and receive from them, they were eager to teach us not only songs but dance and other arts too. The more we spent time together, the more I became fascinated by their rich Christian history and tradition from Damascus, Syria. They shared story after story about abundant church life in the Middle East and often demonstrated their radical hospitality by welcoming people into their home with an overflowing feasting table.

We ended up writing many songs together in multiple languages including Arabic. When they read Scripture, pray, and sing in Arabic, they bring much more than just another language: a faith resilient to persecution, radical hospitality toward strangers with the aroma of a never-ending bounty of Mediterranean food.

When we co-write songs together, Dareen and Chadi often say *salam*, an Arabic word for peace. At first, they came to us as guests needing our safety and hospitality, but at some point, they became our host, serving us with their abundant cultural resources. In an authentic co-creating space, the host becomes the guest, and the guest becomes the host. As reciprocal exchanges occur, often mutual transformation follows.

Jessie Tang, a British-born Chinese ethnodoxologist, says it well: "As God's people learn from one another, they also partake in one another's cultural expressions, including singing each other's songs, to create an organically evolving community, where when one

member enters, the whole culture changes."⁶ Because Dareen and Chadi became a part of us, now our whole community longs more for *salam*, and we've learned to worship the Prince of Peace with them.



Jaewoo Kim is a multi-cultural worship leader and songwriter. He serves in network relations and ministry development at Proskuneo Ministries which aims to bring nations together in worship on earth as it is in heaven. Jaewoo lives in Clarkston, Georgia, where

over 60 languages are spoken in a 1.5 mile radius.

Memorial Art—Lydia Hreniuc

On December 21, 1989, anticommunist demonstrators flooded into Piața Uniri, or Union Plaza, in Cluj-Napoca, Romania. Within minutes, two army platoons arrived on-site and blocked the plaza's entrance. A small group of men addressed the soldiers: "We're unarmed, as you can see. Shoot if you want!" And the soldiers did. Twenty-six men and women died in Cluj that day, another 57 wounded. The following day, a similar revolt began in Romania's capital city, Bucharest—one that would end in the overthrow of Nicolae Ceausescu, the communist dictator, and his regime.

In 2003, sculptor Liviu Mocan was commissioned to design a memorial in honor of the lives given during the 1989 Anticommunist Revolution at Cluj-Napoca.

⁶ Tang, J. (2021) S4E3: It's rightly uncomfortable—with Rev. Anna Poulson by A Cross Culture. (online) Available at: <https://anchor.fm/acrossculture/episodes/S4E3-Its-rightly-uncomfortable---with-Rev-Anna-Poulson-e14gl20> [Accessed 22 May 2023].

Mocan created seven pillars of bronze, cast to resemble abstract silhouettes—silent and wounded—standing among the living. An inscription accompanies the pillars: “There is no greater love than to lay down one’s life for one’s friends.”

The Shot Pillars preserve the memory of that tragic day, both the purpose for which those men and women stood in unity and the oppositional brutality they endured. Weathered and tactile, the pillars’ textured bronze appears simultaneously resilient and fragile. Each is marked by symbolic bullet wounds—not concealed but commemorated within the everyday life of the city.

“We have them as martyrs,” Mocan says of the victims, “and, like them, we also have Christ as a martyr.” Their acts of sacrifice are a shadow of One greater. Though crucified, the Son of God lives and by His Spirit the scars of the past are being transformed.

The places we inhabit are intricately interwoven with our personal and communal identities. As Christians, we remember the scars of the past with expectant hope because we, and the places we inhabit, are testaments of God’s recreating work. Memorials, like the Shot Pillars, are an invitation for us to see the world for what it truly is and what it will one day become.



LYDIA HRENIUC’s parents immigrated to the United States less than a decade before the revolution in Romania. She grew up with many stories from that time. Lydia is currently a PhD in World Arts student at Dallas International University and an

adjunct professor in California Baptist University’s architecture program. She also serves with SIL International and is a GEN member. [MFI](#)



The *Future* of Ethnodoxology in Arts and Mission

Ethno-WHAT? In the early 1990s, the term *ethnodoxology* did not exist. Coined by Dave Hall, its first appearance in print was in September 1997.¹ As we launched the organization that became the Global Ethnodoxology Network (GEN), many people asked us, “Why would you want to use a word no one understands to describe what you do?” Our answer? We needed an innovative word for this discipline emerging from the intersection of missiology, ethnomusicology, worship studies, Scripture engagement, linguistics, and other disciplines.

The growth of the term’s use in the last 20 years has vindicated that choice. In the last year, for example, 2.5 percent of the people who found the GEN website (worldofworship.org) did it by googling the term *ethnodoxology*. And there were 1,367 views for the “What is Ethnodoxology” page (out of 11,835 total views for the site).² The chart below from the N-gram site shows the growth of the term in publications archived by Google books through 2019.³ It is clear from the trajectory that, although it took almost a decade for the term to make its way into print, the second decade demonstrated exponential growth.

1 The term ethnodoxology first appeared in print in an editorial by Brian Schrag in EM News Vol. 6, No. 3, September 1997 (a quarterly put out by the SIL Ethnomusicology and Arts Group).

2 Many thanks to GEN’s social media and website analytics specialist, Lindsay Oakley, for these statistics.

3 To check on an updated database at the N-gram site, go to <https://books.google.com/ngrams/> and insert the term *ethnodoxology*, adapting the dates to show 1997 to the present. This chart was generated with a smoothing factor of one, reflecting data only through 2019 but showing a clear trajectory.

In addition to an upsurge in the use of the term, the ethnodoxology *approach* has spread during that time as mission agencies, non-profits, and training institutions begin to incorporate ethnodoxology values into their thinking, methods, and curricula.

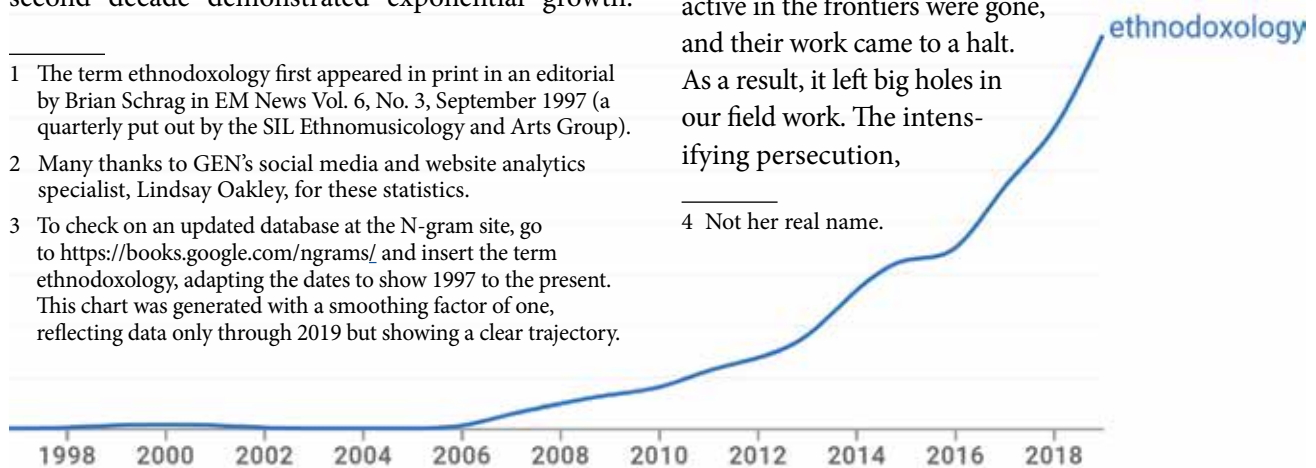
Given the rise of ethnodoxology values and methods and its expansion into the beginnings of a global movement, we wanted to explore this question: **What might be the future of ethnodoxology as it intersects with arts and mission?** Interviews with some global leaders in the GEN network revealed vibrant hopes and dreams for the next decade of ethnodoxology’s future. What follows is an exploration of some of their ideas.

Ethnodoxology and Social Innovation in Restricted Countries

Grace⁴ returned to her country in East Asia after receiving graduate level training in an ethnodoxology-related degree. She told me, “When I returned to my country, I was hit by a new reality. As the restriction of religious freedom tightened, many well-trained expats who were active in the frontiers were gone, and their work came to a halt.

As a result, it left big holes in our field work. The intensifying persecution,

4 Not her real name.



however, was showing us that the traditional approach was not working. Instead, innovation was urgently needed. In the face of these new challenges, I felt a push from the Lord to explore a sustainable approach to mission.”



As Grace responded in obedience, the Lord opened an opportunity to work with a non-believing social enterprise centered on bringing ecological, economic, and cultural sustainability to marginalized mountain communities in the region. The people of this region excelled in producing beautiful and complex arts but had little chance to leverage them for financial sustainability. Her colleagues’ business is an example of social innovation (fostering the wellbeing of the community through social enterprise).⁵

Grace’s colleagues renovated some traditionally built architectural spaces that had become dilapidated, converting them into a school that soon began to attract students from all over the country and even beyond. Grace developed the curriculum for educational packages, allowing these students to study endangered but beautiful forms of Intangible Cultural Heritage (ICH) such as local embroidery styles. She arranged for local artisans to give lessons and teach skills, while incoming students learned how to do research into local art forms. In addition, the students coming also commissioned new works from the artisans.



Grace says, “Inspired by my working experience with the social enterprise, I felt an urge to mobilize the church to get out of the Christian bubble and connect to the society through integral mission. Meanwhile, I started to dream of creating an Arts and Culture Incubator for ethnodoxologists to leverage their training in arts and culture research, while connecting the needs of society to the market and providing economic thriving for communities. Along the way, believers can build deep relationships with people in communities where normally they would not be welcome. Grace hopes that this “Arts and Culture Incubator” model will provide inspiration for other fields to use a social innovation model, especially in restricted areas.

⁵ Social innovation has been defined as “the design and implementation of new solutions that imply conceptual, process, product, or organisational change, which ultimately aim to improve the welfare and wellbeing of individuals and communities.” See <https://www.oecd.org/regional/leed/social-innovation.htm> and this article from the Harvard Business Review: <https://hbr.org/2015/04/the-traits-of-socially-innovative-companies>.

Ethnodoxology and Digitality

John Paul Arceno⁶ notes the future of ethnodoxology will be increasingly digital. He observes worship increasingly happening in hybrid and digital spaces. Furthermore, he believes *digitality* will affect more and more of our work in missions: “Digital communities can be real, embodied cultural people groups. We need to adapt our ministries to indigenously engage with these cultural groups in their own language [of digitality].”

Ethnodoxology Resources and Training in More Languages

Juan Arvelo Montero, a GEN board member from Venezuela serving with WEC’s *Arts Release* ministry in Spain, told me this: “When I discovered ethnodoxology, it was like a new world for me. I thought, *why didn’t I learn about this before?* My vision is to train Spanish-speaking ethnodoxologists. In 10 years, I would love to see a program established to train ethnodoxologists in Spanish and other languages.” He noted that the field of ethnodoxology was mainly developed in English, but now it needs further development in other languages. Juan is dreaming of more than just one program. He said, “I could see this starting at Dallas International University, but it needs to spread to other institutions as well. Initially, we need to provide education at the graduate diploma level, but in the long term we need a doctorate for Spanish speakers to study ethnodoxology.”

Drawing on Michelle Petersen’s article⁷ applying language development principles to the arts, Juan notes all three levels of development she outlines for arts are needed for training initiatives as well: status development, corpus development, and acquisition development. He says, “We need to increase the *status* of ethnodoxology in the Spanish speaking world, we need to create more *literature*, and we need to *train more people*.”

6 John Paul Arceno is a Digital Theologian with the World Evangelical Alliance Mission Commission. He is from the Philippines, now living in New Jersey, doing PhD studies with Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary in Ft. Worth, Texas. He serves with Indigitous (<https://indigitous.org>).

7 Michelle Petersen, “Arts Development for Scripture Engagement,” *Ethnodoxology: Global Forum on Arts and Christian Faith* 5 (2017):A58–86, <https://artsandchristianfaith.org/index.php/journal/article/view/31>.

Juan is already working to partner with Spanish-speaking ethnodoxology colleagues Josh Davis (Proskuneo) and Jhonny A. Nieto Ossa (ALDEA) to plan a Spanish-language online course. Jhonny, a GEN leader from Colombia, also shares Juan’s vision, adding that the future of ethnodoxology will see a growth in workshop facilitators who can function in multiple languages.

Jhonny also dreams of the development of ethnodoxology applications for those with special needs. Other applications of ethnodoxology, such as multicultural worship and multigenerational worship are also growing and promise to play a more prominent role in the future of the field.

Retired professor and GEN Certification Committee member John Pfautz adds this vision for ethnodoxology education: “I envision a course that travels well to various regions of the world that will train teachers in educational centers, churches, and under the baobab tree. This course, adapted for each local situation, should teach appreciation for local arts and music, affirm local efforts, and provide encouragement as well as tools for support of local artists and musicians.”

Ethnodoxology & Polycentric Mission

Elsen Portugal, GEN board member from Brazil with the first PhD in Ethnodoxology wrote, “I believe one of the directions towards which the discipline is going is *polycentric mission* (from everyone to everywhere). Although we do not wish to deny or forget that mission was practiced typically from ‘us’ to ‘them’ for centuries, I believe that, through the interconnectivity of this world, ethnodoxology can truly support the global Church, mutually serving one another and building of the Body of Christ—to everyone from everywhere.” The



board of trustees for the Global Ethnodoxology Network (GEN) already represents this reality (see <https://worldofworship.org/about/board/>), and even the contributors to this issue illustrate the global engagement of its members in ethnodoxology practice.

The implications of polycentrism extend beyond board composition and contributors to publications, however. John Pfautz expressed my own thoughts well when he wrote his dream for the future: “There has been enough buy-in globally that regional leadership in GEN will be mentoring a flourishing group of folks who not only engage via technology, but meeting face to face to share dreams, successes, and challenges unique to specific people in that specific part of the world. Administration, leadership, centers of education, will likely be experienced regionally.” The GEN Board shares this vision and is investing in those leaders already (our “GEN Global Advisory Council”). Their voices are increasingly shaping the future of ethnodoxology. You can meet them at this GEN YouTube playlist, titled “I am an ethnodoxologist.”⁸

Héber Negrão (Brazil), PhD student in World Arts at DIU and GEN board member, integrates many of these ideas above into his vision for the future: “I foresee ethnodoxology becoming a required course in every center for missionary training in the next years. Ethnodoxology is essential to understand cultural ways of worship from different people groups. In the historical moment we live in today, missions are accomplished from everywhere to everywhere, and that scenario is here to stay. The imprint of Western Christianity will gradually abate, however ethnocentrism will continue as a marker of our fallen humanity.

As missionaries from the Majority world take the

⁸ The “I am an Ethnodoxologist” YouTube playlist features the GEN Global Advisory Council and shows the various ways that ethnodoxology ministry is expressed around the globe: <https://tinyurl.com/GENglobaladvisors>.

Gospel to other countries, they will need to know how their intended audience uses their arts to respond to God. And they must resist the urge to use their own artistic expressions and cultural assumptions in their missionary efforts. Given the ruthless effects of globalization and the beautiful diversity God has created in all cultures, I am convinced that ethnodoxology is truly indispensable for the future of multicultural Christianity.”

Where are we headed?

If there is anything the 2020s are teaching us, it is that global trends can be difficult to predict. But the future of ethnodoxology may well include the hopes of these GEN leaders, as we grow into 1) creative models of social innovation and holistic ethnodoxology ministry, 2) embracing digitality while not abandoning our commitment to regional in-person gatherings, and 3) polycentric leadership and teaching staff who provide ethnodoxology learning opportunities in a broad variety of languages in regional centers around the globe.

In the final chapters of the Bible, we see the certain hope of a new heaven and a new earth, in which the New Jerusalem is flooded with the light of the glory of God. Revelation 21 describes the splendor, glory, and honor of the nations (that includes their artistic treasures!) that will be brought as tribute to the Lamb (Rev. 21: 24, 26). With that end picture in mind, we hope you will join us in working toward a future in which communities of Jesus followers in *every culture* engage with God and the world through their own artistic expressions, offering them to the Lord in the worship He is due. 🌍



ROBIN HARRIS, PhD is the president of GEN and chairs the Center for Excellence in World Arts at Dallas International University. She served as the president of the Evangelical Missiological Society from 2020-2022.



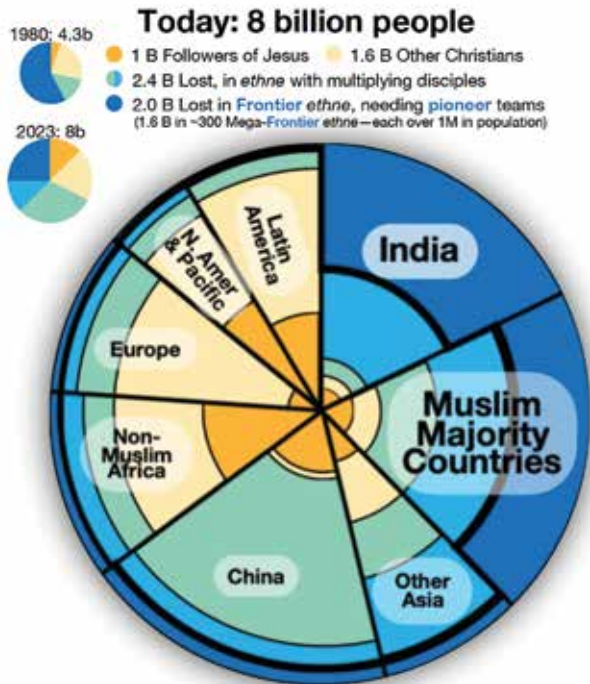
The Astonishing Power & Progress of God's Promise

(Part 2)

By **ROBBY BUTLER**

Robby Butler graduated from Caltech in 1980, shortly after joining the U.S. Center for World Mission. There he worked closely with Dr. Ralph Winter on understanding the barriers to and opportunities for movements to Jesus to fulfill God's ancient promise to bless all *ethne*. For more than a decade Robby has helped popularize and strategize for movements to Jesus, and most recently has worked closely with Dr. Winter's daughter, Becky Lewis, to clarify the remaining need for pioneering mission work among Frontier *ethne*—those Unreached People Groups with virtually no followers of Jesus and no sustained movements to Jesus. Robby and Jackie and their three adult children live in Mount Vernon, WA.

Recap of Part 1: Four thousand years ago, God told Abram—an elderly, childless man—that all of earth's family-lines would one day be blessed through his descendant. God even confirmed this promise with an oath. Two thousand years later, Jesus commissioned and equipped His followers to fulfill this promise. In 1980, this blessing was only spreading among an estimated 40% of humanity. Today—less than 50 years later—disciples are now multiplying among 75% of humanity. ...



Of the total Frontier *ethne* population (2 billion), 80% (1.6B) are concentrated in less than 300 large groups (over 1 million each). Many of these Frontier *ethne* have been fruitlessly “engaged” by Christianity for decades or centuries, providing case studies for how our intuitions and strategies can go wrong.¹

The Rise and Fall of Pioneer Work

In 1792, when William Carey published his *Enquiry*,² roughly three-fourths of humanity lived in *ethne* that still needed **pioneer** work to establish the first multiplying households of believers. Carey's *Enquiry* prompted the formation of many new teams,³ focused primarily on what today would be understood as **Frontier *ethne***. These teams were largely successful, shifting gradually from **pioneer** work to **partnership** with the church movements they started.

200 years later, followers of Jesus in these formerly-pioneer fields came to vastly outnumber followers of Jesus in historically “Christian” lands. And by the 1970s nearly all missionaries worked primarily in **partnership** with existing believers, while 60% of humanity still lived in *ethne* needing **pioneer** work.

Thus, by the 1970s, most *ethne* were again clearly divided between those with a strong Christian

1 Cont. from the July/Aug 2023 *MF*: MissionFrontiers.org/issue/article/the-astonishing-power-progress-of-gods-promise

2 WmCarey.edu/carey/enquiry/anenquiry.pdf

3 RobertBlincoe.blog/the-protestant-mission-ice-age-explained-in-eight-timelines-sixth-of-ten

presence and those still needing **pioneer** work. This time Ralph Winter's analysis and advocacy⁴ led to a new wave of workers to **Frontier ethne**.

By 2018 however, most **pioneer** work to "unreached" *ethne* was again shifting to **partnership** with new believers, just as Winter had foretold two decades earlier:

Frontier [pioneer] Mission outreach will dwindle to the extent that church-planting success is achieved within any one ethnic group. Missionary breakthroughs and the resulting marvelous, growing movements all around the world have diverted attention from additional frontier outreach just because the needs of a growing church do not diminish but seem to demand more and more help—dental work, education, medical attention, pastoral training, etc.

And, churches back home are so thrilled by the appearance of churches on the field that for a while this massive transition seems to be unavoidable. ... But if every mission that breaks through (and most of them have) sits down and attends the new national church rather than continuing its original pioneering function, we will suddenly discover a massive fall off of new cross-cultural outreach.⁵

Several additional factors further obscure the remaining pioneer task:

1. In 1975 the term "Unreached" shifted from "needing **pioneer** work" to less than 1 in 50 being "Evangelical." **This obscured the essential difference between:**
 - Tight-knit **Frontier ethne** still with virtually **NO** followers of Jesus and **NO** sustained movement to Jesus (where **pioneer** teams are still needed).
 - Other "**Unreached**" *ethne*, where believing families are less than 1 in 50, but multiplying and modeling how to follow Jesus in that *ethne*, such that teams can see rapid fruit working in **partnership** with local believers.

2. A subsequent focus on "Unengaged" UPGs further drew attention from very large UPGs with no movements to Jesus—where more **pioneer** teams were still needed—to smaller and smaller "Unengaged" UPGs (where followers of Jesus might be multiplying but still less than 2% of the population).
3. Many churches require the workers they fund to work with local believers, creating an additional barrier to missionaries doing **pioneer** work among **Frontier ethne**.

The Bulk of the Challenge: 300 Mega-FPGs

Dramatic changes have occurred since Carey's and Winter's appeals stirred prayer and **pioneering** teams to pursue God's promise. In less than 250 years, indigenous followers of Jesus have begun multiplying in thousands of *ethne*—establishing movements to Jesus among an *additional* 50% of humanity.

Today the bulk of the challenge is much more focused: 80% (1.6 B) of the global **Frontier ethne** population lives in less than 300 **Mega-FPGs**—each over one million in size. However, these **Mega-FPGs** aren't simply a blank slate waiting to hear about Jesus. Most of them have been offended or alienated from Christianity by historic contact with Christians—the Crusades, Western "Christian" culture, which is the primary global producer of pornography, evangelism aimed at separating individuals away from their families and community, etc. Most of these **Mega-FPGs** have thus demonstrated a determination to protect their families and community from what *they* perceive as a harmful, western influence.

Most **Mega-FPGs** have been fruitlessly "engaged" by Christianity for decades or centuries, providing case studies in how our strategies and efforts can go wrong. This history has resulted in distorted impressions of who Jesus is and what it means to follow Him. And these **Mega-FPGs** are also likely under greater oppression from powers of darkness that have fled the growing light among other *ethne*.

To make matters worse, some **Mega-FPGs** have badly outdated Bible translations, using an ancient script or offensive religious terms of other religious groups. And

⁴ Ralph Winter's 1980 Hidden Peoples poster: JoshuaProject.net/1980pie

⁵ March/April 1998 *MF* editorial: missionfrontiers.org/issue/article/editorial-comment58

yet updated translations are resisted by the economic interests of the publisher. For some **Mega-FPGs**, even the King James English Bible is more intelligible to the few believers than their own centuries-old translation.

Jesus movements are unlikely to be birthed among these **Mega-FPGs** through the traditional ministry strategies that have failed among them in the past. They thus need focused prayer, clear reflection on the challenges and opportunities, and new Spirit-led **pioneering** teams.

Fortunately, as this article goes to press a major consultation is being held on **Pursuing God for Movements among the ~300 Largest Frontier People Groups**. We welcome your retroactive prayers for this consultation to unite mission leaders in a new focus on prayer and collaboration toward the fulfillment of God's promise to bless these **Mega-FPGs**.

New Avenues for Effective Pioneer Work

In past centuries, missionaries fruitfully combined proclamation with practical strategies for blessing the *ethne* they served—with medicine, literacy, education,

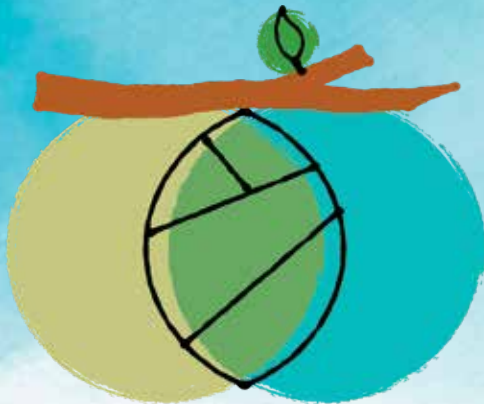
etc. However most **Mega-FPGs** today are based in countries where medicine, literacy, and education are run by the national government and where missionaries are no longer welcome.

Yet God's promise is sure, and He has confirmed it with an oath! The Holy Spirit is awakening many to new avenues for blessing *ethne* in **pioneer** work—through business, addiction treatment, regenerative agriculture, etc. Amidst the destructive agricultural practices and use of harmful chemicals that has swept the globe, and the global fear and challenges following recent lockdowns, microbiome science,⁶ orthomolecular medical science,⁷ and regenerative agriculture⁸ appear to be fruitful avenues for demonstrating the wisdom, goodness, and abundance of God, and equipping movement disciples to focus on multiplying God's blessing—among their own *ethne* and among Frontier *ethne*. 📖

6 OrthoMolecular.org/resources/omns/v19n30.shtml

7 OrthoMolecular.org

8 BackToEdenFilm.com and Farming-Gods-Way.org



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Praying through 12 Common Characteristics¹ of Disciple Making Movements

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24:14 Goal: Movement engagements in every unreached people and place by 2025 (28 months)

By **ROBIN SMITH**

Robin (rls@beyond.org) and her family first moved to India one week before 9/11. After several years of seeing very little fruit birthed from among the lost, the Smiths changed ministry strategies to ones utilized by the Apostle Paul and Jesus Himself. The resulting numbers of new followers of Christ from Hindu, Muslim, and Sikh backgrounds surprised “experts,” both within and outside of the mission world. The Smiths serve with Beyond.org.

¹ These characteristics overlap significantly with (but are not identical to) David Garrison’s “Ten Universal Elements” found in every Church Planting Movement. *Church Planting Movements, How God Is Redeeming a Lost World* (Midlothian, VA: WIGTake Resources, 2004), pp. 171ff.

Lord, lead us as we pray!

1. Extraordinary Prayer. In every known movement around the world, prayer plays a vital role. Prayer must be the foundation for any plan to reach a people group. Thus, the health of the messenger’s personal prayer life is crucial. The new church and its leaders will imitate the prayer life they see in the messenger.

- Pray for God to enable laborers in the harvest fields to walk in intimate conversational relationship with Him, so they bear much fruit that remains, for His glory (John 15:4–8).
- Pray that God’s people will not grow weary in doing good: in this case, the good work of prayer (Matt. 7:7–11).
- Pray that God’s people will have His heart for the lost for whom they pray. This is Jesus’ pattern (Matt. 9:36–38).
- Pray for God’s people to pray boldly, as commanded in Luke 18:1–8.

2. Authority of Scripture. In every known movement around the world, the Bible is the unquestioned authority and guiding force for the disciples—concerning everyday life, doctrine, and policy. This is true even in non-literate cultures, where the Bible is received and shared through oral storytelling.

- Pray that all who labor in the harvest will base their lives on Jesus and His word, being obedient doers, not forgetful hearers or hearers only (James 1:19–25).
- Pray for God’s Word to reach every people group in their own heart language. Pray that the Word would spread rapidly and be honored among all, because God’s Word is the source to thoroughly equip disciples for every good work (2 Thess. 3:1; 2 Tim. 3:16–17).
- Pray for laborers and disciples living and working among least-reached peoples to have their ears and hearts open to the Lord’s Word, so that when He shows them things to change, stop doing, or start doing, they will obey (Heb. 4:12).

3. Abundant Gospel Sowing. In every known movement around the world, messengers and first disciples generously tell others about Jesus. They share boldly about Jesus and His goodness—with their families, neighbors, coworkers, and friends.

- Pray for God’s children living and working among the world’s least-reached peoples, to not grow weary in generously sowing Gospel seed among the lost (Matt. 13:3–8; 2 Cor. 9:6).
- Pray for God’s Spirit to enable all who labor in the harvest to boldly witness—in season and out of season (Acts 4:18–20, 29–30; 2 Tim. 4:2).

- Pray for priority to be given to proclaiming the good news (Luke 15:3–7).
- 4. Intentional Gathering.** In every known movement around the world, lost people are disciplined in groups even before the movement begins, usually before they fully respond to the Gospel. Why? It is more effective to gather-then-win than to win-then-gather.
- Pray for disciples of Jesus to reach out to groups of people, no matter how small, instead of just individuals (Luke 10:5–7). Group decisions fit the common biblical pattern (Acts 10:24, 33, 44, 48; 16:14–15; 31–33) and provide strength (Ecc. 4:12).
 - Thank God that where two or three gather in His name, Jesus is there with them (Matt. 18:19–20).
 - Pray that disciples of Jesus will boldly ask lost people if anyone in their household or community of friends would also like to hear Good News (Acts 16:31–34).
 - Ask God to show His children (including us) who in their lives might like to be disciplined as a group, no matter how small.
- 5. Every Member a Minister.** Movements around the world emphasize and encourage the priesthood of all believers. Every follower of Jesus has gifts that he or she is expected to use, to strengthen others and extend the impact of God’s kingdom here on earth.
- Pray that disciples of Jesus in unreached places will obey His command to make disciples (Matt. 28:18–20). This task is not just for a select few.
 - Pray that disciples of Jesus in unreached places would boldly exercise the gifts God has given them (1 Peter 4:10; Eph. 4:11–12).
 - Pray for the hundreds of thousands of “Paul-Timothy” relationships currently existing in unreached places, among both men and women. Pray that Timothys would quickly become Pauls, and Pauls would quickly become Barnabases (1 Timothy 1:2; Acts 9:27; 11:25–26).
- 6. Bivocational Lay Leaders.** Movements around the world rely on lay leaders who work “normal” jobs in addition to the work of ministry. This helps to prevent leadership shortages caused by relying on seminary-trained or highly educated leaders. Spiritual leaders are developed through on-the-job training rather than institutional learning.
- Pray for God to multiply Christ-following leaders in every time zone (1 Thess. 2:4–12).
 - Pray for God to give energy and strength to His children (Ps. 29:11).
 - Pray for God to give wisdom and diligence to His children as they do various kinds of work (Acts 18:3; Col. 3:23).
- 7. House Churches.** Most of the churches in Disciple-Making Movements are small, reproducible fellowships of 10–30 members. They meet in homes, stores, coffee shops, or under trees—the normal gathering places in their societies. Many small fellowships dispersed throughout a city or community have a greater impact than a large, centralized group.
- Pray for disciple makers to stop inviting lost friends and neighbors to Christian activities, and to instead plant God’s kingdom *within* households of lost people, as Peter did in Acts 10:22–48.
 - Pray for God to multiply and strengthen house churches (simple churches) throughout UPGs, as we see in Rom. 16:5; Col. 4:15; and Philemon 2.
 - Pray Romans 16:17–20 for house churches all over the world.
- 8. Disciples Making Disciples.** Biologically, shepherds can’t produce sheep. Sheep produce sheep. Disciple-Making Movements apply this biological truth spiritually. In the over 1,900 movements that exist today, local followers of Jesus (simple sheep) actively disciple their lost friends and family, planting new churches. How? When lost people become followers of Jesus, they quickly obey His command to produce more “sheep.” Thus, more laborers are found *in* the harvest.
- Pray for God’s people all over the world to follow the Good Shepherd’s example and step out of their comfort zone to pursue lost sheep (Luke 15:3–7).

- Ask God to forgive us, His Body, for relegating His disciple-making command and promise (Matt. 28:18–20) to trained and/or paid professionals. Pray for disciples of Jesus in both reached and unreached places, that we will all believe His promises and personally obey His command.
 - Pray 1 Pet. 2:24–25 for the world’s UPGs.
- 9. Sense of Urgency (Rapid Reproduction).** In movements, maintaining focus on the task is essential. Jesus said the harvest is plentiful, but the laborers are few (Matt. 9:35–38). He then instructed His disciples to pray for more laborers to bring in the harvest.
- Ask God to forgive us, His Body, for getting distracted from the harvest. We spend most of our time, energy, and money where the harvest is already being harvested. Meanwhile, Matthew 9:37 remains true for 42.5% of the people groups of the world (joshuaproject.net).
 - Ask God to give His children (both those living in reached places and those living among the unreached) boldness and courage to sow seed broadly, not sparingly (Matt. 13:3–8; 2 Cor. 9:6).
 - Ask God to raise up many disciples in unreached places who will follow the example set in Mark 5:19.
 - Ask God for Matthew 24:14 to finally be fulfilled in our lifetime.
- 10. Simple Church.** In the New Testament, being a church didn’t involve special buildings, seminary-trained leaders, or institutions. The church was (and is intended to still be) a group of Jesus’ followers who base their lives on Jesus and His Word. This involves encouraging each other to live lives of worship to Him, witnessing to the world, baptizing new followers, teaching and encouraging each other to obey all of Jesus’ commands, and sharing to meet needs.
- Pray for the Spirit to work in every gathering of followers of Jesus around the globe, that Jesus’ light might shine brightly throughout the earth (Luke 11:13).
- Pray that the house churches in movements would follow the example of the first followers in Acts 2:42.
 - Pray for God’s protection over the churches that have started through movements, that they will continue to find unity in humility (Phil. 2:1–4).
- 11. Enduring through Suffering.** Disciple-Making Movements often emerge in places where following Christ is costly and may lead to suffering or even death. Followers of Christ understand that in the world we will have tribulation, but Jesus has overcome the world. Those who bear fruit are pruned, so they can become more fruitful for God’s glory.
- Pray that Jesus’ promise in Luke 22:28–30 would ring loudly in the hearts of all disciples suffering persecution today.
 - Pray for God’s children to endure and have courage to persevere through trials (Heb. 12:1–3).
 - Pray James 1:2–18 for all who are currently suffering for the sake of the Name.
- 12. Signs and Wonders often Accompany Proclamation of God’s Word.** All disciples of Jesus are commanded to proclaim the kingdom in the authority of Jesus (Matt. 28:18–20). In current movements, as followers of Jesus boldly proclaim the Gospel, the Lord very often confirms the message with signs and wonders. This is one way God convicts lost people to believe in Him (Deut. 4:34–35).
- Ask for followers of Jesus in unreached places to boldly pray for manifestation of God’s kingdom, including signs and wonders accompanying Gospel proclamation (Mark 16:20).
 - Pray for God’s children to be bold enough to ask for the “impossible” so that many will believe (Matt. 17:20; John 14:12). 🟩🟩

Unlocking the Potential of Bitcoin for Global Mission

In our ever-evolving world, it's critical that we adapt, innovate, and harness new technologies in light of the Great Commission. One such opportunity lies in the realm of digital currencies, especially Bitcoin, which holds immense potential for the global mission community.

The global financial landscape presents challenges, especially in developing nations. Even simple transactions can be cumbersome, costly, or potentially risky. Mission workers and ministries often grapple with cross-border payments, limited access to funds, and difficulties in raising capital, among other issues. The problem is amplified by the fact that a staggering 87% of the global population doesn't have access to stable currencies like the dollar or euro, with 1.7 billion people unbanked altogether. The regions most impacted by these issues are also the most unreached with the Gospel.

The advent of Bitcoin presents a significant opportunity to overcome these obstacles. Bitcoin is a global payment network and a bearer asset. In the past decade, it has been instrumental in solving numerous financial problems in the Global South.

As a payment network, Bitcoin provides a practically instantaneous, cost-free platform for global monetary settlement, bypassing the need for banks or middlemen. It democratizes financial transactions, enabling anyone with a computer and an internet connection to transfer money worldwide and securely store wealth.

As an asset, Bitcoin, through robust encryption technology, guarantees a safe store of value that is immune to confiscation, censorship, or debasement. Its monetary policy and supply cap are transparent and unaffected

by the political or economic policies of any nation. From zero value at its inception, Bitcoin has grown into a \$550 billion asset class over 14 years, offering people without access to appreciating assets a chance to hold the best performing asset of the past decade.



While the Global Church and the developing world are already actively embracing Bitcoin, global adoption is still in its early stages. The mission community has the unique opportunity to leverage Bitcoin's growth for Great Commission impact by acquiring knowledge and skills to navigate this new financial landscape

and payment technology.

Some faith-driven entrepreneurs and organizations are already pioneering work in this space, exploring Bitcoin's potential for community impact. However, there is a missing link connecting community economic development with explicit Gospel proclamation, discipleship, and church planting—a link we are determined to catalyze.

A small team from the Ralph Winter Launch Lab of Frontier Ventures received an innovation grant from Missio Nexus to explore the potential for utilizing Bitcoin as a tool for global mission. They plan to host design labs in Central America, Africa, and the Middle East to explore Bitcoin-based solutions to the complex economic challenges faced by those living in the developing world.

If you'd like to learn more about this project or participate in a design lab, email us at:

WinterLaunchLab@frontierventures.org. 📧

Spreading the Word

By **Greg H. Parsons** Frontier Ventures staff, currently serving as Global Connections Strategist.

The story in the Bible begins with all-powerful God creating an amazing place of generous beauty, abundance, security, and provision. He creates humans to dwell in that creation *with Him*. He gives them instructions and responsibility to fulfill His plan—for them to be fruitful, multiply, fill the earth, and subdue it.

For reasons I cannot understand, that is not enough for them, so in direct disobedience to God's command for their good, they decide to grasp for more. Death enters the perfect world, and all is thrown into a de-creation—bringing evil, ugliness, scarcity, insecurity, pain, and difficulty.

Yet God does not change His plan to dwell with us nor His plan for us to rule the earth. But there is an unsolvable problem keeping Him distant from us: He is holy and sin must be purged. So, He pursues working through people, empowering them, and sometimes tolerating them, for His purposes.

If we read this story, as if for the first time, we realize in Genesis 3 that there will be *one* who will be able to resist temptation and obey God. We read about those who walked closely with God and the amazing faith they lived out; ultimately, they all failed. The sin that entered the world now stains every person. So, we diligently look for that *one* who is different. Yet even the likes of Abraham... Moses... David... all exercise great faith and failure.

Finally, in the fullness of time (Galatians 4:4), God sends *One* to dwell with humans who *does* live a perfect life and does not grasp for more on His own. He will restore the relationship with God by giving His life as a ransom for many. In Luke 4, after quoting Isaiah 61, that *one*—Jesus, the Son of Man—announces that He is the *one* Isaiah talked about.¹ In some of the most powerful words ever spoken, in 4:21, He says, "...*Today this Scripture has been fulfilled in your hearing.*" Far more than the amazing truth that *the King* has come is that He actually *sees* the fullness of the kingdom, where good news is brought to the poor, the broken hearted are healed, captives are

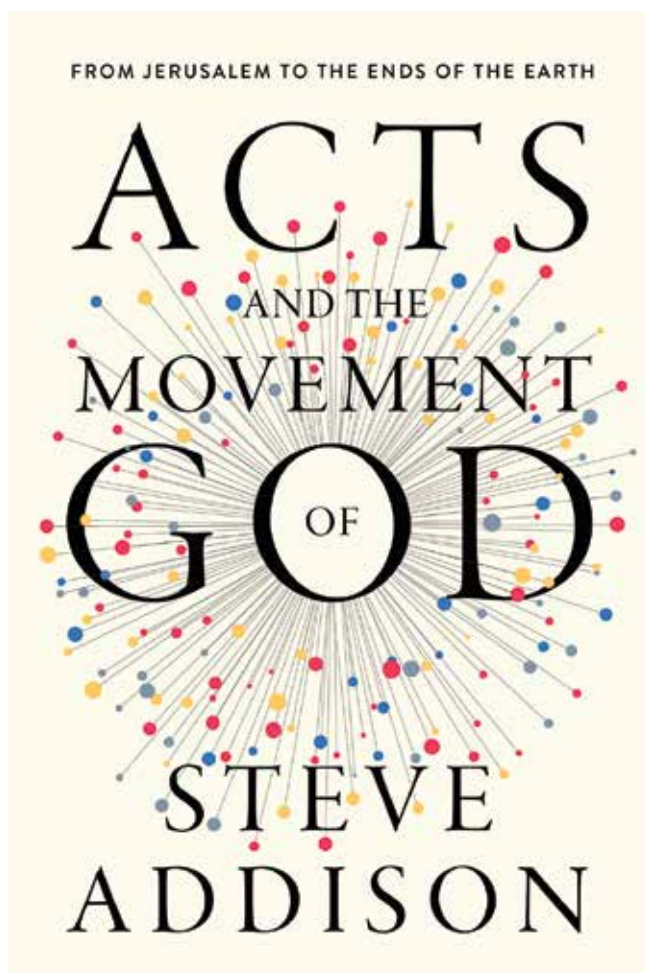
released...mourners are comforted, beauty replaces ashes, oil salves the mourning, praise strengthens faint spirits. The pictures in those words speak to a profound transformation of our world, and Jesus sees it fulfilled even as He is about to live the perfect life that makes it possible! It is a re-creation back out of the de-creation caused by Adam and Eve's sin. And we can see that reversal in Revelation 21–22. There will be a new heaven and earth, the restoration of all things, wiping away of every tear, and most amazing of all:

*"Behold, the **tabernacle** of God is among the people, and He will **dwell** among them and they shall be His people and God Himself will be among them..."*
(21:3).

As believers, sharing the above message of God's desire and plan to dwell with humans is what we are called to do. Telling the story like I have above is one way to present that Gospel; but no matter how we do, the truth of the biblical story must shape our purpose and calling. Yet often that witness gets clouded by other priorities. When people first believe and turn from sin, they become part of the Body of Christ. And, while never perfect, a local fellowship often becomes a "home" for people, a refuge from the world. This can be a good thing. And then, increasingly, we hang around people who agree with us on issues of faith. Pastors strongly encourage church members to "be there when the doors of the church are open" and even be together for Bible studies and prayer groups. Increasingly, churches start schools for Christian (only) students. Our training institutions prepare pastors to serve the church with gifts and calling that tends toward discipling, teaching, and otherwise caring and growing the flock to maturity. These are all good things, or they can be. Yet the focus for announcing that good news *outside* the Body of Christ seems all too rare.

If you are a reader of *MF*, you know the problem is that even *if* believers spread their faith, a huge majority of the non-believers in the world do not live near enough Christians. Estimates say something like 87%+ of the Muslims, Hindus, and Buddhists do not personally know a Christian of any kind. Even if that estimate is way off, it still represents a huge gap in spreading the truth that Jesus, the King of all Kings, has come and will come back. That is why we are here at Frontier Ventures. That is what we focus on in *Mission Frontiers*. ❏

¹ The word "gospel" is used in other literature during the rule of Rome for an announcement of a king.



AN INTERVIEW WITH THE AUTHOR

Why did you write *Acts and the Movement of God*?

There's a gap between the movement of God described in the pages of Acts and our experience, especially in the Western world. Luke wrote Acts to help us bridge that gap.

When Jesus rose from the dead, He encountered a band of disciples who were defeated and disillusioned. People just like us. Jesus took 40 days to turn them into a missionary movement that would go to the ends of the earth. He wants to do the same for us today.

What is the book of Acts about?

Acts is more than a book about the early Church. Acts is about God—Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. Luke

tells us that what Jesus began to do in His Gospel, He continues to do in Acts through His people (Acts 1:1). God is the main character of the story, and His Word and Spirit are the driving force propelling that story forward. Angels appear, prophets speak, prison doors open, houses shake, thousands believe, persecutors fall to the ground, the Scriptures are fulfilled—God directs this mission. He calls His people into what He is doing.

What's God's agenda in Acts?

The Father's plan is centered upon His Son, whose obedience to death brought forgiveness of sins and a restored relationship with Him. Now risen and enthroned, the Lord Jesus rules through the Spirit, who empowers the disciples to proclaim this salvation to every people and every place. At Pentecost, the outpouring of the Spirit reached its climax in the proclamation of the Word to the nations and the formation of the Church in Jerusalem. As the Word goes out, the Spirit forms those who repent and believe into the new people of God who are witnesses to the ends of the earth.

We live in a very different world. Is Acts still relevant?

There's no other book like Acts. It ties together the coming of Jesus and His continuing mission through His Spirit-empowered disciples. Acts is a book about the unchanging God. Its relevance cannot be confined to the past.

The church in every generation must return to the book of Acts and find renewal in its identity and mission or else risk settling down.

You went looking for examples of the patterns of Acts lived out today. What did you find?

I found examples on every continent.

There's a movement of disciples and churches in the red-light district of Mumbai, India. Every year, thousands of mostly Nepali women and girls are trafficked and forced to work as prostitutes. In the past four years, 300 women have been rescued from slavery by the Hilltop of Hope ministry. One hundred of them have been baptized and are following Jesus in simple

churches. The churches are islands of hope, offering a community that accepts them and opens the door to a new way of life.

In the Middle East, two local workers were out praying for needs in a neighborhood controlled by Islamic militants. A man was healed and turned to Christ. Immediately, he started sharing his faith with friends and relatives. He met fierce persecution and had to flee, but everywhere he goes, he leaves behind small bands of new disciples gathering as churches.

What about in the Western world?

In London's financial district, teams are heading out during their lunch break offering prayer and engaging people with the Gospel. About 200 people have come to faith. They meet for discipleship over coffee or lunch and workplace churches are forming and spreading from the city to the suburbs and to other global cities.

There are other examples in the book of movements emerging in Britain, Canada, and the United States.


How were you surprised by Acts?

In Acts, I was surprised how simple and concrete the mission of God is. Acts is all about the spread of God's Word through the disciples, empowered by the Holy Spirit. The messengers are hard pressed, but the Word never takes a backward step. As the Word spreads, grows, and multiplies, the outcome is always new disciples and churches to the glory of God—every people, every place.

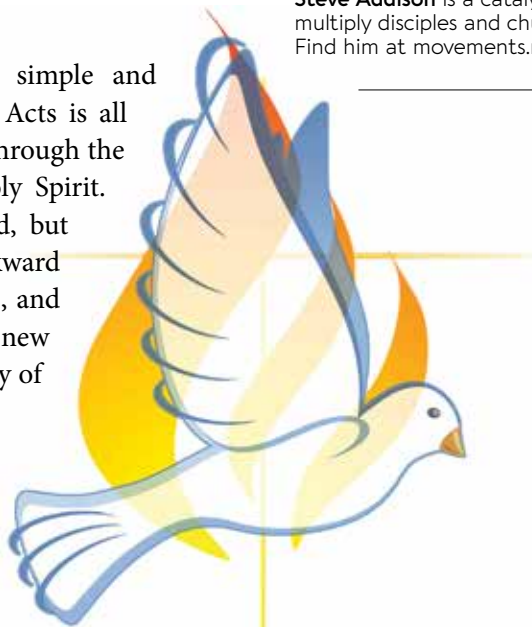
You see this on the day of Pentecost. The Spirit comes in power upon every disciple. The Word goes out and the fruit is disciples meeting across the city. Pentecost is not just the birth of a church but the birth of a missionary movement that is headed for the ends of the earth.

Why aren't we heeding the lessons of Acts?

We all know there's a gap between the movement of God in Acts and our experience. Facing that gap is uncomfortable; it implies radical change in our behavior. So we tell ourselves Acts doesn't apply today. Our world is different. The tension is eased. We measure ourselves with ourselves and refuse to look into the mirror of God's Word.

Acts was written to show us how God fulfills His mission in the world and how we are to play our part. We need to be disturbed about the gap between what we read in Acts and our current experience. Despair is a virtue if it drives us to the sufficiency of God. He wants to inspire us to believe that what He did in Acts, He can do today. Around the world, it's already happening. 

Steve Addison is a catalyst for movements that multiply disciples and churches everywhere. Find him at movements.net.



Priority 15

Mobilizing a New Generation for Hard Places Through Community & Prayer

By DR. KARA GARRISON

Dr. Kara Garrison spent 12 years facilitating Disciple-Making Movements in SE Asia and holds a Doctorate in Transformational Leadership from Bakke Graduate University. She currently serves with Cornerstone International, a mission sending organization (www.cornerstoneinternational.org) and also volunteers with Priority15 (www.priority15.org) and Perspectives (www.perspectives.org).

I didn't expect to be "wowed" when I entered the Priority 15 (P15) Conference this past spring. I was curious, however, and my curiosity led me to interview several participants. The gathering boasted more than 200 young professionals, many of whom were Perspectives alumni. What I discovered was a culture of community and purpose that was strangely similar to the culture my husband and I experienced when we visited the awakening at Asbury University a week earlier.

P15 is a mobilizing entity. Its name comes from Paul's Romans 15 commitment to relay the Gospel to those who have never seen nor heard (Romans 15:21). It exists to motivate, encourage, and collaborate with like-minded individuals committed to the last of the unreached and unengaged peoples of the world.

The P15 community gathers in three ways: an annual conference, weekly prayer groups, and goer cohort groups that meet bi-monthly. The conference is a missional on-ramp for young professionals (in training or in the marketplace) wanting to explore living, serving, and multiplying disciples in strategic restricted-access areas.

The Formation

P15 is the dream-child of a small group of physicians and residency administrators who recognized a different mobilization strategy was required for the aspiring global workers they were mentoring. The typical "go into missions somewhere" approach "was not inspiring prayer or actual going" co-founder J explained.

Co-founder T said, "Several of us who had developed friendships and collaborative relationships began talking in 2013, 'Wouldn't it be cool if we could get our students together for a weekend to help them collaborate and encourage each other?'" J expressed a hope for their mentees to consider forming teams to go to one of the prioritized hard to reach places.

What I discovered was a culture of community and purpose that was strangely similar to the culture my husband and I experienced when we visited the awakening at Asbury University a week earlier.

They expected 20–30 medical students to attend the first gathering. "We didn't advertise, but relied on word-of-mouth, and 120 missional trainees and faculty showed up from eight US cities," T recalls, still incredulous. He continued, "We didn't know much about the unreached people groups we adopted, but we kept researching, praying, and casting vision. People groups were adopted, missional trainees started language classes, and eventually became goers to closed countries."

Consultant and keynote speaker, Nathan J'Diim, provided an outsider's glimpse of his early days with P15 Organization. "I'm an unlikely guest at the P15 Conference," he began. Grinning, he shared his first exchange with P15 administrator, J:

“The first time I was invited to speak, I wrote back, ‘I’m not your guy.’ I let him know that I am only interested in groups willing to focus on skills that lead to movement!”

J wrote back, “That is what we want P15 to be.”

J’Diim confessed, “This gathering has become a very attractive place for me.”

Shared belief in God’s worthiness to be worshiped by all the world’s people groups was evident among several conference attendees.

Community

Whether I spoke to attendees of the P15 conference formally to interview or informally in a prayer group or during a coffee break, the sense of community was evident. Four impressions that most struck me were a sense of horizontal relationships, shared purpose, belonging, and shared risk.

Sense of horizontal relationships

There was no dominant voice for the conference; leadership was shared. There were no flashy musicians. Both men and women spoke from the stage and in the breakout sessions. Young parents attended the sessions sitting in the back with their children playing around them. Multiple ages and ethnicities were present.

Sense of shared purpose

Shared belief in God’s worthiness to be worshiped by all the world’s people groups was evident among several conference attendees. One pregnant mother, who was preparing her family for an overseas move excitedly explained, “When I’m here, I know I’m with people who believe Jesus is WORTH it!!!”

Sense of belonging

S explained that he and his wife appreciate being with “people who talk our talk. We need people who think our passions are ‘not crazy.’” Indeed, on three occasions, I heard different individuals express that the conference was “a place where people don’t think I’m crazy!”

R, who is preparing to go to one of the 15 prioritized places, shared, “It’s always encouraging to be with like-minded people, because it can feel kind of isolating when you are pursuing this alone, but we are united in purpose.”

Sense of shared risk

Rick Donlon, a missional physician, led two break-out sessions titled, *Suffering and Missions: Counted the Cost?* I attended the second session along with at least 40 others. When the facilitator asked, “Why should good people expect suffering?” a young woman several rows behind me shouted, “Because we serve a suffering Savior!”

There was hushed reverence over the room. I was reminded of a young mother I had spoken with earlier in the day who said, “I look around and I see beauty in a room full of people willing to go and possibly not come back... people here don’t just talk the talk.”

Teasing out organizational culture

After the conference, I followed up with future goers, mobilizers, and prayer warriors to gain further understanding of the P15 culture.

The topic that came up most frequently was prayer. This sparked my interest: How was prayer commitment sustainable beyond the conference itself? Mission mobilizer Ryan Shaw explains attendees of globally focused gatherings typically return home only to be deflated. “Their vision for the nations is dulled because there is no ongoing mission fuel at the local-ministry level.”¹

P15 leaders avoid this problem by inviting attendees to be involved in a weekly prayer group. P and her husband have been in one for more than two years. “We have been involved in churches but...involvement in the unreached wasn’t even on their radar,” she shared. The P15 prayer groups keep potential goers’ visions from dulling.

On the P15 website, two types of prayer groups are described:

Priority15 Prayer Teams meet virtually once a week for 30 minutes to pray the Scriptures over the P15 unreached regions of the earth.

Priority15 Goer Cohorts are for those focused on leaving their homeland as long-term career goers to the unreached within the next five years. We are all active on a weekly Priority15 Prayer Team and we meet virtually every two months.²

1 Ryan Shaw, “Developing Mission Mobilization Movements in Local Ministries,” *Mission Frontiers*, Nov/Dec 2022, 9.

2 <https://priority15.org/partner>

So, what is P15 doing right?

When I asked conference attendees what they perceived as pillars of P15, responses always emphasized prayer and/or a faithful, like-minded community. P offered three: “I think ordinary people investing time in prayer; praying for God’s glory to be made known where it is not yet known; and believing that interceding for the nations changes history.”

A and his wife are both in a prayer group and Goer Cohort. A and M say, “Prayer is a priority for us and praying through Scripture regularly with others for unreached people certainly is in line with what we feel God made us for.” A second priority is “meeting regularly with others who also believe Jesus is worth everything, including moving to difficult places and even suffering to make disciples.”

S, a preparing goer, explained, “P15 has a solid foundation because they seek to be a prayer movement more than being a people movement.” He enthusiastically shares, “In Luke 10:2, Jesus says the harvest is plentiful but workers are few, and praying is the answer to that problem! Our tendency is to start making things happen, but *praying* is to be our first

response!” Smiling, he adds, “Although many of those prayers conclude with us asking, ‘*What if we are the answer to our own prayers?!*’”

A writes, “Since we were still in the U.S., I felt I needed fellowship and encouragement to continue focusing on unreached people and preparing to go.” M also expresses gratitude for their praying community and the relationships that are built through shared prayers and goal setting for Scripture memory. “Without prayer, strongholds cannot be broken. We pray for breakthroughs, laborers to be sent, and current laborer requests. These groups are so worth it.”

In Summary

M summarizes the emerging culture I found within P15 best, “We all have this innate desire to be a part of a grand adventure, this bigger story that God is writing, and we recognize that ‘missions as usual’ isn’t going to get us to these remaining people groups. Prayer is the strategy, and any of us going is just a bonus.” Prayer and consistent community with others who believe Jesus is worth everything are the distinguishing values of the P15 culture. I didn’t expect it, but I was wowed by a new generation of passionate followers of Jesus. 📌

ISFM

International Society for Frontier Missiology

2023

Formation for the Frontier

The intersection of education and mission produces a maze of models and practices.

This year’s EMS/ISFM conference will offer different perspectives from the academy, the church and the field practitioner.

The ISFM track of presentations will focus particularly on the formative principles, structures, and curricula required for effective service in frontier contexts.

Plenary Speaker:

Dr. Paul Cornelius, President, William Carey Int’l University

“Rescuing the Mind from Academics:

A South Asian Perspective on Education for Contemporary Engagement”

October 13–14, 2023 • New location: Dallas Theological Seminary



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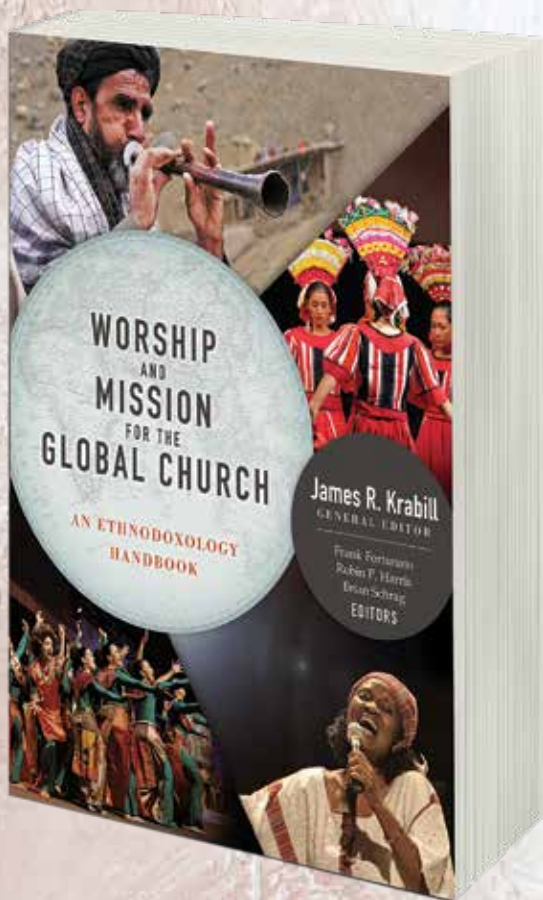
Educating for contemporary mission

Conference details at www.emsweb.org • Online or in person • Registration is open

Worship and Mission for the Global Church An Ethnodoxology Handbook

James R. Krabill, Frank Fortunato, Robin P. Harris,
and Brian Schrag (Editors)

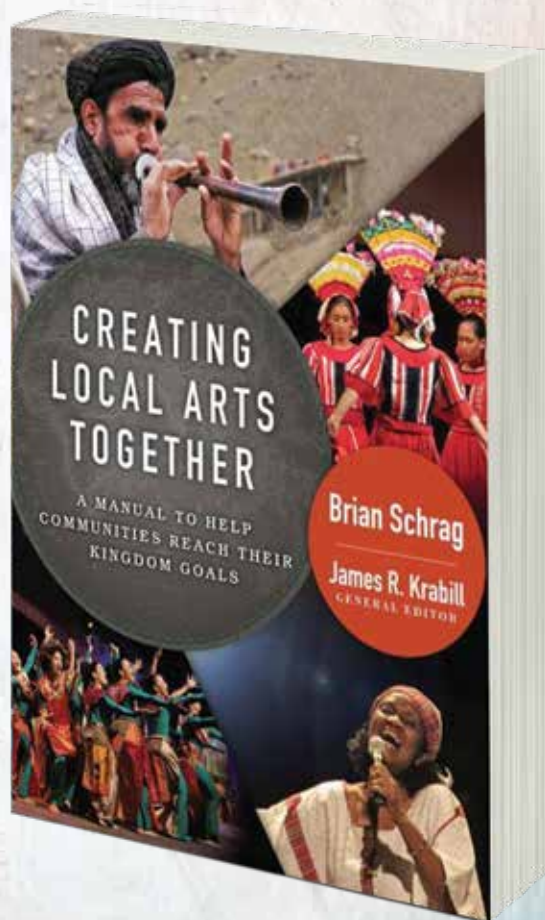
Worship and Mission for the Global Church offers theological reflection, case studies, practical tools, and audiovisual resources to help the global church appreciate and generate culturally appropriate arts in worship and witness. Drawing on the expertise and experience of over one hundred writers from twenty countries, the volume integrates insights from the fields of ethnomusicology, biblical research, worship studies, missiology, and the arts.



Creating Local Arts Together A Manual to Help Communities Reach Their Kingdom Goals

Brian Schrag (Author), James R. Krabill (Editor)

Creating Local Arts Together is a manual designed to guide an individual or group into a local community's efforts at integrating its arts with the values and purposes of God's kingdom. The practical, playful text reduces experience-based scholarly insights gained from multiple decades of incarnational ministry around the world into a flexible seven-step process.



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Community Arts for God's Purposes How to Create Local Artistry Together

Brian Schrag and Julia Rowe

People communicate by speaking words in over seven thousand languages around the world. They also sing, dance, paint, preach, dramatize, and design communication that enlivens heart, soul, mind, and strength. God gave every community unique gifts of artistic expression to enable its members to proclaim the Truth and to bring healing, hope, and joy to others in the fallen world in which we live.

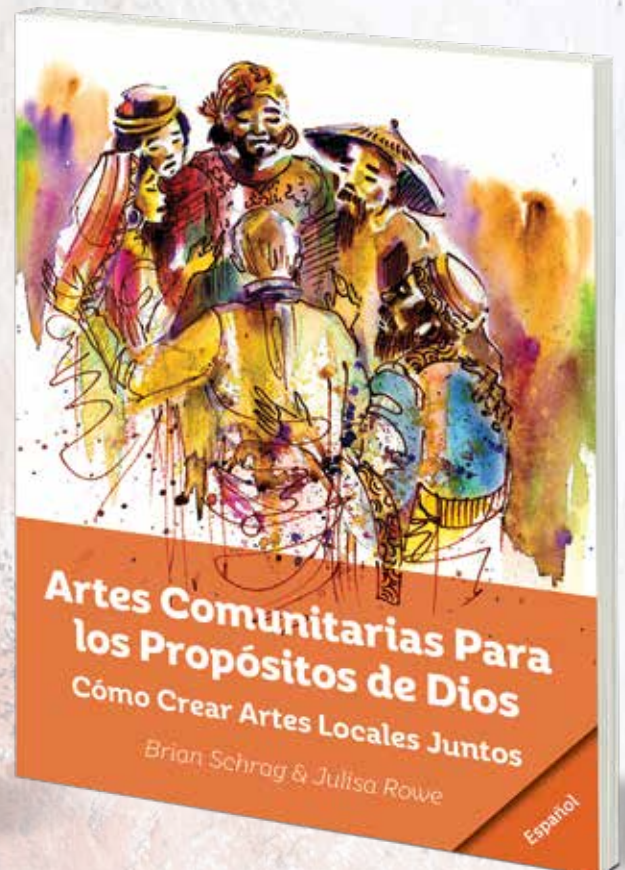
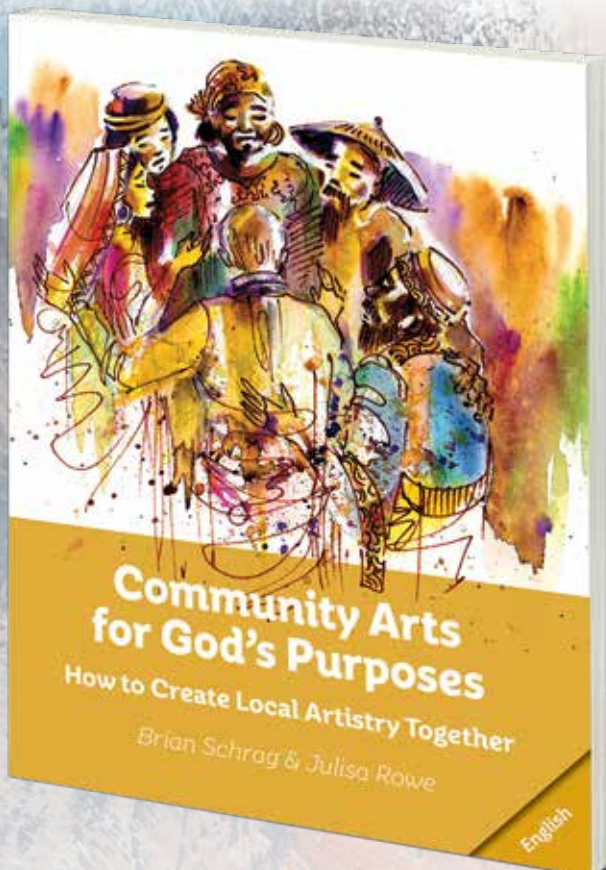
Community Arts for God's Purposes highlights the CLAT (Creating Local Arts Together) method, a seven-step process that inspires artistic creativity and collaboration with local musicians, dancers, storytellers, actors, and visual artists. In this manual, the arts are treated as special kinds of communication systems, connected to specific times, places, and social contexts.

Contributors apply expertise from multiple academic disciplines, such as ethnomusicology, performance studies, anthropology, biblical studies, and missiology.

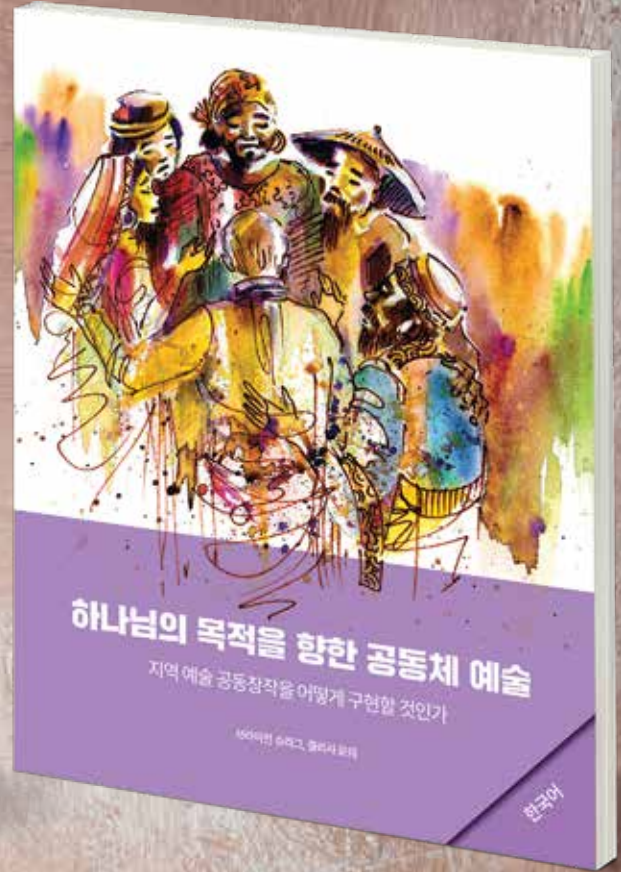


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7 Languages with more on the way!



Scripture references are from the *English Standard Version* (ESV). Images in this guide (marked with an asterisk *) come from the International Mission Board (IMB). We thank the IMB for their exquisite images, taken by workers in the field.

■ 1 Western Cham in Malaysia

The Western Cham are survivors from the Champa Kingdom, which was prominent from AD 2-1471. When the Vietnamese invaded their kingdom, the majority of Champa aristocrats managed to flee to Cambodia while the poorer ones remained in Vietnam. Some have migrated to Malaysia for work in construction, fishing, and rice cultivation. The Western Cham are Muslim; this is their identity as a people. There is much family pressure to remain in the Islamic fold.

But for you who fear my name, the sun of righteousness shall rise with healing in its wings. You shall go out leaping like calves from the stall. —Malachi 4:2

- Pray that this people group would fear the name of the Lord and experience His healing.
- Ask God to touch their hearts, so they will crave fellowship with Him.
- Ask God to help them realize they need a savior.
- Pray for the Lord to move powerfully in their communities.

■ 2 Muslim Teli in India

The Teli is a community that presses mustard or sesame oil. In India, they can be Hindu or Muslims. Some are landless farmers. It is very difficult for Muslims to listen to someone who tells them that Jesus Christ is essential for salvation. They have been taught their entire lives that the way to please God is through obedience to the teachings of Mohammed.

But he answered, It is written, Man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word that comes from the mouth of God. —Matthew 4:4

- Pray that today's people group to learn and understand that the Bible comes from the mouth and mind of the one, true God.
- Pray for the Lord to thrust out loving workers who will not stop until Teli Muslim leaders have heard of the saving power of Christ.
- Pray for a spiritual hunger and a desire for the "oil" of the Holy Spirit to guide their families.

■ 3 Sikh Valmiki in India

Sikhism came out of Hinduism at the time of the European Protestant Reformations. It is a monotheistic faith with belief in one God, not the many gods of Hinduism. Surprisingly the Indian Constitution constitutes it as a Hindu sect along with Jainism. It has its own scriptures and places of worship. Valmiki is a caste that claims descent from Valmiki, the writer of one of Hinduism's epic writings.

The people dwelling in darkness have seen a great light, and for those dwelling in the region and shadow of death, on them a light has dawned. —Matthew 4:16

- Pray for this people group to see the light of Jesus Christ.
- Pray for the spread of Jesus gatherings and power encounters among Valmiki Sikhs.
- Pray for house churches to spread into rural areas where the Gospel is often weakest.

■ 4 Waza in India

Waza refers to a caste of caterers who specialize in cooking for large functions. They are accepted by Muslims and Hindus as well as all other religious communities of India. This Muslim people group lives primarily, if not exclusively, in the highly unreached far northern state of Jammu and Kashmir. Church functions and weddings could hire Waza caterers, develop friendships and expose them to the Gospel.

Blessed are the poor in spirit, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven. —Matthew 5:3

- Pray that this people group to recognize their own spiritual bankruptcy and come to Christ for the riches of His forgiveness.
- Pray for the Holy Spirit to penetrate the Waza community in a powerful way, leading to healings and other examples of His power and goodness.
- Pray for Waza household fellowships and Bible studies to spread throughout Kashmir.

■ 5 Karingani in Iran

The Karingani are a minority language group in Iran. They practice Shia Islam mixed with animistic beliefs in spirits and sacred groves, used for spirit worship. They fear the Red Woman, who is responsible for infant and maternal mortality.

You are the light of the world. A city set on a hill cannot be hidden. —Matthew 5:14

- Pray for this people group to become a light to the world reflecting the goodness and grace of Jesus Christ.
- Pray the Holy Spirit prepares them for a Christ encounter.
- Pray for them to find Jesus to be the only way to be protected from the spirit world.
- Pray for a people movement among them that will extend to others.

■ 6 Khalaj in Iran

Did you know there are Turks living in Iran? The Khalaj are such a group, and they speak an ancient dialect of Turkish, and their name means “to stay hungry.” Unlike most Turks, they are Shia Muslims.

Beware of false prophets, who come to you in sheep’s clothing but inwardly are ravenous wolves. You will recognize them by their fruits. Are grapes gathered from thornbushes, or figs from thistles? —Matthew 7:15-16

- Pray that the Lord gives this people group the discernment to recognize false prophets and the grace to know the true Prophet, Priest, and King, Jesus Christ.
- Pray for Iranian Christ followers to reach these Turks.
- Pray for Bible translation, Christian literature, and media to become easily accessible to them.
- Pray they grow weary of the false righteousness of Shia Islam and find truth in Jesus Christ.



■ 7 Ucayali-Yurua Asheninka in Brazil

The Ucayali-Yurua Asheninka live a subsistence lifestyle. To make matters worse, their land is often exploited by loggers and other outsiders. Animism still has a strong grip on the lives of the Ucayali-Yurua Asheninka. Christianity is often viewed as the religion of those who wish to use them, so they want nothing to do with it.

And do not fear those who kill the body but cannot kill the soul. Rather fear him who can destroy both soul and body in hell. —Matthew 10:28

- Pray for believers in today’s people group to be courageous in their witness for Christ and fear God, not men.
- Pray for medical missionaries to offer medical treatment and a chance to see living Christianity in practice.
- Pray for the Lord to improve their lives physically, economically, and spiritually.
- Pray for the Holy Spirit to prepare their hearts to hear of the savior of all mankind.

■ 8 Embera-Baudo in Colombia

The Baudo is a subgroup of the greater Embera people. They live in parts of Colombia where there is no government control, so the local people are in danger of drug lords and other criminals. The Embera-Baudo do not have the resources to defend themselves against outsiders. For obvious reasons, they view outsiders as a threat.

At that time Jesus declared, I thank you, Father, Lord of heaven and earth, that you have hidden these things from the wise and understanding and revealed them to little children. —Matthew 11:25

- Pray for this people group to humble themselves and come to trust in Christ as little children.
- Pray for the Holy Spirit to raise up indigenous Christ bearers to share the truth with the Embera-Baudo.
- Pray for the Lord to prepare workers with valuable skills such as helping with medical needs.
- Pray for the Lord to prepare Embera-Baudo hearts to hear and respond to Jesus Christ.

■ 9 Kogi in Colombia

The Kogi are one of the indigenous tribes that evaded Spanish conquistadors. They moved higher into the mountains where they now grow and trade coffee. They are very concerned about the destruction of their physical environment which includes glaciers, mountains, deserts, rainforests, and wetlands. The Kogi regard outsiders as “Little Brothers,” a term of endearment for those who are ignorant of essential truths about the environment.

Other seeds fell on good soil and produced grain, some a hundredfold, some sixty, some thirty. —Matthew 13:8

- Pray that today’s people group would become fertile soil and produces much fruit for God and His kingdom.
- Pray for the Lord to shower the Kogi people with mercy and justice as they face an uncertain future.
- Pray for Kogi leaders to have the spiritual discernment to respond to Christ when they hear of His glory.

■ 10 Hunan Lu Mien in China

The Chinese government has maintained the policy of trying to turn the lu Mien into Han Chinese. The lu Mien have resisted these efforts and still speak their own language as their first language. The Hunan lu Mien people live in remote mountains that are not easily accessible to Christ’s ambassadors.

Go therefore to the main roads and invite to the wedding feast as many as you find.’ And those servants went out into the roads and gathered all whom they found, both bad and good. So the wedding hall was filled with guests. —Matthew 22:9-10

- Pray that many in today’s people group to accept the Lord’s invitation to become part of His kingdom and join His great feast at the end of the age.
- Pray that the Lord moves anointed Han Chinese Christian believers to pray for and go to the Hunan lu Mien.
- Ask the Lord to raise up a church planting movement among the lu Mien of China in this decade.



■ 11 Guanyingqiao Jiarong in China

To outsiders, the Guanyingqiao people look like Tibetans. However, the language they speak is not closely related to Tibetan. There are few roads to the region of Sichuan where the Guanyingqiao live. The Guanyingqiao have been Buddhists for centuries, and it is part of their core identity. By contrast, they see Christianity as a foreign religion.

His master said to him, ‘Well done, good and faithful servant. You have been faithful over a little; I will set you over much. Enter into the joy of your master.’ —Matthew 25:21

- Pray that many in this people group become good and faithful servants of the Master and celebrate with Him in the coming kingdom.
- Ask the Lord to send caring, Spirit-filled workers to the Guanyingqiao people.
- Pray for a hunger for spiritual truth among the Guanyingqiao.
- Pray that every Guanyingqiao would have the opportunity to hear the good news of Jesus Christ in a way they can understand.

■ 12 Jiasou in China

Since 1949, the Chinese government’s policy has been to incorporate indigenous peoples like the Jiasou into the Han majority language and culture. Due to their isolation, the Jiasou have been able to hang on to their primary language of Sani and their distinct traditions. The Jiasou religion of animism and ancestor veneration is deeply ingrained in their society.

Now after John was arrested, Jesus came into Galilee, proclaiming the gospel of God, and saying, The time is fulfilled, and the kingdom of God is at hand; repent and believe in the gospel. —Mark 1:14-15

- Pray that this people groups to get the opportunity to hear a clear presentation of the good news.
- Pray for God’s Spirit to move them to repent and believe in Christ.
- Pray that the Bible and other resources would be translated into the Sani language.
- Ask the Lord to send loving, Spirit-filled workers to the Jiasou.
- Pray that each Jiasou person will have the opportunity to hear the Gospel in a way they can understand.



■ 13 Hindu Kalal in Bangladesh

The Kalal cremate their dead, and they scatter the ashes in a sacred river like the Ganges. A Kalal priest leads worship, practices traditional medicine and prays to protect his people from evil spirits. The Kalal celebrate the Hindu festivals like the birthday of Rama, a central Hindu god.

And a leper came to him, imploring him, and kneeling said to him, If you will, you can make me clean. Moved with pity, he stretched out his hand and touched him and said to him, I will be clean. —Mark 1:40-41

- Pray for this people group to feel the healing touch of Christ and be cleansed from their sins.
- Pray they will put their hope and trust in the finished work of Jesus Christ, the only one who can give them dignity in this life and salvation in the life to come.
- Pray for the Lord to thrust out loving workers.

■ 14 Kapali in Bangladesh

Kapali people are settled near different tea gardens. These Hindus believe that their ancestors originated from the forehead of Lord Shiva. There are no known Christ followers among Kapali people in Bangladesh. Audio and visual Bible resources, including the entire Bible, exist in Bengali, the spoken language of Kapali people in Bangladesh. Christ followers could use these to expose them to the Gospel.

And he awoke and rebuked the wind and said to the sea, Peace! Be still! And the wind ceased, and there was a great calm. —Mark 4:39

- Pray that the Lord brings His peace that passes all understanding into the hearts of this people group.
- Pray that Kapali people in Bangladesh will see that their old system of ethics and beliefs is not working and that their only hope is in Christ.
- Ask Almighty God to transform entire Kapali families and communities for His glory.

■ 15 Mahishya in Bangladesh

Mahishya people are unusual in that their livelihood was originally based upon producing crops, but in recent years, many have become skilled as engineers and successful business people. Even in Muslim Bangladesh the Mahishya people are almost completely Hindu.

And he did not permit him but said to him, Go home to your friends and tell them how much the Lord has done for you, and how he has had mercy on you. —Mark 5:19

- Pray for those who have been blessed among today's people group to boldly and lovingly tell others of God's abundant mercy.
- Pray for Mahishya households to begin to study the Bible and accept the blessings of Christ.
- Pray for a spiritual hunger that will invite them to the loving arms of Jesus. Pray for workers who are filled with the fruit and the power of the Holy Spirit to go to the Mahishya people.
- Pray they can communicate the desperate need we all have for the savior.

■ 16 Serbian-speaking Jew in Serbia

Serbian Jews have been decorated throughout their history in Serbia for their participation in various wars. Today, some are involved in political and national affairs. Jewish people often don't give Jesus a chance because of abuse by Christians. They need loving ambassadors of Christ to go to them.

And they were astonished beyond measure, saying, He has done all things well. He even makes the deaf hear and the mute speak. —Mark 7:37

- Pray that this people group comes to understand that the wisdom, power, and goodness of God are found only in Jesus Christ.
- Pray that Jewish hearts will respond to the love of Christ through Jesus followers as they engage in everyday life together.
- Pray for a movement to Jesus Christ among Serbian Jews in Serbia.
- Pray for the Holy Spirit to give Serbian-speaking Jews hearts that are soft towards their Messiah.

■ 17 Slovak-speaking Jew in Slovakia

Jews have been in Slovakia since the 14th century. They have been persecuted severely throughout Slovakian history. Through the centuries most Slovakian Jews moved to cities and acquired skills as artisans, merchants, and shopkeepers. Although they continue to experience separation from other Slovakian people, their religion is largely inward-looking. They seldom discuss spiritual matters with outsiders.

And he asked them, But who do you say that I am? Peter answered him, You are the Christ. —Mark 8:29

- Pray that this people would believe and proclaim, like Peter, that Jesus Christ is their Savior and Lord.
- Pray for a mighty movement of this people group starting within families and growing into strong Bible teaching fellowships filled with disciples who will reach others.
- Pray that Christ-honoring families would be sent out to bring Slovak-speaking Jewish families to their Messiah.

■ 18 Lezgin in Ukraine

The Lezgin people of Ukraine are a Muslim group that live and work in brutal weather conditions. Even though the Lezgin are Muslim, they have not relinquished their pre-Islamic belief in the spirit world. In recent years, some Lezgins have come to faith in Jesus Christ. However, their numbers are so few that they cannot form a fellowship even in Ukraine, the “Bible Belt” of Eastern Europe.

For what does it profit a man to gain the whole world and forfeit his soul? For what can a man give in return for his soul? —Mark 8:36-37

- Pray for today’s people group to come to realize that all the spiritual riches of life and true wisdom are found in Jesus Christ alone.
- Pray for a movement to Christ among Lezgins in Ukraine and in Russia.
- Pray for the Lezgin people to see beyond Lezgin culture and identity and give a fair hearing to the Gospel.



■ 19 Orochi in Ukraine

The Orochi are among the peoples of Russia’s far east. They come from a land where few can live, so most have moved to Ukraine and other parts of Russia. The Orochi people can be Buddhist, shamanistic or marginally Russian Orthodox. Their state of spiritual confusion might be a barrier to their accepting the lordship of Christ.

For he was teaching his disciples, saying to them, The Son of Man is going to be delivered into the hands of men, and they will kill him. And when he is killed, after three days he will rise. —Mark 9:31

- Pray for today’s people group would comprehend that Jesus died for their sins and rose again demonstrating His power over sin and death.
- Pray for spiritual hunger to permeate Orochi society, giving them the desire and ability to follow Jesus.
- Pray for the Lord to thrust out workers to these people who desperately need a savior.
- Pray for a movement to Christ among the Orochi in both Russia and Ukraine.

■ 20 Hainanese in Cambodia

The Hainanese migrated to Cambodia more than 500 years ago. They work hard, rarely taking time off from work, and they have distinguished themselves as experts in the food catering business. Many manage coffee shops, Chinese noodle houses, and other businesses in the food industry. Those who love Christ can be customers at Hainanese owned noodle houses during slow times, which will give them the chance to strike up spiritual conversations.

But when Jesus saw it, he was indignant and said to them, Let the children come to me; do not hinder them, for to such belongs the kingdom of God. Truly, I say to you, whoever does not receive the kingdom of God like a child shall not enter it. —Mark 10:14-15

- Pray that this people group humbles themselves and comes to God with child-like trust and thereby enter into His kingdom.
- Pray for the Lord to bless their businesses as a testimony of His power and goodness.
- Pray for Hainanese disciples to make more disciples who will make even more disciples.

■ 21 Hakka Chinese in Cambodia

Many Hakka families have started popular noodle shops in Cambodia. Hakka noodles, or Hakka Mee, are yellow noodles topped by minced chicken or pork and condiments. There is an attitude among the Hakka that spirituality is flexible, and that Christianity is only for Westerners. The Hakka can easily stick with traditional religion and face a Christless eternity because they are unwilling to give Him a chance to transform their hearts.

And Jesus said to him, What do you want me to do for you? And the blind man said to him, Rabbi, let me recover my sight.
—Mark 10:51

- Pray for the Lord to heal the spiritual blindness of today's people group.
- Pray that these people see and recognize Jesus for who He truly is, the Light and Savior of the world.
- Pray for the Lord to prosper the Hakka spiritually and economically, so they will know He is their true provider.
- Pray for Hakka church planters to train others to plant more churches and make disciples.

■ 22 Mongallese Arab in South Sudan

Islam spread throughout much of North Africa from the 7th through the 11th centuries. During this time, it became much more common than in Sudan, where it was very hierarchical and mainly followed by the upper classes. One of these "upper class" people groups were the Mongallese in South Sudan. Language is one of the biggest obstacles in spreading the word to the Mongallese Arab. Their distinct dialect and strong Islamic beliefs make it difficult for any solid movement to take root.

Jesus said to them, Is this not the reason you are wrong, because you know neither the Scriptures nor the power of God?
—Mark 12:24

- Pray that this people group hungers for and learns the Scriptures.
- Pray that these people begin to experience the miraculous power of God.
- Pray for Holy Spirit-sent workers.
- Pray for the Lord to send dreams and visions to Mongallese Arab leaders.

■ 23 Daasanach in South Sudan

The Daasanach are known for their fighting prowess and are feared by many neighboring groups. They take cattle from their neighbors in raids. It is very hard for neighboring Christianized people to want to go to these people who are known for violent raids.

And he said to them, The harvest is plentiful, but the laborers are few. Therefore pray earnestly to the Lord of the harvest to send out laborers into his harvest. —Luke 10:2

- Pray for an abundance of Holy Spirit-led workers to disciple this people group.
- Pray for the Lord to thrust out determined and loving witnesses of the grace of Jesus to the Daasanach people.
- Pray for the Lord to do whatever it takes to turn these people from violence and destructive behavior to peaceful and productive lives as a testimony of what the Holy Spirit can do.

■ 24 Swedish Jew in Sweden

In the past, Sweden's Jewish population experienced antisemitism especially in the 1930s because of the German Nazis. There are a large number of recently arrived Muslims in Sweden, some of whom hold hostile feelings toward Jews. Sweden's Jewish population is urban and prosperous.

Then he opened their minds to understand the Scriptures,
—Luke 24:45

- Pray that the minds of this people group will be opened to understand God's word by the Spirit Himself.
- Pray that efforts to reach the Jews in Sweden will be conducted by those who love them and want them to thrive spiritually.
- Pray for Messianic Jews to present Jesus in a culturally appropriate way. Pray for a movement to Christ to rise among Swedish Jews.



■ 25 Albanian in Sweden

The Albanian people in Sweden are much smaller in number than other Muslim groups. More of them are applying to settle in Sweden each year because they want better economic opportunities than they have in Albania. There are so few Albanians in Sweden that establishing any real ministry may be difficult. Establishing an Albanian Church in Sweden will require outsiders to learn their language and culture.

I am the vine; you are the branches. Whoever abides in me and I in him, he it is that bears much fruit, for apart from me you can do nothing. —John 15:5

- Pray for the Lord is to help today's people group to understand that apart from Him they can do nothing of spiritual and eternal value.
- Pray for the Lord to bless the Albanians spiritually and economically so they will know that Jehovah is their provider.
- Pray for the Lord to thrust out loving ambassadors of Christ to the Albanians in Sweden.

■ 26 Zarma in Niger

The Zarma are farmers who use simple tools; they do not have access to modern farming equipment. They live in the Sahel Desert in Niger and Chad, which makes farming very difficult. Others are fishermen, businessmen or teachers. They have little time for leisure activities. Though Islam was introduced to them by outsiders, the Zarma have embraced it as their own.

The next day he saw Jesus coming toward him, and said, Behold, the Lamb of God, who takes away the sin of the world! —John 1:29

- Pray that today's people group looks to the Lamb of God, Jesus, to have their sins taken away.
- Pray for the Lord to show himself loving and powerful by providing adequate rain for the Zarma people, who live in a dry land.
- Pray for spiritual hunger and openness to the teachings and ways of Jesus Christ.

■ 27 Air Tuareg in Niger

There are many Tuareg subgroups, including the Air Tuareg, named after their homeland in the Air Mountains. This area is part of the Sahel Desert, but the location is relatively wet with enough water to sustain small herds. There is a time of the year when Air Tuaregs hold a public festival and open it to outsiders. The festival features cultural events, camel rides, and a market for locally made goods.

Jesus answered him, Truly, truly, I say to you, unless one is born again he cannot see the kingdom of God. —John 3:3

- Pray that many in this people group are born again and enter into the kingdom of God.
- Pray for the Lord to speak to Air Tuareg decision makers through dreams and visions.
- Pray for spiritual humility and a desire to come close to the Holy One.

■ 28 Afghan in the US

The Afghans living in the US are spread across the country. They have one thing in common: Islam. Islam is central to their identity in a non-Muslim land. The Afghans in the United States now enjoy freedom of religion, so they can hear and respond to the Gospel. Befriending new arrivals could lead to opportunities to share the Gospel.

But the hour is coming, and is now here, when the true worshipers will worship the Father in spirit and truth, for the Father is seeking such people to worship him. —John 4:23

- Pray that this people group soon begins to worship the Father in spirit and in truth.
- Pray for many Christian believers to take Christ to the Afghans in a loving way.
- Pray for the hearts of the Afghans in the United States to be soft, fertile ground for the Word of God.

■ 29 Gulf-spoken Arab in the US

Gulf-spoken Arabs have migrated to the United States from Kuwait, Bahrain, Qatar, the United Arab Emirates, Southern Iraq, Eastern Saudi Arabia, and Northern Oman. Though Gulf Arabic has a variety of dialects, they are all close enough for mutual understanding and communication. The Gulf-spoken Arabs who do not yet know English will be difficult to reach. Witnessing to them with Arabic Bibles and materials like the JESUS Film could potentially yield much fruit.

Truly, truly, I say to you, whoever hears my word and believes him who sent me has eternal life. He does not come into judgment, but has passed from death to life. —John 5:24

- Pray that today's people group listens to God's message and believes in the good news of their salvation.
- Pray for a spiritual hunger that will overcome community pressures.
- Pray for the Lord to establish His Church among them and call them to take the good news to their homelands.

■ 30 Adi Dravida in India

The Adi Dravida were once called the Paraiyar (or pariah in English), so their leaders requested that their name become Adi Dravida or "original Dravidians." Today, the Adi Dravida are a scheduled caste which means they receive special benefits for government jobs and places in education to rectify past societal wrongs. Illiteracy is high among the Adi Dravida, which limits them to non-printed Gospel materials.

Jesus said to them, I am the bread of life; whoever comes to me shall not hunger, and whoever believes in me shall never thirst. —John 6:35

- Pray that this people group hungers for God and begins to feed spiritually on the Bread of life, Jesus Christ.
- Pray that the Lord would lead Indian Christians to become friends with the Adi Dravida to help them with their educational and vocational needs.
- Pray for spiritual hunger that will lead them to the risen Christ.

OCTOBER

■ 1 Kawa in China

The mountainous region where the Kawa live is difficult for Christ's ambassadors to access. This inaccessibility, in combination with very few local Jesus followers, makes sharing the Gospel with the Kawa difficult. It is also very possible that Christianized peoples in this region have compromised their testimony by getting involved with the drug trade.

On the last day of the feast, the great day, Jesus stood up and cried out, If anyone thirsts, let him come to me and drink. Whoever believes in me, as the Scripture has said, Out of his heart will flow rivers of living water. John 7:37–38

- Pray for this people group to experience the fullness of the Holy Spirit and the overflowing, gracious love of God.
- Pray that there would be a movement to Christ among the Kawa and that they would come to know God's love for them.
- Pray for healing from opioid addictions among the Kawa and for healed relationships between the various resistance groups and ethnic groups in the surrounding areas.

■ 2 Keji in China

The Keji are Tibetan-speaking Sunni Muslims. They were originally from Kashmir. They have their own mosques and restaurants, so they may eat ritually clean foods and avoid pork. Economically, they engage in commerce and trading. There are no known Christ followers among them.

And he who sent me is with me. He has not left me alone, for I always do the things that are pleasing to him. —John 8:29

- Pray for today's people group to begin to please God by trusting in and obeying His Son.
- Pray Chinese churches will try to reach the Keji people for Christ.
- Pray that soon there would be Keji disciples who will make more disciples.
- Pray for the Lord to provide for their needs as a testimony of His power and love.
- Pray that the Keji people would have a spiritual hunger that will open their hearts to the King of Kings.

■ 3 Agri in India

The Agri are a Hindu people native to suburban Mumbai. They speak Marathi. Both husband and wife are responsible for household income and management, as there is no dowry. The Agri make a living through real estate and fishing. The idea that God could have a personal relationship with mankind seems strange to them.

Jesus said to them, Truly, truly, I say to you, before Abraham was, I am. —John 8:58

- Pray for this people group to understand that Jesus is not just another human prophet but is the eternal God.
- Pray that the Holy Spirit would prepare the Agri to encounter Scripture and Indian evangelists.

- Pray the Agri would develop a spiritual hunger and have dreams of Jesus that will prepare them for an encounter with media and messengers of the faith.
- Pray that soon Agri Christ followers would disciple others in their communities.

4 Bengali-speaking South Asian in Finland

Finland is a peaceful, prosperous Nordic nation. The country has opened its doors to refugees who are fleeing the turmoil of their home counties in Asia and the Middle East. One of these groups is Bengali speakers from South Asia. The Bengali speakers in Finland want to retain their ethnic identity and religion, so they might be resistant to a Gospel witness.

He answered, Whether he is a sinner I do not know. One thing I do know, that though I was blind, now I see. —John 9:25

- Pray that the Lord removes the spiritual blindness of today's people group and they begin to see God's truth revealed in Jesus Christ.
- Pray that the followers of Christ in Finland would lovingly reach out to these Muslims with Christ-like character.
- Pray that they would be open to embracing Jesus Christ as Lord of their lives.

5 Chara in Ethiopia

The Chara make their living through farming. They had a high population until they were decimated through war and frequent slave raids. Along with their ethnic religion, the Chara practice a syncretized form of Orthodox Christianity which keeps them from embracing the truth of the Savior.

But you will receive power when the Holy Spirit has come upon you, and you will be my witnesses in Jerusalem and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the end of the earth. —Acts 1:8

- Pray that today's people group would receive God's Spirit and become empowered to tell others about the grace of God in Jesus Christ.
- Pray for the Lord to raise up those who can produce culturally appropriate worship music for the Chara people.
- Pray there would soon come a day when Chara disciples will make more disciples.
- Ask the Lord to strengthen the existing indigenous church to reach its people.



6 Harari in Ethiopia

Until recent times the Harari people lived in and near the ancient city of Harar in Ethiopia. Harar is a center for Muslim learning. Most Harari made their living by trade. On market days the Harar buy and sell agricultural and manufactured products with the different peoples who live in the area. Ethiopian believers can build business relationships with the Harari.

And they were all filled with the Holy Spirit and began to speak in other tongues as the Spirit gave them utterance. —Acts 2:4

- Pray for this people group to be filled with the Holy Spirit and to proclaim the greatness of God.
- Ask the Lord to send Spirit-filled believers to the Harari.
- Pray the Holy Spirit would create an openness and hunger among the Harari for learning about Jesus.
- Pray the complete Bible would soon be translated into the Harari language.

7 Bambara in Canada

Bambara speakers in Canada are originally from Mali. They often blend in with other West African peoples in the new country, especially in regard to African festivals. In deciding which immigrants to admit from developing countries, Canada favors those with a good education and professional skills.

You have made known to me the paths of life; you will make me full of gladness with your presence.' —Acts 2:28

- Pray the Lord makes known to today's people group the true path of life.
- Pray they learn to rejoice in God's presence. Pray that Bambara believers would shine Christ's light in such a way that other West Africans will be attracted to Him.
- Pray for a disciple making movement among West Africans in Canada.
- Pray for the Bambara people to look to Jesus Christ for their spiritual and physical needs.

8 Bantu Somali in Canada

Bantu Somalis face discrimination in Somalia. As a result, some Bantu Somalis are leaving their homeland and going to egalitarian nations such as Canada. It is a huge adjustment coming from a clan based, agricultural Muslim society to a modern, secular nation like Canada.

And all the people saw him walking and praising God. —Acts 3:9

- Pray for the Lord to do signs and wonders among today's people group.
- Pray they trust in God and give Him the glory.
- Pray for churches to sponsor Bantu Somalis, help them in practical ways, and show them the love of Jesus Christ.
- Pray for the Holy Spirit to give the Bantu Somali people in Canada teachable and understanding hearts.
- Pray that a strong movement of the Holy Spirit would bring entire Bantu Somali families into a rich experience of God's blessing.

9 Balkar in Kyrgyzstan

For centuries, the historically Muslim Balkar people have lived in the highlands of the Caucasus Mountains of southern Russia shepherding their flocks. They resisted Russian cultural and religious domination for many years, and the scarcity of usable land forced many to move to the cities of Central Asia such as Bishkek, Kyrgyzstan.

And there is salvation in no one else, for there is no other name under heaven given among men by which we must be saved. —Acts 4:12

- Pray for today's people group to come to understand that salvation is found only in Jesus Christ and in no other religion.
- Pray that the Holy Spirit would soften the hearts of the Balkar people toward faith in Christ.
- Pray for Balkar Christian believers to disciple others to make more disciples.
- Pray there would soon be culturally appropriate evangelistic songs in the Balkar language that will lead many people to placing their faith in Christ.

10 Dungan in Kyrgyzstan

The Dungan originated in the Kansu and Shensi provinces of northwestern China, but today there are people from Kansu living in Kyrgyzstan. Culturally, the Dungan are similar to the Han Chinese, but their language is greatly influenced by Arabic, Persian, and Turkish.

But Peter and John answered them, Whether it is right in the sight of God to listen to you rather than to God, you must judge, for we cannot but speak of what we have seen and heard. —Acts 4:19-20

- Pray for this people group to listen to and to obey God.
- Pray that they hear God's message and tell others about His marvelous works.
- Pray for peace in Kyrgyzstan and for a stable, effective and just government.
- Pray for a movement to Christ to spread and benefit everyone spiritually, physically, and economically.
- Pray that the few followers of Christ among the Dungan would fellowship together and heed the call to share the Gospel with their neighbors

11 Hemshin in Kyrgyzstan

The Hemshin are well-known for the clever jokes, riddles and stories. They are ethnic Armenians whose ancestors converted to Islam from the 1890s through 1920s. They originally settled in the Hemshin district in the province of Rize, Turkey. Some have migrated to Russia and Kyrgyzstan.

And now, Lord, look upon their threats and grant to your servants to continue to speak your word with all boldness, while you stretch out your hand to heal, and signs and wonders are performed through the name of your holy servant Jesus. —Acts 4:29-30

- Pray for boldness and love among the workers who go to today's people group.
- Pray for ethnic Armenian followers of Christ to take them the Gospel.
- Pray for a spiritual hunger that would lead the Hemshin people to the cross and the empty grave.
- Pray that the Hemshin people would have their spiritual and physical needs met in Kyrgyzstan.



12 Dombki Baloch in Pakistan

The Eastern Baloch are part of a much larger population of Baloch who came to their homeland in the 12th century. For centuries the Eastern Baloch have been entirely Sunni Muslim. They doubt the accuracy of the Bible or anything not sanctioned by their religious leaders.

Then they left the presence of the council, rejoicing that they were counted worthy to suffer dishonor for the name. —Acts 5:41

- Pray that believers in this people group are willing to endure persecution for the name of Christ.
- Pray for the Lord to thrust out His chosen workers to the Eastern Baloch in Pakistan.
- Pray for the Holy Spirit to move in Baloch hearts, preparing them to receive their king.
- Pray for Eastern Baloch disciples to make more disciples.
- Pray for the Lord to thrust out Holy Spirit directed veterinarians and medical professionals to reach them for Christ.

13 Pindara in Pakistan

Most of the Pindara in Pakistan own farmland. On the death of the father, sons and daughters both inherit the property, and the oldest son becomes the new family head. The Pindara are Muslims, but they sometimes join Hindus in their festivals.

So Philip ran to him and heard him reading Isaiah the prophet and asked, Do you understand what you are reading? —Acts 8:30

- Pray that the Lord gives today's people group a desire to hear and to understand God's words.
- Pray the Lord would send dreams and visions to Pindara leaders, opening their hearts to accept the teachings of the Glorious One.
- Pray for anointed song writers to prepare culturally appropriate music that teaches of the only savior.
- Pray that soon Pindara disciples would make more disciples, transforming their society.

14 Qizilbash in Pakistan

The main difference between Qizilbash tribes and other Turkic people is that they are Shia Muslims. Therefore, the name Qizilbash is usually applied to them only. Though they are no longer a cohesive group of people, they hold on to their ethnic pride. In Pakistan, they are often urban professionals: doctors, teachers, engineers, and lawyers.

Then the proconsul believed, when he saw what had occurred, for he was astonished at the teaching of the Lord. —Acts 13:12

- Pray for many from this people group to be amazed at what Christ can do to bless their families and communities.
- Pray for the Holy Spirit to open Qizilbash hearts to Jesus as the only one worthy of their devotion.
- Pray for dreams and visions for Qizilbash leaders that will point the way to Jesus Christ.
- Pray for them to follow up with Bible studies, leading to praying fellowships.

15 Belide in Indonesia

The Belide follow the traditional practice of living by rivers rather than roads. Belide people profess Islam as their religion, and they are officially registered as Muslims. However, the Belide still retain many animist and spiritist beliefs. Ambassadors of Christ may have easier access to reaching the Belide by traveling on rivers rather than roads. While this may be physically difficult, those who want to share the Gospel with the Belide should travel the same way as the people they wish to contact.

For so the Lord has commanded us, saying, I have made you a light for the Gentiles, that you may bring salvation to the ends of the earth. —Acts 13:47

- Pray that the believers in today's people group become God's light to their own group and to the nations of the world.
- Pray that the love of Jesus Christ would reach the Belide through dedicated disciples willing to share the Gospel.

16 Belitung in Indonesia

The Belitung live on the Indonesian island of Belitung. Many farm corn, cassava, sweet potatoes, and bananas. Groups of Belitung families form villages they call keleka. The keleka is led by a traditional chief and his assistants. The religious leader is a shaman who leads religious ceremonies. The Belitung largely adhere to Islam, but they also follow beliefs outside of Islam.

And a vision appeared to Paul in the night: a man of Macedonia was standing there, urging him and saying, Come over to Macedonia and help us. —Acts 16:9

- Pray that the Lord sends messengers to this people group to tell them the good news about Jesus.
- Pray for the few followers of Jesus among the Belitung community to fellowship together and grow strong in the nurture of the Lord.
- Pray for the material and physical needs of the Belitung to be met.

17 Bengkulu in Indonesia

The Bengkulu people live in the city of Bengkulu, on Sumatra Island. They generally work as store clerks, ship builders, mechanics, construction contractors, and government workers. The majority of the Bengkulu are Muslim. However, they still practice certain traditional ceremonies and rituals according to their older animistic beliefs.

The times of ignorance God overlooked, but now he commands all people everywhere to repent, because he has fixed a day on which he will judge the world in righteousness by a man whom he has appointed; and of this he has given assurance to all by raising him from the dead. —Acts 17:30-31

- Pray for today's people group to repent of their sins and to believe in the God of the Bible.
- Pray the Lord would begin stirring their hearts so that they will be softened toward the good news of Christ.
- Pray for Christians in other Indonesian tribes to move toward the Bengkulu people and take steps to tell them of eternal life which is only found in Jesus Christ.



18 Coong in Vietnam

The Coong people in Vietnam speak both Coong and Thai. They come from Laos originally. The Coong worship ancestors and practice animism or folk religion. They have no written Bible in their language. They look to evil spirits and the souls of their departed ancestors for help. They fear these spirits and they do not feel at liberty to follow Jesus.

So the word of the Lord continued to increase and prevail mightily. —Acts 19:20

- Pray that the word of the Lord spreads and prevails in this people group.
- Pray that loving Vietnamese Christians would lead the Coong people to Jesus.
- Pray that the Lord would create a desire among the Coong people to learn his word.
- Pray for Coong disciples who will make more disciples.

19 Sila in Vietnam

The Sila of Vietnam practice an ethnic religion: animism and ancestor worship. Most farm and hunt for their food supply and they struggle with malnutrition and diseases such as malaria. Believers can aid in establishing medical clinics and training facilities where Sila people can learn to help others with health care needs. Christians can spread the Gospel as they teach useful skills.

But I do not account my life of any value nor as precious to myself, if only I may finish my course and the ministry that I received from the Lord Jesus, to testify to the gospel of the grace of God. —Acts 20:24

- Pray today's people group would experience God's wonderful grace and begin to tell others about Him.
- Ask the Lord to send Christian medical workers to labor among the Sila and soften the people's hearts.
- Ask the Lord to establish a Sila church that will multiply.

20 Sikh Zargar in India

Most of the Zargar Sikhs in India reside in the Jammu and Kashmir state. While the majority are Hindu or Muslim, some follow Sikhism. The Zargar who practice Sikhism believe God to be formless. They grow closer to God by living a good life and practicing charity. They believe in reincarnation and the law of karma. It will be difficult for them to understand and embrace what the Bible says about these matters.

To open their eyes, so that they may turn from darkness to light and from the power of Satan to God, that they may receive forgiveness of sins and a place among those who are sanctified by faith in me. —Acts 26:18

- Pray for God to send spiritual light and truth to this people group.
- Pray for the Lord to soften their hearts and prepare them to receive His Word.
- Pray for His kingdom to come and His will to be done among the Zargar people.



21 Arasu in India

Arasu people make up a large proportion of the politicians, government administrators, and teachers of Karnataka. The Arasu marry within their community and pass property from one generation to the next. They attempt to follow their ancient traditions and customs to maintain their cultural identity as high caste members.

Therefore let it be known to you that this salvation of God has been sent to the Gentiles; they will listen. —Acts 28:28

- Pray for this people group to hear and to accept the message of God's salvation.
- Pray for the Arasu to have the opportunity to hear and receive the good news.
- Pray for the Lord to awaken their hearts and open their spiritual eyes and ears to experience His love and salvation.
- Pray for the Holy Spirit to move powerfully in Arasu families and communities.

22 Hmong Njua in Australia

Many Hmong Njua people were forced to migrate to Australia due to wars and communist oppression. The primary religion practiced by the Njua Hmong is an ethnic religion. Ethnic religion is deeply rooted in a people's ethnic identity. Conversion essentially equates to cultural assimilation or even betrayal.

For though we walk in the flesh, we are not waging war according to the flesh. For the weapons of our warfare are not of the flesh but have divine power to destroy strongholds. We destroy arguments and every lofty opinion raised against the knowledge of God, and take every thought captive to obey Christ. —2 Corinthians 10:3-5

- Pray for the Holy Spirit to give new believers among today's people group victory their spiritual battles.
- Pray that the Hmong Njua people would increasingly hunger to know forgiveness for their sin, which only Jesus Christ can offer.
- Pray for a disciple making movement among the Njua Hmong people to thrive in Australia.
- Pray for Njua Hmong people to be able to find jobs in Australia where they can contribute to their host country and flourish economically.

23 Gujarati in New Zealand

The first Gujarati immigrants in New Zealand were tradesmen, shop owners, and small businessmen. The second group were engineers, medical professionals, and property managers. Retaining their culture is very important to Gujaratis in New Zealand though they live in a very different cultural world.

Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who has blessed us in Christ with every spiritual blessing in the heavenly places, —Ephesians 1:3

- Thank the Lord that He is giving His spiritual blessings to this people group.
- Pray for Holy Spirit led workers to go the Gujaratis in New Zealand.
- Pray for a movement where Gujaratis can embrace Christ while retaining parts of their culture that don't conflict with the Bible.
- Pray for the Holy Spirit to illuminate the Gospel to convict Gujaratis of their need for salvation found only in Jesus Christ.

24 Adi in Bhutan

Adi people live mainly in China and India, and only a very small number live in Bhutan. Historically a remote people, the Adi continue to be socially and economically isolated. Even their villages tend to remain separate from one another, governing themselves by individual rules and councils. Wealth is measured in domesticated animals, jewelry, and land ownership.

That the God of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of glory, may give you the Spirit of wisdom and of revelation in the knowledge of him, having the eyes of your hearts enlightened, that you may know what is the hope to which he has called you, what are the riches of his glorious inheritance in the saint. —Ephesians 1:17-18

- Pray for spiritual wisdom and light for the leaders of today's people group.
- Pray for key members of Adi communities in Bhutan to hear and receive the good news.
- Pray for the Lord to thrust out loving workers to the Adi people.
- Pray that Adi people in Bhutan would experience God's wonderful grace and begin to tell others about Him.

25 Ormuri in Afghanistan

Ormuri people live among the Pashtun in Afghanistan. Though they are Sunni Muslims, the Ormuri people also depend on spiritual forces and amulets for their needs. Physical remoteness and a devotion to the Islamic religious system make it very hard to reach Ormuri people.

That according to the riches of his glory he may grant you to be strengthened with power through his Spirit in your inner being, so that Christ may dwell in your hearts through faith—that you, being rooted and grounded in love, —Ephesians 3:16-17

- Make this your prayer for today's people group.
- Pray for the Lord to approach Ormuri leaders through dreams and visions that will make them seek and find His answers.
- Pray for the Lord to make a way for them to easily access the JESUS Film.
- Pray for a major movement to Christ among the Ormuri.

26 Halang in Laos

For centuries the Halang have been slash-and-burn agriculturists, farming in one area then moving to another. Marriage is simple among the Halang people of Laos. After the wedding, the couple lives alternately with the wife's family and then with the husband's family for equal lengths of time. Only when the couple has had several children do they move into their own home.

That he might sanctify her, having cleansed her by the washing of water with the word, so that he might present the church to himself in splendor, without spot or wrinkle or any such thing, that she might be holy and without blemish. —Ephesians 5:26-27

- Pray for an emerging, spotless and pure church among this people group.
- Pray for Halang hearts to be open to receive the message of radio broadcasts.
- Pray that the Halang believers in Vietnam would seek to reach their unreached relatives in Laos.
- Ask God to raise up laborers to plant churches among the Halang.

27 Northern Katang in Laos

Traditionally, the Katang lived in longhouses, and extended families dwelled under one roof. In recent decades, many have moved down from the hills onto the plains, where they have become more like the Lao majority. Although most Katang have absolutely no awareness of the Gospel or the claims of Jesus Christ, there is one Katang church in Laos, with approximately 100 known believers.

Put on the whole armor of God, that you may be able to stand against the schemes of the devil. —Ephesians 6:11

- Pray for the Holy Spirit to give His armor to the believers among today's people group.
- Ask God to bless and anoint the small Katang church in Laos.
- May they show their neighbors what it is like to be blessed by the King of kings!

28 Comorian in France

Comorians are among many other African migrants who live in France. Thousands have risked their lives to migrate to France and when they get there they live in poverty. The vast majority of Comorians are Sunni Muslims though some became Christians during the latter half of the 1990s. France is a very secular environment; Comorian immigrants are either Muslim or they forsake religion altogether.

...filled with the fruit of righteousness that comes through Jesus Christ, to the glory and praise of God. —Philippians 1:11

- Pray for righteous character for those who find the Lord among this people group.
- Pray for the few Comorian believers to be salt and light to their neighbors.
- Pray that the Lord would equip Christ followers in France to share the Gospel with Comorian immigrants.
- Pray for a movement to Christ among the Comorians in France.

29 Baori in India

The Baori are described as a nomadic group who were once associated with criminal activities. They do not trust outsiders. Christians need to feel genuine compassion and concern for these people and not be condescending. There may be opportunities to minister to their physical and material needs in order to establish trust.

Being strengthened with all power, according to his glorious might, for all endurance and patience with joy; —Colossians 1:11-12

- May new believers among this people group walk in joy and love in the Holy Spirit.
- Pray for constructive and productive ways for the Baori people to provide for their families.
- Pray for the Lord to take the Baori people from despair to a place where they are productive members of Indian society, for the glory of His name.
- Pray they would make schooling for their children a priority.



30 Kami in Nepal

The Hindu Kami are known for metal working. They supplement smithing with farming. Others serve as healers who favor traditional medicines over modern medicine. About a third are literate in Nepali, and many are bilingual, also speaking Bengali.

Walk in wisdom toward outsiders, making the best use of the time. Let your speech always be gracious, seasoned with salt, so that you may know how you ought to answer each person. —Colossians 4:5-6

- Pray for new believers in this people group to have Holy Spirit-led words to say to their elders as they explain their new faith.
- Pray for Christ's ambassadors to produce songs, stories, and recordings from Scripture.
- Pray for Nepali and Kami believers to carry the message to the Kami people. Pray for increased literacy and for the JESUS Film to be shown in their communities.
- Pray that they would forsake idolatry and for the Lord to show His power over the spirit world.

31 Hindu Rajbansi in Bangladesh

The Rajbansi are an agricultural, indigenous people who live mainly in India and Bangladesh, though a smaller number live in Nepal and Bhutan. The Rajbansi claim to be descendants of the kings of the Koch dynasties that ruled Bengali lands in the 16th century. Wet rice is their primary crop, and wheat and potatoes have also recently been added. Some have remarkable skills in weaving and embroidery. They make items that are traded in the weekly markets.

So that the name of our Lord Jesus may be glorified in you, and you in him, according to the grace of our God and the Lord Jesus Christ. —2 Thessalonians 1:12

- Make this your prayer for today's people group.
- Pray for a Holy Spirit empowered discipleship making movement to Christ among them.
- Ask God to raise up prayer teams who will begin breaking up the soil through intercession.



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