



THE GREAT COMMISSION

16 NOW THE ELEVEN DISCIPLES WENT TO GALILEE,
TO THE MOUNTAIN TO WHICH JESUS HAD
DIRECTED THEM AND WHEN THEY SAW HIM
THEY WERE GLAD BUT SOME DOUBTED.
18 AND HE SAID UNTO THEM, "ALL
AUTHORITY IS GIVEN UNTO ME IN
GIVEN UNTO ME IN HEAVEN AND
DISCIPLES GO YE THEREFORE AND MAKE
THE NAME OF THE LORD JESUS CHRIST KNOWN IN
OF THE HEAVENS AND EARTH AND SEA AND
OBSERVE ALL THINGS WHICH I HAVE COMMANDED YOU.
AND BEHOLD, I AM WITH YOU ALWAYS,
TO THE END OF THE AGE."

**GO
HEREFORE
AND MAKE
DISCIPLES OF
ALL NATIONS**

MATTHEW 28:16-20

ETERNAL

REWARD

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Just Briefly news from Africa and the Asia-Pacific

AGM and Dinner Event 30 October 2021

AIM has cancelled the planned dinner event due to NSW Covid restrictions and uncertainty. The AGM of Africa Inland Mission Ltd. will be online only, with details going to company members later. People can apply for membership, and existing members can renew their 2021-2022 membership and pay fees on; www.aimint.org/ap.

Read more about Missions in Africa AFRIGO

AFRIGO is an African missions

magazine for Africa, sponsored by Africa Inland Mission and SIM.

See the latest and recent issues via the QR code.

Learn more from the AFRIGO website www.afrigo.org.



Farewell to Worker

S, one of our workers, has recently retired after almost ten years of sharing Jesus in a creative access location. Would you please pray for God to call others to serve as He had initially called her and for God's blessings on her current counselling studies and future ministry?

Hong Kong Committee Member Retires

AIM in Hong Kong gives thanks to the Rev. Eddie Chu for being the Founding Chairman of the Hong Kong Committee in 1984 and his 37 years of service. Rev. Chu recently retired and will live in Canada, where he will continue to be an Honorary Advisor to the AIM Hong Kong committee.

New Workers from Hong Kong

Boris and his wife Endas left for Africa in August to commence youth ministry among unreached peoples.

Shining in Prison for Jesus

A former Muslim, now a believer in Christ, wrote recently from a Muslim country in Africa. Following this and five months in prison the author is free.

This (letter) is my testimony while I have been in jail for my faith in the Lord:

Shalom, I greet you in the name of our Savior, Jesus Christ. What God has done for me is not something I can finish in a day or two, He is a Rock on which we rely.

When I went to prison, the Lord did not forsake us. He stood with us as He promised in His Word. He was not far from us for a second, and He humbled the hearts of those around us. He caused the inmates, prison guards, and those visiting us to like us.

The Lord has made the prison like a home for me. Prison doors are closed at

all times, but for the last three months, I have been living alone in a room where I am able to close or open the door of my room.

The Lord has given me perseverance and patience that gives me the thoughts of us being in jail like a one month. The Lord has given me wisdom to use with inmates, and they all call me a mother. The Lord has given me all His grace and mercy.

He wipes away the tears from His hand, my heart is with Him, and He is closer to me than the breath I breathe, He is my Father, and I am his daughter.

He raised my head to the point where the director of the prison asked me



about the situation of the female inmates because he said, "she tells the truth, and Christians do not lie."

I am happy to be a prisoner again in the name of Jesus Christ because He has promised me that I will inherit the kingdom of God.

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AFRICA
INLAND MISSION
Christ-Centred Churches
Among all African Peoples

Cover: The Great Commission, ancient words with modern meaning. Drawing by Ralph Downer.

Thank you Peter and Sue Bird

After 21 years of service at the Africa Inland Church Kijabe Hospital in Kenya, Peter and Sue Bird will soon retire from AIM. AIM thanks God for the Bird family's significant contribution during this time. Peter and Sue originally left Australia for Africa in 2000 with their two eldest daughters Sarah and Melanie. They were sent through AIM by the Crossway Church in Melbourne.



While living in Kijabe, Liz was born in 2002, and in 2004, they adopted their fourth daughter, Joanna. Peter started his service at Kijabe Hospital as a surgeon and was the Head of Surgery for 17 years. He developed breast cancer expertise in East Africa and shared his observations and research in international forums.

Peter also trained African surgeons, with one of his trainees later becoming Head of Surgery at Kijabe. His work as a surgeon was a daily example of sharing God's love with patients and their families as he prayed with them and provided medical care. Peter also had a long-standing ministry doing Bible training and making disciples of students at Kijabe Boys School. Sue was involved in visiting patients at Kijabe and was supportive in school life at Rift Valley Academy, Kijabe, where Sarah, Melanie, Liz and Jo all attended as day students.

Sarah and Melanie graduated from RVA and settled back into life and university study in Australia. Both are now married. Liz graduated from RVA in 2020 and is studying in Australia. During her 2018 visit, Australian Personnel Manager Liz Moore recalls that Sue visited a young, injured Somali woman. This young woman could not walk, but Sue could chat with her through the hospital translator and demonstrate God's love. Sue also provided some hands-on assistance through her occupational therapy training. Apart from supporting patients, Sue helped provide famine relief for locals, and was part of the team who made Covid PPE for the hospital and more.

Peter and Sue also supported the spiritual growth of other Christian medical workers. They challenged them to think about their place in God's mission by regularly running the

Kairos course, focusing on the needs of unreached peoples. They helped Kairos become part of the intern curriculum at Kijabe.

For the Birds, the Kairos Course has been central to making disciples and mobilising African health care workers to live among and serve unreached peoples. Since 2014, Sue and Peter have helped present 11 of these courses at Kijabe Hospital, touching the lives of about 270 people.

In July, Peter returned to Kijabe Hospital for a three-month term. He has continued the training of African surgeons, completed the handover of some of his long-term projects. He said farewells and sorted belongings stored in Kenya. Due to Joanna's schooling and Covid travel restrictions, Sue remained in Australia with the family. She is also involved in presenting Kairos Courses in Victoria.

Shining in Prison for Jesus, continued from Page 2

My husband and I know very well that our real home is the Kingdom of God in heaven, and surely, we are guests on this earth.

I know that I have not yet paid the cost of following Jesus Christ; even if I am killed for His sake, I cannot pay. I love God with all my heart. Finally, my brothers and sisters in Christ, I love you, and I know that you always pray for us because we are one body with the precious blood of the Lord Jesus Christ.

We miss you and seeing you, and we

will definitely come out when we have finished the work for which the Lord has taken us here, and we will all celebrate the joy of our freedom.

We are waiting for the day when the Lord will answer us.

He said, "Ask, and I will give it to you". But He knows when it will be. Dear brothers and sisters in Christ, I love all of you for the love of God and the grace of Jesus Christ and the fellowship of the Holy Spirit.

*"The Lord is good,
A stronghold in the day of
trouble, And He knows those
who take refuge in Him.*

*But with an overflowing flood
He will make a complete end
of its site, And will pursue
His enemies into darkness."
(Nahum 1:7-8)*

The Great Commission -

Ancient Words with a Modern Meaning

By Len Lesleighter,
Director AIM Asia-Pacific
Mobilising Region

The ancient words of Jesus recorded in Matthew 28: 16-20 have shaped history.

Though at times they seem forgotten, they are as relevant today as when first spoken.

After His resurrection, Jesus met with His disciples on a mountain as prearranged.

He stated His authority over heaven and earth. Based on this authority, He commanded His disciples to make disciples of all nations.

To do this, they would need to go; to baptise people in the name of the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit; and they would need to teach people all that Christ taught them. However, the one command was to make disciples of all nations. (Ryrie Study Bible).

The words of Matthew 28 align with Daniel's vision (Daniel 7:13,14), where the Son of Man received authority from the Ancient of Days. Though tempted by Satan's bribe to worship him and be given dominion over the earth (Matthew 4:8), Jesus resisted and triumphed through His sacrificial death and resurrection.

He declares authority over creation and the church because He created both (Col 1:15-18). He now fulfils His promise made on a Galilee beach to His disciples, to make them fishers of Men (Matthew 4:19). (Africa Bible Commentary on Matthew 28.)

Jesus sets in motion the most incredible movement on earth: making His disciples from all nations.

The book of Acts is where the rubber first hits the road for the Great Commission. Powered by the Holy Spirit, the disciples start to be Christ's witnesses in Jerusalem, Judea and Samaria and to the ends of the earth.

(Acts 1:8). They begin making disciples of all nations.

Africa Bible Commentary author Joe Kapolyo notes the Great Commission, given by the highest authority in the Universe, is binding on all disciples for all time.

"No other task comes with the same authority, the same universal scope or the same eternal consequences.

"To go into all the world and make disciples of all nations is the most exciting, most urgent and most necessary task in the world."

"As the numbers of Christians grow in Africa, let the church on the continent be found faithful in advancing the frontiers of mission for the honour and glory of Jesus Christ our Lord."

So, what about us here in Australia, New Zealand, Hong Kong, Singapore and the Asia-Pacific? Do we leave it to Africa? AIM is certainly encouraging Africans into God's mission. Some go at a high cost.

But no – the Great Commission remains binding on us too! But, how do we respond? In the words of Hudson Taylor:

"The Great Commission is not an option to be considered; it is a command to be obeyed."

Kapolyo reminds us Jesus commanded us to make disciples, not just converts.

"Discipleship demands a total surrender of our identity, security and being to the Lordship of Christ."

"Such surrender demands more than mere outward conformity to religion. It must affect one's inner being.

"The task of converting nations means we will have to address all that makes people a nation, including the

deepest elements of their culture.

"Baptism is the initiatory step to be taken at the beginning of discipleship. But 'teaching them to obey all I have commanded you' is a more comprehensive command."

The process of making anyone a disciple, or follower of Christ, may take many people. You may only be a link in the process for one person becoming a true disciple. Don't be the missing link.

The Joshua Project is clear the task is unfinished (JoshuaProject.net). There are more than 10,000 ethnic or people groups or Biblical nations, allowing for one group spanning more than one country. Of these, almost 5,000 are unreached.

In Africa alone, there are almost 1,000 unreached. Nearly 70% are Muslim people groups, and 600 are in north Africa. We need missionaries like those sent out in Acts 13 to go, make disciples of all nations. We need Acts 13 churches to send them!

We need more people here in our homelands to make disciples of all the nations God brings to our door. What more can we do to make this happen?

You can join the Africa Inland Mission and help make disciples of all nations, focusing on Africa's unreached. See www.aimint.org/lap/go and www.PrayAfrica.org

Africa's Unreached



Source: Joshua Project Google Maps, www.joshuaproject.net

Legend
● Unreached peoples
● Formerly reached
● Minimally reached
● Partially reached
● Significantly reached

Churches Benefit from Connection with Overseas Mission

Churches with a high level of engagement in distant missions are more likely to engage in local mission.

This was the view of Bible College lecturer and researcher Tim Silberman, speaking at the Missions Interlink online Global Forum on 17 June. Mr Silberman is a mission lecturer at the Sydney Missionary and Bible College and a doctorate student.

He said his doctorate research in Australia has shown that Gospel-minded churches connected to mission overseas or in distant places are also most likely to be involved in mission locally.

“Overseas mission engagement stimulates local mission”.

However, some Gospel-minded churches may focus only on local mission and not be involved in the bigger picture of overseas cross-cultural or other distant mission ministries.

Churches highly engaged with the foreign or distant mission were identifiable by three factors: Relational, Organisational and Theological.

He said these highly engaged churches had a strong relationship with overseas workers.

These relationships helped build “social capital”, or the benefits experienced by relationships with distant workers.

“Connection with overseas workers can help the church learn about evangelism, contextualisation and reaching people of different cultural backgrounds.

“This stimulates the church into some local engagement.”

Mr Silberman stressed these relationships with overseas workers needed to be kept fresh and mutual. For example, some churches may give

lots of money and have a strong prayer focus, but they would not receive the full benefits without solid relationships with workers.

Churches not highly engaged in the global mission would not have good relationships with international or distant workers.

These relational differences are the most significant factor because they shape the church’s theological or core beliefs.

Highly engaged churches had a strong sense of responsibility for global mission.

They had a strong belief they can and should contribute to the worldwide mission. They saw this as God’s mission and considered it a privilege to be involved.

On the other hand, churches not highly engaged in global mission seemed to lack understanding of global needs and saw their priority as local. Local activity consumed their attention. They tended to think more about money and saw the worldwide mission as a burden.

These core beliefs of a church helped shape or form the church’s mission culture, which became reflected in organisational factors that may stimulate people to be involved in the mission.

Key organisational features comprised leaders, structures, and processes in the church.

While having a pastor passionate about the global mission was important, it was not enough. Mr Silberman said leaders at all levels in the church needed to have the same passion for a church to be highly engaged in God’s global mission.

Church structures were then crucial and included missionary committees, mission policies and small groups,



Tim Silberman & Richard Upter

youth and children’s groups, having an integrated mission focus.

Processes in the church were also critical. Churches tend to have processes or procedures that stimulate their highest priorities. These priorities included personal evangelism, inviting friends to events or meeting local social needs.

However, in churches highly engaged in global mission, the processes help members explore their possible involvement in God’s mission. These processes may involve encouraging short-term mission, local cross-cultural mission, and training within or outside the church, including Bible college.

Mr Silberman said the processes in a church engaged in God’s worldwide mission reflects the conviction that the church is responsible for raising workers for God’s global purposes.

The three factors, relationships with missionaries, theological beliefs and organisational dimensions, were interlinked.

Relationships with overseas missionaries influenced a church’s theological beliefs, affecting the church mission culture. Subsequently, the church missions’ culture then influenced the organisational factors including leaders, structures and processes. These church organisational factors would impact the development of relationships with global mission workers.

Mr Silberman said the critical thing to consider ourselves is how we could help churches, including our own church, get more globally engaged.

Good News in Rural Madagascar

From Jeremy and Felicity Aitken, Preparing to Serve in Madagascar.

When you think of Madagascar, what comes to mind?

Perhaps you conjure up an image of a tropical paradise with pristine beaches, or your mind may wander to the famous gigantic baobab trees and fascinatingly unique wildlife.

Many people do not realise that Madagascar is one of the poorest nations in the world, with 70% to 80% of people living below the poverty line.

Hunger and malnutrition are commonplace as subsistence farmers rely on timely rains for their livelihood. Infant mortality rates are high, and life expectancy is low. In rural Madagascar, access to healthcare when needed is challenging. The few roads that do exist are entirely impassable during the rainy season that lasts for months of the year.

In addition to the physical needs of the people, there are more significant spiritual needs. Many Malagasy people try to appease the spirits of their dead ancestors by sacrifices and following special “taboo” rules.

People believe these spirits control their daily fate, including sickness, poverty, poor harvests and infertility. Evidence of stone altars and the horns of sacrificed animals is visible in the villages. The people remain in fear and bondage by this spiritual system.

But Jesus has said, “The Spirit of the LORD God is upon me because the LORD has anointed me to bring good news to the afflicted; He has sent Me to bind up the broken-hearted, to proclaim liberty to the captives, and freedom to the prisoners” (Isaiah 61:1).

This Good News of Jesus is bringing light amidst this darkness.

In Mandritsara, rural Madagascar, the Good News Hospital has been doing this for the past 25 years. The hospital provides a place where afflicted, broken-hearted, captive and spiritually imprisoned people can come. They receive not only life-saving healthcare but also hear the life-changing news that Jesus has come to offer them eternal life and freedom.

The hospital’s strategic rural location means that many people from surrounding regions can travel more easily to receive care where otherwise they would have to walk for days. Alongside the hospital, as a broader part of the Good News Project, is the Good News School, the Voice of the Good News radio station, Community Health work and the Nursing and Midwifery Training School.

Currently, the Good News Hospital is expanding its surgical capabilities and have built a new surgical wing. The team has a vision to train excellent African surgeons to continue to carry



hope and healing into other unreached communities and have qualified to be a part of the highly respected Pan African Academy of Christian Surgeons.

The hospital has invited us (Jeremy and Felicity) to join the team, along with our four sons.

Melbourne trained Jeremy will use his specialist nursing skills and experience in anaesthetics and recovery nursing to empower and train local nurses.

But more than that, we both have a heart for discipleship and are excited to “be disciples who disciple” those we contact.



The Aitkens are preparing to learn French (required for hospital work) at an immersive language school in France before going on to Madagascar directly.

They are hoping to leave Australia as soon as they have reached their support target.

Would you please pray for the Good News Project and for the Aitken family that God would build the necessary prayer and financial support team to enable this?



Rural Madagascar Landscape



Good News Hospital, Madagascar



Some of the Good News Hospital Team



Good News Hospital, Madagascar



Madagascar Landscape

Three-way Mission Partnership

Good partnerships in mission are vital, according to Pastor Sam Reeve.

Pastor Reeve is the senior pastor of CrossCulture Church (formerly Swanston Street Church of Christ) in Melbourne. He spoke at the Missions Interlink 2021 Global Missions Forum.

Pastor Reeve said three-way partnerships between the (sending) church, mission agency and missionaries are essential.

The Apostle Paul talks about Gospel partnerships with churches in Philippians. These were partnerships with the common goal of getting the Gospel out and making disciples. (Philippians 1:3-5). There were partnerships in times of trouble (4:14) and in giving and receiving (4:15).

Pastor Reeve said people share and invest their passion, energy, money, and time toward a common goal, to get the Gospel out and make disciples.

“We need to keep the Gospel temperature up.”

In churches, we need to make sure the people we are nurturing toward mission are clear about the Gospel and can clearly articulate it, and they can do so in their context.

Pastor Reeve said that people need to be clear about how the person and work of Christ have impacted them and show they can share this with others.

He recalled interviewing some people considering mission service and said that sometimes these people could not clearly articulate the Gospel. When asked to talk about their Christian journey, they did this without mentioning Jesus.

In churches, we need to focus on the Gospel and the goal of sharing it and making disciples.

Pastor Reeve said his church found the Perspectives course is a great tool, helping people to think their way into

mission. Mission agencies need to ensure candidates are well prepared and supported in their work in the field, allowing them to get the Gospel out.

Pastor Reeve said partnership in times of trouble is also essential.

“At least three of our 28 Global Partners (missionaries) are in crisis at any one time”.

“Missionaries need a lot of care. Paul says the Philippians showed their care and concern for him (4:10), and he rejoiced in it.”

Churches can help by connecting people with prayer support.

Pastor Reeve said the CrossCulture Church prays for at least one global partner per service. All their life groups adopted at least one global partner. The church provided weekly prayer points and held weekly zoom prayer meetings. Often international partners join in the prayer meetings or life groups by video conference.

“Like the Philippians, we want to do well in partnering with each other, so Gospel workers not only survive but thrive.”

“Mission agencies can do well by having dedicated pastoral carers on the ground.”

Agencies need to ensure they don't put people where they can't support them.

Ensuring workers have professional independent debriefs on their return to Australia or during or after a crisis is essential.



Pastor Sam Reeve calling for good partnerships in mission.

“We send people for regular medical checks, so why not send them for regular emotional and mental health checks. It's probably more important.”

Pastor Reeve said three-way agreements or memoranda of understanding (MOUs) between churches, mission agencies and workers is an excellent way to clarify who is responsible for what.

“The introduction to our MOU says: The purpose of this agreement is to maximise the benefit of (missionary's name) ministry, to ensure her flourishing and perseverance in her relationship with the Lord, family, colleagues and the people she seeks to serve.”

We all seek effective partnership with all stakeholders so that the ministry can be effective and efficient, to the glory of God.

Pastor Reeve also said partnership in giving is vital (Phil. 4:15-19).

“One of the reasons for the warmth Paul has for his friends in Philippi is that they partnered with him in giving and receiving, and kept at it – from the first day until now (v5).”

“Churches can encourage people to invest in getting the Gospel out.

And yes, you can ramp it up.

Fifty years ago, our church was giving \$800 to world mission. Today, by God's grace, it's more than half a million dollars.”

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Leaving a bequest to AIM in your will is a way you can ensure the ongoing proclamation of the Gospel.

Your bequest will help AIM mobilise people and reach Africa's unreached. These are people who otherwise may not hear the good news of Jesus Christ.

Wills are a time to remember your family. They are also a time to share with Christian ministries close to your heart. A simple way to remember AIM is to leave a specific sum or a proportion of your estate.

A sample clauses is:

"I give, devise and bequeath the (Insert details) to Africa Inland Mission Ltd free of all duties; for which written acknowledgement of the Chief Executive Officer of Africa Inland Mission Ltd. shall be sufficient."

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Contact Asia-Pacific Director

E director.au@aimint.org

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