



# AFRICA INLAND MISSION

Christ-Centred Churches  
Among all African Peoples

# AFRICA news

Oct 25-Mar 26  
[www.aimint.org/ap](http://www.aimint.org/ap)



## *In this issue:*

**Africa to the Rest**  
page 4

**AfriGo**  
page 8

**Central Africa**  
page 10

**Kairos**  
page 14

**Madagascar**  
page 16

Kenyan missionaries Robert & Carol Betts have served with AIM in South Sudan for the past 10 years.

# EDITOR'S LETTER

There's a whole history of missions in Africa that many of us are simply not aware of. So often we think of missionaries in Africa as those sent from the West ...maybe starting with heroes of the faith like David Livingstone and AIM's own founder Peter Cameron Scott, to those we are sending and supporting today.

But what about the vast numbers of African missionaries, even from the early days of the 'modern missionary age'? Most of them are lost to the history books but played a significant and vital part in advancing the gospel across Africa, often sacrificially. Today, the African missionary force is growing and, in this issue, we'll explore a little of how AIM is helping to encourage churches in Africa to prepare and send missionaries, to the remaining unreached African people groups and beyond.

The Great Commission still calls us to go from our historic Christian centres to make disciples of all peoples, but we join with African disciples who are themselves going and making disciples ...even to

those living at the ends of the earth where the glorious gospel of our great God has yet to take root.

With one of our own sending church Pastors sharing the joys and challenges of sending disciple-makers on page 20, I hope you will have a sense of God's mission being so much greater than the small but necessary part we all play, as we work alongside missionaries from across the world, towards reaching the remaining unreached peoples of Africa.

Serving Him together



*Tim Matthews*

Director, AIM Asia-Pacific




**Africa Inland Mission  
serves and partners with  
churches to fulfil the Great  
Commission and advance the  
gospel among Africans who  
have the least opportunity  
to hear about Jesus**

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www.aimint.org



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INLAND MISSION**  
Christ-Centred Churches  
Among all African Peoples

*English language magazine of  
Africa Inland Mission Asia-Pacific  
Mobilising Region*

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# CONTENTS

Africa To The Rest	4
African Missionary Fund	7
AfriGo	8
Central Africa	10
Kairos	14
Madagascar	16
Aitkens, Madagascar	18
A Pastor’s Reflection	20
Retirees	22



Africa Inland Mission is an evangelical Christian mission agency serving in over 20 African nations and around the world. Our passion is to see Christ-centred churches established and thriving among all of Africa’s peoples.



# AFRICA TO THE REST



Sam Ngugi is the co-founder of Mission Campaign Network (MCN) and GEN12, mission agencies based in Kenya and Rwanda, and he is also co-author alongside Yaw Perbi of the book "Africa to the Rest: From Mission Field to Mission Force (Again)". He's currently doing research on "the state of discipleship and cross-cultural missions in Afro-diaspora churches in the UK" with Oxford Centre for Mission Studies and is a member of the AIM Europe board.

## GOD HAS ALWAYS WORKED IN AFRICA

We are living at the dawn of an emerging African mission movement. Biblical faith is perhaps the most powerful force engaging the minds and hearts of Africans today, reorganising and transforming people's lives and communities in tangible ways. In our book "Africa to the Rest", Perbi and I try to make it abundantly clear that, contrary to the popular tales, God's hand has always been upon the peoples and continent of Africa. In the formative years of Christianity, Africa was a "theological

force", with early church fathers from Africa playing a critical role in grounding global Christianity in sound biblical doctrines that have carried the global Church to date! Once again, the Great I AM is on the move in Africa.

## SIGNIFICANT CHANGES IN AFRICA

In the Lausanne Movement's "State of the Great Commission" report, the most common word associated with Christianity in Africa is "growth": from the numerical growth of Christianity and churches to mission agencies, missionaries, international students,



diasporas, resources, Bible schools, etc. All projections convey optimism and hope. Take Bible translation, for example: between 2010 and 2024, SIL Global's expatriate workforce in Africa decreased by 20% while the African workforce increased by 70%! In addition, the leadership of all the four major translation agencies - SIL Global, United Bible Societies, Wycliffe Global Alliance, and the Word for the World - are from continental Africa.

## ENCOURAGING THE MISSION MOVEMENT

Enthusiasm about the emerging mission movement out of Africa is off the charts. But how can the growth and youthfulness of African Christianity translate to a real, fruitful and transformative mission movement in our generation and beyond? I propose at least two things:

## I. MATCH MISSION THEOLOGY WITH MISSION PRACTICE

Biblical Christianity and mission stand or falter on sound theology, biblical teaching and discipleship. While everyone acknowledges the dire need for discipleship in the Church in Africa, we don't seem to have the will and the determination to invest significant resources - human and financial - in it. I believe we need to make the ability/skill to disciple people a prerequisite qualification for missionary candidates and enquirers and peg all ministry funding in Africa to robust discipleship training programs. We need a mission-focussed discipleship revolution in Africa! Indeed, *Missio Dei* is about BEING and DOING, but the current mission enterprise is too heavy on 'doing' and little on 'being'. It's time to match our mission theology with our mission practice.



Co-authors Yaw Perbi and Sam Ngugi

## 2. OVERCOME RACIAL & CULTURAL BARRIERS

The Africa mission movement will flourish through kingdom partnerships built on genuine trust and hope. As they say, 'attitude leaks'; Africans still face racial obstacles, and we must work hand-in-hand to overcome these racial and cultural barriers and demolish every negative stereotype that creates doubts in the abilities of Africans to be missionaries in North Africa, Asia, Middle East and Europe. While mission strategy that links gospel workers with unreached peoples of similar/closer cultural affinity can be helpful to determine how and where to effectively mobilise a country's missionaries, this can lead to unintended negative implications which can marginalise and have a crippling effect e.g. determining that Africans can only be missionaries among dark-skinned

unreached peoples. This does not advance God's mission or motivate participation. Where is the faith and confidence in the power of the cross to both confound and save nations (Psalm 2:1-4)? God's mission is colourblind and Africa shall be a blessing among all nations.

**LISTEN TO SAM TALK ABOUT THE BOOK**

**HE CO-AUTHORED, AFRICA TO THE REST: FROM MISSION FIELD TO**

**MISSION FORCE**



**[EU.AIMINT.ORG/AFRICA-TO-THE-REST](http://EU.AIMINT.ORG/AFRICA-TO-THE-REST)**



# THE AFRICAN MISSIONARY FUND

**Answering the call to be a missionary is a courageous and selfless act—especially for African missionaries who often face significant financial challenges.**

## AN ETERNAL IMPACT

The African Missionary Fund (AMF), established in 2020, exists to support African missionaries reaching unreached people groups of Africa. Through bursaries, training, and sustainable business initiatives, AMF is working to ease financial burdens and reduce dependence, allowing missionaries to focus on their life-changing work.

## COLLABORATING TO EASE THE BURDEN

AMF's mission is rooted in kingdom values, supporting not only AIM African missionaries but also indigenous mission agencies across Africa, multiplying the impact and accelerating progress. By collaborating, we're seeing tangible results—missionaries reporting reduced financial stress and the ability to continue their service with joy.



## MAKING A DIFFERENCE

One recipient shared, “this has been such a blessing, easing our financial burdens so we can focus on the work at hand.”

Another spoke of the joy of meeting their budget for the first time, being able to pay for medication and rent. Another said, “we are deeply grateful for the support we receive monthly from AMF and for how the Lord has used that to further his work in our lives as a family and in the work he has entrusted to us in mercy”.

## SUPPORT

As we look toward the future, AMF's vision is clear: to support more missionaries and reach more communities with the hope of the gospel. The generous contributions of individuals and churches have been instrumental in this journey, fuelling the faith and determination of everyone involved, making a lasting impact and eternal difference.

**SUPPORT THE FUND:**

**[HTTPS://AIMINT.ORG/AP/AMF](https://aimint.org/ap/amf)**



Watch Lucky, an AIM missionary serving in Madagascar, share his experience of learning to trust God for the finances he needs to serve.

# AFRIGO: THE VOICE OF THE

## AFRICAN MISSIONS

### MOVEMENT

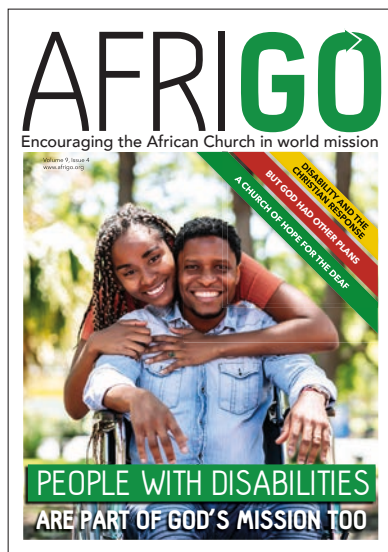
Cami Peterson-Zwart, an AIM missionary, serves on the team at AfriGO magazine as Editor-in-Chief, alongside five staff members and volunteers from Kenya, Nigeria, Ghana, Tanzania and Angola. Stephen Nitte La'abes, an SIM missionary from Nigeria, is Team Lead for the project. The team work remotely from all corners of Africa, meeting online and swapping stories. This excerpt was originally published in the AIM US Heartbeat magazine.

### THE UNTOLD STORIES

Although Africans have been involved in missions from the earliest years of foreign missionaries bringing the gospel, very few of their stories have been told. It was from a desire to tell these stories, and to inspire the African Church to claim her place as a sending church, that the dream for AfriGO came.

### AFRIGO'S JOURNEY

Inspired by former SIM international director Joshua Bogunjoko, a Nigerian, AfriGO magazine published their first issue in 2016. In 2019, AIM joined forces with SIM. To date, we've published 32 magazines covering a range of topics from



“Business as Mission” to “How to reach the Muslim next door,” a very pertinent topic for many Africans. We have also expanded to three other languages: Portuguese, KiSwahili and French. AfriGO is in 38 African countries now, with subscribers in 28 non-African countries!

### LIMITED BY EXPECTATIONS

Across Africa, believers have reached out locally, then further, and global missions is growing. However, this has not been the story everywhere. For many African churches, the idea of sending missionaries is still a foreign concept – literally. Their expectation that foreigners should do such outreach has stifled their vision. AIM’s goal is to ignite the fire of God’s call to missions in every African church.





## THE AFRIGO TEAM

## THE FUTURE OF AFRICAN MISSIONS

Our vibrant website and dynamic social media broadcast inspirational content on African missions daily. And there are many stories to tell! The African mission movement has taken off, and there are literally tens of thousands of Africans serving as full-time, cross-cultural missionaries all over the world, including in some places where Westerners are less welcome. The African Church is already a powerhouse for world mission, and will become even more so as they fully embrace the Great Commission. The receivers are now the senders, with joy! What a privilege to tell their stories.

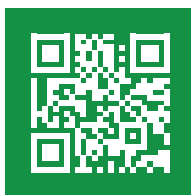


## INSPIRING AND MOBILISING

Through our stories, Africans are hearing about their rich history of missions, as well as discovering how wide and deep the African mission movement stretches. Youth are being stirred, and AIM mobilisers working to spread God's missionary vision find AfriGO an inspiring and educational tool. Through this ministry, we hope to encourage the African Church to send, support and pray for African missionaries, and to reach the lost wherever they are, near and far.

THE RECEIVERS ARE NOW THE SENDERS,  
WITH JOY! WHAT A PRIVILEGE TO  
TELL THEIR STORIES.

## HELP FUND THE AFRIGO PROJECT



With funding, AfriGO can translate more issues into French, Swahili and Portuguese, resources that those language-speakers are asking for!

**AFRIGO.ORG/GIVE**

# CENTRAL AFRICA

**Peter and Catherine Gitau are Aussie AIM missionaries based in Kampala, Uganda. Peter is the Regional Executive Director for AIM's CR (Central Region), covering 7 African countries and serving some 80 missionaries. Catherine teaches and cares for students at a local school.**

Here's Peter's snapshot of ministries in each of the CR countries.

**South Sudan** is a vast country plagued by instability, insecurity, and limited infrastructure. AIM works with 5 Unreached People Groups, who have no scripture, no church. Workers rely on Cessna airplanes and Toyota Landcruisers with winches to get there.

We have 3 teams: The first in a major town focusing on TEE (Theological Education by Extension - basic pastoral training for lay-leaders), and training health workers at the health institute. The second works with the Laarim. A people group of 6000, living in arid territory, whose lives are marked by fear of their more powerful neighbours and the threat of famine. The Laarim are responding with great interest to the gospel! The third team works with the Lopit. Work that is slow and hearts are hard, but now with a small group of believers meeting together.

In July we started a new Inbound (training) Team with five members after a successful team two years ago.

**Chad** is another challenging country with 70+ Unreached People Groups

mostly in the Muslim dominated north. Our workers need to speak French and then most add Chadian Arabic to minister to the Chadian Muslims, or a tribal language. Our six teams teach English, minister as chaplains in the hospital, provide Christian education training, serve MKs through a primary school, do evangelism in predominantly Muslim towns, and provide leadership and logistics.

In recent years, Chadian workers have trained with TIMO for church-planting work, with a team reaching out to the



Maba people, and another to the 'K' people. Pray for courage and clear witness in challenging places ...see the video on the QR code.

**DR Congo** has been in turmoil for years and continues to be. We have a small team doing medical work, ministering to street children, and working to empower the national church. They need more help! The church is well-established, and they send their own missionaries to parts of Congo that have no churches or where they used to have a church. It is exciting news that the Congo church is planting new churches. We also work with the church in Congo, offering educational help to the church in Central African Republic. Pray for the church as they send Congolese missionaries into difficult places.

We have no foreign missionaries in



the **Central African Republic** since evacuating in 2017 due to conflict between Muslim and Christian/traditional people groups. I was due to teach on syncretism in August, but the church leaders asked we teach on Trauma Healing. This is such a relevant topic because of the on-going fighting. Previously we have partnered with Voice of the Martyrs to send aid to displaced people. This is an enormous effort – purchasing basic supplies (tarps, cooking pots, blankets) in Uganda, which then make a tough 4-week journey. The video on the QR code shows these “ugly-face trucks”, which are the only things that can make it through. These are 6 and 8-wheel drive trucks linked two or three together to push/pull the load through flooded, pot-holed roads.

When the aid arrives, people from the church and AIM fly there to distribute it,

using planes that can ferry the goods to places even more inaccessible. It means we can continue supporting the church in CAR. We don't know when we might send people back, but it's not soon. We want to continue to reach out to the



Mbororo people who are involved in much of the conflict. So, we continue supporting and equipping the local church to do the work.

**Rwanda** is different. We don't have AIM workers here either. Different from the places I've just described - paved roads, reliable electricity, stability and very little corruption. Rwanda rose from the genocide of 1994 determined to redefine itself. We continue to run youth camps and leadership training and partner with Rwandan mission organisations who are

helping equip the church and mobilise for missions. The potential is exciting as the church in Rwanda seeks to send missionaries to other places in Africa.

**Uganda** is a mix of both. We have urban ministries that reach out to the disabled, street-kids, refugees, and are empowering Ugandan missionaries to serve among people like the Ik. We also have teams among the Karamajong – Uganda's nomadic pastoralists who are the tough warriors in hard-to-get places and have remained mostly untouched while Uganda develops. Another outreach focuses on the Ssesse Islands in Lake Victoria with young churches being equipped to teach better theology and train church leaders.

There's also ministry among a Muslim people group escaping war in East Africa and potential ministry amongst another people group close to Ethiopia.

In **Burundi**, we partner with local missionaries and organisations who are seeking to send and support their own missionaries around the world. In July we had two Burundians join the Inbound team in South Sudan.

Please pray for God's glory to be known in greater measure through the Central Region as people are saved, and that Peter is effective in the various tasks his role entails, as he encourages our missionaries and partners.





# YOU ARE UNIQUELY POSITIONED

Whether you go, pray, give, serve or encourage,  
your part in mission matters deeply.

## YOU'RE INVITED...

Jesus is inviting you into his redemptive plan for the world.  
We want to walk alongside you as you discern your role in  
the Great Commission and invite you to consider your next  
step in your journey into mission.

Together, we can play our part in seeing Christ-centred  
churches established among all African peoples.

**DISCOVER HOW GOD IS CALLING YOU  
TO TAKE YOUR NEXT SMALL, FAITHFUL STEP  
IN WORLD MISSION WITH OUR FREE DEVOTIONAL**



**GET A FREE COPY  
OF THE DEVOTIONAL  
TO SEE WHERE GOD  
IS LEADING YOU**

**[AIMINT.ORG/AP/UNIQUE](http://AIMINT.ORG/AP/UNIQUE)**



**AFRICA  
INLAND MISSION**

**PARTNERING WITH CHURCHES  
REACHING AFRICA'S UNREACHED**



# KAIROS: EQUIPPING THE CHURCH



**Nita Finger (Aussie AIM missionary) is serving on a team whose desire is to encourage and equip the local church to share the gospel of Jesus Christ in the unreached communities of Karamoja, northeast Uganda. Nita shares about one of the tools they use – the Kairos Course.**

## **BEING TRAINED TO REACH**

The Kairos Course shares God's heart for people of all nations and his desire to use his Church to reach them. As well as giving a thorough biblical and historical foundation of mission, it shares strategic and cultural insights for reaching out to people of other cultures. It helps us to see we all have a part in reaching the unreached of the world, whether we can go to them ourselves or not. As one

participant said: "I realised I am blessed to be a blessing and so the salary I receive every month is not only for me, but I should keep aside part of it to support the work of reaching the unreached peoples."

## **WORKING TOGETHER**

We have run the Kairos Course three times, with a mixture of church leaders and members participating. It has been very well received with participants sharing how it expanded their understanding of God's purposes in the world. After the second course, members from both cohorts started to come together each month; alternating between praying for unreached peoples and engaging in evangelism in nearby communities. We have also been running some refresher sessions to remind ourselves of some of



the aspects of “sending”, “mobilising”, and “welcoming”. We have invited people from other parts of Uganda to share about their experiences in each of these areas. It is helpful for people to hear that other Ugandans are also involved in these things, not just foreign missionaries. And they are also able to hear how others have dealt with some of the obstacles and challenges that they face in this context. Our next refresher will be focused on “going”.

## POWER IN SIMPLICITY

Raising up missionaries doesn’t need to be complicated. It is simply helping other believers understand God’s heart for all nations and helping them to find their part in seeing the unreached reached. It can be as simple as inviting a friend to pray together for an unreached people group.

*“THE KAIROS COURSE HAS ENCOURAGED ME TO REACH OUT AND PREACH THE WORD. I HAVE GOTTEN CONFIDENCE AND FEAR HAS GONE. NOW I CAN PREACH THE WORD OF GOD TO ANYONE.”*

**Pastor Julius Kibukuna, Kairos Course participant**

## PLEASE PRAY

- Giving thanks for the Kairos Course and the way it helps people see their part in reaching the unreached of the world.
- Pray for the Kairos graduates as they continue to meet for prayer and to put what they learned into practice.
- Pray for the encouragement and equipping of Karimojong church leaders, especially in rural communities.

# MADAGASCAR



**30.95 MILLION**  
Population

Capital  
**ANTANANARIVO**  
Official languages  
**ALAGASY, FRENCH**  
Unreached  
**471,000 (1.5%)**



## RELIGIONS IN MADAGASCAR

**49.7% CHRISTIAN**

**7% MUSLIM**

**42.6% ANIMISM**

## BEAUTY HIDES THE NEED

The tropical island of Madagascar is found off the east coast of Africa. It boasts rainforests and unspoilt beaches and is home to over 110 species of lemur. But it is also one of the poorest countries in sub-Saharan Africa with nearly half a million people who have yet to hear the gospel.





## THE PEOPLE

With a language and culture that points to Indonesian roots, as well as the influence of Afro-Arab settlers, the Malagasy people have a unique blend of Asian and African cultural ideas, beliefs and practices that are only found on this island. Over 90% of the population is Malagasy, divided into an estimated twenty ethnic groups. However, these groups are not always clear cut, as one blends and merges into another.

## HISTORY OF TURMOIL

While the people scattered across the island have had their own power struggles, they have also dealt with frequent invasions from European nations and attempts to occupy the island, culminating in the French occupation at the turn of the 20th century. Even when Madagascar became autonomous in 1958, political turmoil continued within its government. Unrest, protests and presidential impeachments have been a regular occurrence.

## A DAMAGED COUNTRY

The constant upheaval of its government has left its mark on Madagascar. Changes in foreign and domestic policies between 1972 - 1975 saw a significant decline in the economy and deterioration of the country's infrastructure and social services. The country was declared bankrupt in 1982. Since then it has relied on foreign aid, which has been suspended multiple times over the years in response to the political turmoil.

## A UNIQUE PLACE

Madagascar is home to many species that are found nowhere else in the world. From all the species of lemur, to the unique fossa (a cat-like mammal), to the island's national tree – the baobab – it is estimated that 5% of all known plants and animals in the world are only found here. These unique plants and animals are threatened though by the demand for wood and charcoal, which sees the forested areas of the island continue to decline.

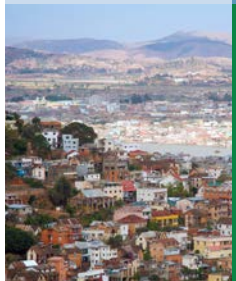


### UNDISCOVERED

There is no evidence of any indigenous people living on Madagascar prior to circa 500 AD.

### NATIONAL TREE

The baobab can grow up to 30 metres tall and live for over 1000 years.



### BIGGER THAN YOU THINK

Madagascar is the world's fourth largest island and is over twice the size of New Zealand.

### FAMADIHANA

The Malagasy people engage in a tradition known as the 'turning of the bones', where they rewrap the bodies of their ancestors. Image by Hery Zo Rakotondramanana.



### CHRISTIAN

Nearly half of the population are considered to be Christian, but people groups like the Antankarana remain unreachable.

# AITKENS, MADAGASCAR



*Trainee surgeons at the Good News Hospital*

## **Jeremy and Felicity Aitken (and their 5 boys with number 6 on the way) serve at the Good News Hospital in Madagascar.**

Here in dusty Mandritsara, a remote town in northern Madagascar, there is a clear picture of God's mission to seek and save that which was lost.

Some things never change. I wake to the sound of oxen carts rolling by, people walking past the rice fields on their way to market, and others heading out to water their cattle. An altar to the spirits of dead ancestors is just a stone's throw away, while the calls from the town mosque and the bells of the Catholic church echo throughout the day.

On a practical level, life here is perhaps not so different from the time when Jesus washed His disciples' feet. Amid dust and

mud, one gains a fresh appreciation for the perfect servant heart of Jesus, kneeling to wash His disciples' feet.

The mission to seek and save the lost - the fields ripe for harvest, with workers still few - remains a constant challenge. But what is changing?

Perhaps it is our perspective, and our willingness to think outside the box as we consider how to reach the millions still unreachable.

Here at the Good News Hospital, dozens of workers actively share the gospel with patients from all over this vast, unreachable area of Madagascar.

Each of these workers has been encouraged in their faith and equipped in their profession during their time here. Over the years, dozens of specialists from abroad have poured out knowledge and spiritual



encouragement, and thousands of dollars have been donated to develop and sustain the hospital ministry.

It's a lot that has been brought from abroad! But mission is not only about what we bring—it's about what we leave behind.

This shift is becoming more tangible in the hearts of mission agencies around the world. If we are to reach the millions still unreached, we need to see a self-sustaining, mobilising movement.

The traditional model of sending and supporting one missionary from abroad is powerful but limited. It is still genuinely needed but not easily reproduced in the developing world, where the church is often filled with the poorest of the poor.

One exciting example of addressing this challenge is a programme training African doctors in surgery. The Good News

Hospital is one of several mission hospitals doing this. These surgeons are equipped not only with surgical skill but with servant-hearted, mission-minded, and spiritually grounded character, preparing them to serve in some of the hardest-to-reach places.

They will work in prayer-filled partnership with local churches without facing the daunting task of being completely sponsored by them.

Now in its fourth year, the programme has six residents in training. And they are a force to be reckoned with!

So, let's think about what we will leave behind. Let's praise God for opportunities to invest in new workers. And let's pray for those partnering with the ones who know these dusty roads better than anyone else ever could.



# A PASTOR'S REFLECTION ON SENDING



## THE JOYS AND CHALLENGES OF SENDING

When I think of partnership, my mind always drifts towards Paul's words in Philippians 1:3-5,

*"I THANK MY GOD EVERY TIME I REMEMBER YOU... BECAUSE OF YOUR PARTNERSHIP IN THE GOSPEL FROM THE FIRST DAY UNTIL NOW."*

It's a great line, and it's more than a thank you; it's a picture of what it looks like when a local church embraces its role in God's mission. It's cheering others on from the sidelines and partnering meaningfully with those called to take the good news of Jesus across cultures and borders.

At our church here in Mooroolbark, we've had the privilege of sending people we know and love to serve cross-culturally. It's not a long list, and we're not a big church. Not that size is the measure anyway. But what's mattered most is the posture we've taken. A posture of sending, of being open to God's leading and being partners in the gospel together.

## THE JOYS

Watching someone within the life of the church respond to God's call into mission is a beautiful thing. To see them grow in faith, serve in ministry, walk with others, and begin to sense God's leading somewhere new is exciting. It's exciting for them, and it's exciting for the church. It doesn't happen quickly – it can be awfully slow. But when conviction settles and through discernment is affirmed there is a great sense of God at work. You end up realising that this is why the Church exists.

We've had the joy of commissioning services, which are rich in meaning and prayer. The laying on of hands, the setting apart, and the committing those called to the Lord. These are services that energise the church as people rally around, offering financial support, practical help, consistent prayer, and just good encouragement.

It's also encouraging to see the impact that mission updates have on others. Whether it's stories of discipleship, translation, medical work, or leadership development, it all reminds us that we're part of



something bigger. It lifts our eyes beyond the immediate and makes our hearts swell.

Then, perhaps not thought of as often, is the encouragement of seeing the growth in those we send. There's a deepening of faith, a maturing of character, and a greater sense of hope in God. The way God shapes those on the field is a sight to see. They don't just go to give and serve, but they go and are formed, too. And this is a blessing for all involved.

## THE CHALLENGES

Of course, sending has its challenges. The hardest part is often saying goodbye. Those sent are usually not just any member of the church, they're often those who are deeply involved in the life of the community. This is certainly true in my experience. They lead small groups, mentor others, serve in different capacities, and then suddenly there's a gap. The church can't help but feel it.

There is the challenge of distance too. Supporting people well from the other side of the world isn't exactly straightforward. There's the practical reality that we can't always help in hands-on ways. We must be intentional to keep connection, to communicate regularly, and stay informed and prayerful as needs arise. The saying "out of sight, out of mind" can be true in our churches as well as our personal lives. Wrestling with those questions of how partnership works, between the church, the missionaries, and their mission agencies, is key. How do we stay involved without overstepping? Who takes the lead in care, and in what ways? All these tensions are good and right but tensions all the same.

And like many churches, we rely on a volunteer team to keep our missionary support active and present. They pray faithfully, with love and care, but as missionaries needs become more complex (especially around member care and logistics), there can be a stretch. There's more to support than a few emails, an occasional gift, and financial contributions, but how do we do it well? It isn't always obvious.

## THE POSTURE OF SENDING

Through these things, the practicalities and questions, we're learning what it means to have a sending posture. This isn't about an occasional project, it's a long-term commitment that is shaped by the Great Commission, those words of Jesus himself in Matthew 28:19-20,

*"GO AND MAKE DISCIPLES OF ALL NATIONS...  
AND SURELY I AM WITH YOU ALWAYS."*

We want to respond to this call as a church, not only by going but by sending. We go into our neighbourhoods, schools, workplaces, sporting clubs, and families but we also go into the wider world. And we do so trusting that the Lord of the harvest is still calling, still sending, and still doing more than we could ask or imagine.

Sending missionaries isn't easy. But it's worth it. It reminds us that the gospel is good news for all people, everywhere.

And we get to be part of it.

*Jon Coombs is the Lead Pastor at Mooroolbark Baptist Church, the sending church of AIM missionaries Jeremy and Felicity Aitken. He is passionate about seeing others know Jesus, grow in Jesus and show Jesus to the world.*

# RETIREEES

**Kiwi missionaries Bruce & Christine began their service among the Karamojong people in Uganda in 2015, when many would be considering early retirement plans. They returned to New Zealand in 2021 and continued to serve as AIM Mobilisers, finally retiring this August ...although we're thankful they are continuing their work as volunteers!**

It's a cold morning, so let me sit by the fire and write for you ...Why does God call a man at 60 and his wife to walk the pathways in the Karamoja in Northeast Uganda? Well, peace from guns and cattle raiding, and military intervention had come. Also, I was now an equal among the elders of the communities so we easily could sit together. From one village I visited weekly, to teach from the book of Ephesians, I have a video of 18 elders sitting on their stools around one side of the circle.

Language was hard to learn, so I always needed an interpreter. But it meant I often gained insights from observing cultural behaviours. At one village meeting, a group of young men came along the road, unsure we could get them to join us we made a change of music style and gave an invitation that stopped them, and they joined us.

We had so many questions to understand the people we were living among; what is this band around the baby? Who placed it there? How will Jesus answer our prayers



if this is a bond to the spirits and you trust them more than Him?

A group of local Christian men who came each week to our compound for instruction and encouragement became more courageous, more capable, more willing to share Jesus in many places. Their response encouraged me “Thank you Bruce, you have sat with us who have not gone to school. No one else has done that. “

God's call to us was to walk the paths he walks among the Karimojong and fan into flame the little flickers of faith to burn brighter. This was a joy and delight with AIM and the team that was with us.

We have enjoyed this journey; we delight to tell the stories and look forward to the heavenly banquet where language will not be a barrier and we will again enjoy fellowship with these beautiful people.



**Kath Weekley left Springwood, NSW, in 2013 to join a TIMO (Training in Ministry Outreach) team in Chad. Ministry life was not always easy, but Kath persevered and served in a couple of locations in Chad, learning both French and Chadian Arabic during her faithful service. She retired from AIM in January and shares her reflections here...**

As I've wrapped up my time serving with AIM, I've had the opportunity to reflect on what God has done over these past 11 years in Chad—a place filled with amazing people, each one made in the image of God. It has been such a privilege to witness His hand at work.

Over the years, it's been exciting to see hearts opened and lives changed by God's redeeming grace. Many have had the chance to hear the gospel—not just through words, but through faithful living and witness among them. Yet even more than our presence or effort, it's been prayer that has opened hearts. Your

prayers, our prayers. God has heard and answered them.

Again and again, I've seen **how prayer leads us to where God is already at work.**

It has been humbling to be guided by Him to people of peace; to see His Spirit moving, and to know it began in the place of intercession. I've come to understand in a deeper way what it truly means to lift others before our heavenly Father, to intercede, and to stand in the gap. Prayer is not just preparation for the work—it is the work.

Even as my time in Chad concludes, the privilege of prayer remains. We can continue to intercede for those who have heard the Good News, for those still unreached, and for our brothers and sisters who are standing firm for Jesus amid hardship and persecution. We can pray against the schemes of the enemy and for the light of Christ to break through.

This is the work we all can keep doing: to stand in prayer for the unreached of Africa—and beyond.

# YOUR PART

The knowledge of the glory of the Lord will  
fill the earth as the waters fill the sea.



The question is not **IF** this great task will happen  
but **HOW** will you be a part of it?

Today, through your prayers and giving, you can be  
part of awakening worship among Africa's 350m  
unreached people. Together we can send the next  
generation of missionaries.

**Will you join us?**



[aimint.org/ap/task](http://aimint.org/ap/task)