

MISSIONS HIGHLIGHT

"Go into all the world, and preach the gospel." Mark 16:15

March 2008

Monthly Missions Highlights

How to Pray for Missions

1. Thank God for the privilege of cooperating with Him through prayer in changing our local region, our nation and our world.
2. Pray that God will release unbelievers from darkness.
3. Ask the Lord to call people who are willing to sacrifice and share the love of Christ in every dark place.
4. Ask the Holy Spirit to open the hearts of unbelievers toward true Christianity and make them receptive for the gospel.
5. Ask the Lord to raise up strong local churches among unreached people groups.
6. Pray against spiritual forces that hinder the establishment and growth of the church.
7. Pray that God will sustain and give courage to new believers and protect them from those who threaten persecution and death.
8. Pray that God would draw you close to His heart and allow you to see through His eyes, hear with His ears and understand with His wisdom what it is to love God and love others, serve God and serve others.
9. Pray that people in our local church body at RCC would embrace missions and get involved.

This Month's Missions Spotlight

2008 RCC Missions Strategy

Please refer to the last page of this report for the 2008 Missions Strategy of Riverside Community Church. Together we're changing the world, one life at a time!

SEAPC Coins for Kids Fundraiser During Lent at RCC

SEAPC Coins for Kids is a fund raising effort designed to provide for various programs that benefit children by simply using the spare change that each of us collects on a daily basis. Last spring we joined with a few other churches to raise over \$24,000 in change to benefit children all over the world! The money that we collected built a water well and provided a chemistry lab in Cambodia. During Lent we will be partnering with SEAPC in this fundraising initiative by collecting our spare change in empty bottles donated by Daily's Corp. Thanks to Bill and Charlotte Bandi who came in to adhere labels on these bottles! We are asking the family of RCC to participate and return the bottles and money no later than Sunday, March 16th. We will report the total that we've collected on Easter Sunday! Thank you for making a difference!

Monthly Missions Events and News Via Email

To sign up for our monthly missions newsletters which include one events email, one missions report email, and periodic urgent missions updates/news/info—please email Dave Longstreth at Longstreth@riversideconnect.org.

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Monthly Missions Highlights—Western PA

Monthly Prayer Points

1. **YoungLives:** for the girls to find hope and healing in Jesus, that they would be responsive to the mentors and to the message of the gospel, that strong relationships would develop between all the mentors and girls, for girls that are met weekly for lunch at Penn Hill high school (they would move past surface relationships to be willing to get involved in mentoring and club), for the mentors to be encouraged, and for the girls that they've lost contact with that God would keep them safe and they would be able to get in touch with them again soon.
2. **Watchman Fellowship:** pray for Carley and her boyfriend as she is studying with the Jehovah's Witnesses that the Lord will remove the blinders from their eyes and allow that door to reopen, pray for speaking opportunities for this ministry.
3. **Crossroads:** volunteers needed, guidance for Marilou as interim director, clients who suffer from infer abortions, women who are in need of post-abortion counseling, opportunities to reach high schools and universities with their message.

Regional Missions Update

YoungLives—Rebecca Asper

I read two stories this past month of girls that Rebecca and her team have been ministering to and the stories are too graphic and personal for me to share in this type of a report. I can say that this is worthy ministry that needs to be partnered with and we at RCC are happy to do small part. The prayer requests are on the column on the left. Please pray for the girls that are being reached through this ministry. Check out their new website at <http://younglivespittsburgh.younglife.org>.

Watchman Fellowship

Bob Anderson will be traveling to Oakland, CA this month to teach, preach and attack the forces of the enemy in the inner city there. He will be teaching in an inner city Bible School. He is praying that the Lord will open the doors to a couple of churches he's been talking to in that general area. He plans to take a trip to Manti, Utah in June where the Mormons hold a pageant there annually.

Teen Challenge of Western PA

Four students from the school were water baptized recently through the class taught on Christian Practices (which includes water baptism).

Crossroads Pregnancy Services

Gail Anderson is looking to pass the torch of being a church representative for Crossroads to RCC. If there is anyone who is looking to be used of God in this way, please let her know. The commitment is that you meet once in a while with Crossroads and be a liaison between their organization and our church.

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Monthly Missions Highlights—North America

Monthly Prayer Points

1. Ask the Lord to call people to serve in the hurricane ridden area of LA as they still have thousands of homes to yet build.
2. Pray for those still living in FEMA trailers who are now getting side effects from the chemicals and poor construction materials of the trailers—sickness and diseases such as cancer and so-forth.
3. Pray for the construction projects in St. Bernard Parish this month.
4. Pray that God will call future students to study at VFCC and commit to a lifetime of service and leadership development for His kingdom.
5. Pray for the Assemblies of God colleges and universities and other Bible schools throughout the US.

National Missions Update

Cutting Edge Ministries—Bill and Kim Richardson

Bill Richardson has been working with Convoy of Hope in the US (Gulf region), Pastor Rustin who pastors a church in St. Bernard Parish, as well as oversees with various missionaries. He has been traveling to St. Bernard Parish in the Gulf region taking teams to do short-term missions work in rebuilding homes. The trip that we were supposed to take was recently cancelled due to a combination of Convoy of Hope canceling the outreach because of a lack of church commitments to assist in the outreach and Pastor Rustin booked a large group to come the same that we had our reservations and moved us out of the relief center. We as a church will not be rescheduling a short-term trip because of the opportunities that we will have in our own backyard this summer. Bill Richardson will continue to take teams and those interested in joining him should contact him directly.

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Monthly Missions Highlights—The World

Monthly Prayer Points

Pray for our newly supported missions organization in International Justice Mission (IJM):

Prayer For Protection

Ask God to protect IJM staff, their families, and the victims of injustice from physical harm and spiritual attack.

Prayer For Perseverance

Ask God to bless IJM staff with perseverance to seek justice and community transformation in the face of opposition, indifference, and corruption.

Prayer For Love

Ask God to give IJM staff a great love for one another, for the victims that they serve, and for those they confront.

Global Missions Update

International Justice Mission (IJM)

International Justice Mission (IJM) is a human rights agency that secures justice for victims of slavery, sexual exploitation and other forms of violent oppression. IJM lawyers, investigators and aftercare professionals work with local officials to ensure immediate victim rescue and aftercare, to prosecute perpetrators and to promote functioning public justice systems. We have just agreed beginning in 2008 to support this ministry on a monthly basis with emphasis in Southeast Asia.

In Southeast Asia, IJM staff work on the frontlines to bring rescue and relief to victims of sexual violence, including trafficked women and children, and to prosecute their perpetrators. Despite a growing commitment to fight this illegal activity in the region, trafficking continues to constitute a major human rights violation in Southeast Asia. Poverty, overburdened legal systems and social instability all contribute to the prevalence of trafficking.

In Cambodia, 60 percent of individuals in commercial sexual activity report being forced to join the sex industry, and as many as one third of the individuals in the sex industry are children. Here's an example of the work that IJM has been doing in Cambodia. Kunthy was trafficked in to prostitution in Cambodia at age 13. She was held captive in a dilapidated structure the locals called the "Anarchy Building," where she was raped nightly and routinely beaten, drugged and threatened by the brothel keeper and pimp.

Kunthy was discovered through an IJM undercover investigation. After documenting proof of her imprisonment, IJM staff worked with local authorities to ensure her rescue, and pursued the prosecution of the brothel owner and pimp, who were sentenced to 15 and 10 years in prison respectively.

Today, Kunthy lives in an aftercare home, where she is healing from her abuse in a secure and loving environment. Her dream is to own an Internet café and design Web sites for businesses. Right now, she works at a part-time job with a local NGO, attends a computer training school and is thriving in the freedom and security of her transitional home.

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Monthly Missions Highlights—The World

Monthly Prayer Points

1. Pray that they would find a more permanent house or center in Seka for the girls to live.
2. Pray that Firstlight and the church planters would establish five cells of believers from the 100 who have accepted Christ—25 in each cell.
3. Pray for Debbie's father, Jim Graham, as he recovers from surgery from a colostomy operation.
4. Pray for a successful board meeting, staff training and a project development session in Nong Khai.
5. Pray for the start of the RH Project (more info to come).
6. Pray for the Barner family and for Blake, Brittany Claire and David for direction as they study at Hill-song.
7. Pray for Kevin and Sandy for training and discipleship of new leaders and new fellowships.
8. Pray for a building for the International Christian Assembly.
9. Pray for the ministry of the seminary project in China.

Global Missions Update

Dan & Debbie Ecker—Firstlight Evangelism—Thailand

Firstlight now has two church planters on site in Seka. In the first part of the year they helped settle in the church planters in Seka to begin the work there. Over the next five weeks the goal is to follow up on the 100 who have believed. That's 4 people per day. A letter has been sent out to this first group announcing that a home visit will take place over the next five weeks. Tukta & Joy will travel by motorbike daily to each of these homes to follow up on decisions and they will distribute a blanket to each of these people also. Through this process, they will work towards water baptism and the formation of a cluster of cells. A second mailer has gone out to the 1,000 plus people who came to see the HSM doctor teams in November of last year.

Kevin and Sandy Barner—Russia

The International Christian Assembly celebrated 15 years in Moscow last fall and the Barner family just celebrated 5 years at the church in leadership last month. Urgent prayer is needed for the new visa law. Several months ago the government in Russia passed a new law concerning visas. The new requirement is for foreigners on religious, humanitarian, cultural and business visas to be permitted to stay in the country for 90 days, then leave for 90 days, allowing a total of 180 days in country per year. This may mean that many foreigners may have to relocate. Please pray for them all as they deal with yet another law making life and ministry there difficult.

China

Due to security reasons for our missionaries in China, we took this portion out of the report. Contact Dave Longstreth for more information on China missions if you are interested.

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Monthly Missions Highlights—Global

Monthly Prayer Points

1. Please pray that the pledged funds for Touching Hearts will be paid in full by the end of the month.
2. Pray for Bob Roth, John and Mary Romick as the travel to Cambodia this month.
3. Pray for John Bennett, Paul Rummel, Chet Frazier and Mark Nease as they are in Thailand with Partnership for Purpose this month.
4. Pray for Dr. Jennifer Madagan to be released by San Jose State to do this vital international work in Cambodia for the Science Center. Pray for the direction and timing of the visit to the US by members of the Dept of Education and peaceful elections in July (Cambodia).
5. Pray for cash flow for each child receiving a heart operation.
6. Pray for the timing of the Lord in releasing this word in India and among Indian peoples in Oakmont and the Pgh area. Pray for the staff and board of SEAPC that they will continue to be focused and grow personally and be able to handle the increased responsibilities.
7. Pray for strength and health for Mark and Matt in their travels and grace for Jessica and Ellie.

Global Missions Update (continued)

SEAPC-Cambodia—Pastor Sinai and Somalay

The Cambodia Christian School Network is impacting Cambodia nationwide. The model school in Rongko, Banteay Meanchey is now declared a model school for the entire country. High test scores of the students have caught people's attention. Also, the first 12th grade class to graduate in a rural area in Cambodia for many years. The best news is that many of the teachers and students at this school are now Christians. A second church service has begun, held at the college site, to help disciple them.

Other news is that the first building at the college site in Rongko is completed. For now, the high school is going to use the building for classes. The building construction is beginning in Kampong Thom for an area that is in desperate need. In addition to all this, the process of acquiring land in the province of Prey Veng has begun.

The integrated science curriculum is being written by Dr. Madigan, 400 donated computers are being shipped to Cambodia, plans for an irrigation system are under development for Kampong Thom, economic opportunities are being developed in the construction and cosmetology fields for NHO orphans, plans to construct replacement orphanage facilities in Pursat and Kampong Spue are in process, updates on other orphanage facilities are planned, pastors are being trained and churches are being planned.

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Monthly Missions Highlights—Strategy for Missions

RCC's Strategy for Missions

The strategy of missions at RCC is two-fold: redemption of souls and redemption of society. Redemption of souls is evangelism, being the feet of Jesus which carry the Good News of salvation through the sacrifice of Christ. Our mission is to believe and tell others of this kind of redemption. Yet if we only believe in our minds and speak with our lips we have only done half of what Jesus teaches us. We are also called to behave this Good News by being the hands of Jesus that demonstrate through compassion and love the message of hope and restoration and a new kind of kingdom which contrasts the present kingdoms of this world. We believe that we are a church called to address the biggest global evil giants of our generation (as defined by Rick Warren in his global peace plan) by responding through the model of Jesus' life and ministry:

Global Evil Giants of Our Generation

1. Spiritual Emptiness

- Over 4.5 billion people in the world do not know Jesus
- Of these, 2 billion have never even heard the Christian message

2. Egocentric Leadership

- Self-centered or corrupt leaders are abusing their power to serve themselves instead of using their power and influence for the good of those who need help the most

3. Extreme Poverty

- More than 8 millions people around the world die every year due to poverty related issues
- Over 3 billion people live on less than \$2 a day

4. Pandemic Diseases

- 300 million people suffer from curable and preventable diseases, most of these are children under the age of 5
- There are over 40 million people infected with AIDS/HIV resulting in 15 million children losing parents

5. Illiteracy & Lack of Education

- Over 3 billion people, half of the world's population, are functionally illiterate (don't have the reading/writing skills necessary for ordinary practical needs)
- Many more people are poorly educated and a country's overall health is determined much in part with the education of its next generation

The Church's Response as Modeled in Christ

1. Promote Reconciliation

- Reconcile man to fellow man and environment
- Share the Good News of Reconciliation in Christ Jesus through planting and partnering

2. Equip Servant Leaders

- Replace corrupt leaders with others-centered leaders; therefore, train servant-leaders
- Fight injustice (abuse of power over the weak)

3. Assist the Poor

- Through compassion feed the hungry, clothe the naked and care for the least, the last and the lost
- Provide solutions to overcome systemic poverty

4. Care for the Sick

- Provide finances and resources to prevent and cure diseases that we've been able to eradicate in the US
- Provide finances and resources to care for and better the lives of those with incurable diseases such as AIDS/HIV

5. Educate the Next Generation

- Provide finances and resources to educate children in the US and in places where poor education causes systemic problems for developing countries
- Send workers and provide biblical instruction to children and students to prepare them for leading with kingdom principles