

OFFICE OF THE BISHOP:

# GLOBAL MINISTRIES

Jeff Bleijerveld • Director of Global Ministries

It's been a little more than one year since I became the director of Global Ministries. I am more pleased than ever to be part of the United Brethren in Christ denomination and to work with our international partners.

I visited with members of our full-support staff and a number of our endorsed staff. I also visited all of our fields except for Mexico, India, and Jamaica, which I will visit later this year. Here are some highlights and observations.

## Countries

### Sierra Leone

- Rev. Billy Simbo is doing an outstanding job of reorganizing the conference leadership.
- Randy and Toni Fennig are also doing a great job teaching at The Evangelical College of Theology and initiating some new agricultural projects that will help sustain the conference's pastors and ministries.
- The Mattru Jong Hospital has been substantially rehabilitated through the efforts of Dr. Richard Toupin and the advisory team we appointed.
- Four containers of drugs, equipment, and hospital supplies have been gathered from organizations like DeKalb Hospital, Samaritan's Purse, Brother's Brother, and the Salvation Army (Sweden).

### India

A new residential and educational center was completed that will serve the Project Compassion children. Not only have these children's parents been the victims of AIDS, they are themselves infected with this deadly disease. Miriam Prabhakar continues providing excellent leadership to the hospital, child sponsorship program, and church planting efforts.

### Germany

Galen Fiedler (former United Brethren MK

in Sierra Leone) and his wife Maritta live in Baden Württemberg (southern Germany) where Galen is a schoolteacher. They have been approved as non-traditional (tentmaking) staff members with Global Ministries. We formed a partnership with the Christian school where Galen teaches that could significantly impact this under-evangelized region of Europe through summer English camps and exchange programs.

### Mexico

Under the leadership of Rev. Denis Casco, the Mexico National Conference continues to grow through aggressive evangelistic efforts and church planting. The conference's goal is to plant ten new churches in 2009.

Rev. Gary Brooks has been a tremendous help in training pastors and serving the needs of the conference through short-term visits.

### Macau

Our team in Macau continues to work with our two churches to resource and train local leaders while reaching out into the community to youth and adults.

### Hong Kong

Ministry in this urban setting presents a number of challenges to the Hong Kong Conference. Rev. Ajiax Wo, the conference superintendent, has been working to develop new models for church extension. Mission efforts in Thailand, Poland, and Myanmar continue under the direction of Rev. Mark Choi.

### Honduras, El Salvador

During my most recent visit to Honduras, I had the privilege of honoring Rev. Francisco and Maira Raudales for their twelve years of service as superintendent and wife, and praying over Rev. Juanita Chavez as she was elected as the new superintendent. Honduras continues its oversight of church planting efforts in El Salvador. It's

## REPORT 11-10

# Office of the Bishop — Global Ministries

important to note that La Ceiba, Honduras, will host our General Conference in January 2010.

### **Nicaragua, Costa Rica and Guatemala**

Juan Pavon was reelected as superintendent for another three years at the Nicaragua National Conference. Delegations from both Guatemala and Costa Rica were present.

Jeff and April Dice have recently been approved as non-traditional staff with Global Ministries. They will serve 3-4 months of each year as our Central American Liaisons working to organize projects and pastoral training in Nicaragua, Costa Rica, and Guatemala.

We anticipate that Guatemala will be presented for approval as a national conference at the next General Conference in January 2010.

### **Haiti**

In the past year, I asked the Canadian Conference to provide direct oversight of our work in Haiti and to handle all funds coming from Canada and the US. They are doing a tremendous job working with Rev. Oliam Richard.

A partnership with Christian Horizons of Canada has been formed to promote after-school tutoring through local churches. It addresses the concerns of special needs children.

### **Philippines**

Rev. Prudencio Lim celebrated 25 years of ministry in 2008 along with the Philippine Conference that was known as the "Looking Unto Jesus" church before joining the United Brethren. Rev. Lim suffered a stroke in 2009 and continues to need our prayers.

### **Jamaica**

Jamaica Conference, under the leadership of Rev. Winston Smith, consists of 27 churches and three church plants. Rev. Owen Gordon continues as president of Jamaica Bible College. The Malvern Camp is currently undergoing a complete renovation of its aging dormitories.

## **Other Items**

### **Mission Team Leader Training**

Donna Hollopeter and I conducted two-day training events for persons interested in leading short-term mission trips in four places: Chambersburg, Pa.; Fort Wayne, Ind.; Lancaster, Ohio; and Charlotte, Mich. The Culturelink materials presented were well received, and we covered information specific to Global Ministries.

### **New Staff**

- Jessica Hollopeter (GM/OMS – missions journalist).
- Galen and Maritta Feidler (GM - Germany).
- Jessica Hovis (Endorsed – YWAM).
- Jeff and April Dice (GM - Central America).
- Joe and Natalie Reed (Endorsed – South Africa).
- Jenaya Bonner (GM – Macau).
- Bridger Fetters (GM – Macau).
- Ryan and Laura Fennell (Endorsed – Papua New Guinea).

### **Pastoral Training**

"Train and Multiply" is a straightforward training program for pastors and church leaders that is low-cost and does not require students to leave their home. The materials have been translated for use in Spanish, Tagalog (Philippines), Creole (Haiti), and very soon in Tegulu (India). The materials are intended for use with pastors who have limited education, and the training is conducted informally.

### **Relief Partnership**

We agreed to the formation of a strategic partnership between Global Ministries and Samaritan's Purse to strengthen our efforts among our national conferences and our overall response to humanitarian need around the world. This partnership allows us to match our gifts with those of others, and helps us gain access to the expertise and resources needed by our partner conferences in developing countries.

### **Two New Expansion Funds**

We established two new funds using a portion of a sizable bequest to assist in expanding our ministry.

*Caleb Fund.* This fund covers research and development expenses for new mission initiatives throughout the world.

*Antioch Fund.* This fund benefits our partner conferences. It covers travel expenses related to cross-border ministries so they can research opportunities and send missionaries.

### **Institute for TESOL Studies**

Final approval by both Global Ministries and Huntington University was recently received to launch the Institute for TESOL (Teaching English to Speakers of Other Languages) Studies. Global Ministries will contribute up to \$100,000 over the next three years from our

reserves in order to provide start-up funds. This training will not only facilitate those using English education overseas, but can benefit persons and churches serving immigrant and refugee communities in the US.

### **New Project Protocols**

We are working with our national conferences to establish new protocols and procedures for project requests. These new procedures clarify the responsibilities of all parties—including local churches, conferences and Global Ministries—in gathering information for, approving, and publishing requests.

### **New Communications**

We developed a new Global Ministries brochure for release at National Conference. The same brochure will also be produced in Spanish prior to our General Conference.

We are working on a new web design that will incorporate a number of new interactive and media features.

A new intra-organizational email newsletter called “Here and There” goes to our overseas staff and denominational leaders.

### **Global Kids**

Donna Hollopeter developed this material for use with children in the local church. It provides a tremendous window into what God is doing around the world and will assist in developing a new generation of World Christians among our children.

### **Sierra Leone Agri-Business**

We approved a proposal from Randy and Toni Fennig that will provide the means for the Sierra Leone Conference to generate funds for ministry, employment opportunities, and new models for agricultural businesses. The project includes chicken incubation, mechanized farming, and the use of drip irrigation systems.

### **Non-Traditional Staff Category**

In light of the increasing diversity of those serving overseas, we approved a new category for “non-traditional” staff. Non-traditional staff members are those who derive all or part of their income from sources other than traditional support (i.e. tentmaking, retirement income). Non-traditional workers will be accountable to Global Ministries and follow the same application process as traditional staff.

## **Looking Ahead**

There are a number of areas I believe need to be our focus if we are going to be effective and see ministry expand in the near future.

### **Global Ministries in the Muslim World**

The majority of our current funding and focus is on areas of the world that are relatively well reached with the gospel. Aside from India, Macau and China, we provide little opportunity for applicants to work within the 10/40 window unless we assign them to another organization. I believe we need to pray and seek the Lord to open a door.

### **Alternative Approaches to Funding**

In order to free up funds for ministry within the 10/40 window, we need to assist our national conferences in developing alternative sources of funding. If they remain unable to sustain themselves and fund new church plants, we’ll continue to spend the majority of our resources in areas that have an equal or even higher percentage of evangelicals than the United States.

### **Creative Access**

If we are going to move into some of the most gospel-needed countries of the world, we’ll need to employ some creative approaches. For this reason, we need to be diligent in exploring and developing business as mission, tentmaking, medical, educational, and developmental opportunities.

### **Training and Orientation**

We need to provide training and orientation to churches, donors, and candidates so they can meaningfully engage the world for Christ in a way that reflects the reality of our current circumstances and anticipates what lies ahead.

## **Conclusion**

I look forward to what God has in store for us in the years to come. We face great challenges and needs, but we can take encouragement in serving a great God. John 15:16 tells us, “You did not choose me, but I chose you and appointed you to go and bear fruit—fruit that will last.” Therefore I remind myself, daily, that missions is not the church’s idea but God’s, and He is able.

*Respectfully submitted,  
Rev. Jeffrey C. Bleijerveld*

**REPORT  
11-11**

Office of the  
Bishop

Global  
Ministries