

A THRIVING CHURCH FOR EVERY PEOPLE

ETHNOS

MAGAZINE



Together, Following Christ *Page 4*

A photograph of a family of three standing in a grassy field. A woman on the left is wearing a black jacket, glasses, and a headband. A man on the right is wearing a grey hoodie and blue pants, holding a baby. The background shows trees with some autumn foliage under a cloudy sky.

LET GOD USE YOU

Think about it:

If you were given the opportunity today to plant a church in an unreached people group, would you know where to start?

Our missionary training program prepares you for the complex ministry of cross-cultural church planting, teaching you concepts and skills you need to effectively communicate God's Word in a new context. We're also committed to equipping you in your walk with God, so that even in an isolated, high-pressure environment, your relationship with Him can thrive.

EQUIPPING FOR CROSS-CULTURAL CHURCH PLANTING

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Cover photo by Dale Stroud

FROM OUR CO-EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR



Dear Friend,

In the feature article of this issue of *Ethnos Magazine*, we look at how Shaun Humphreys and I are taking a team-approach to leading Ethnos Canada.

There is another context where this team-approach to ministry can be seen: how Ethnos Canada cannot fulfill our mandate without working together with you. We desperately need churches and para-church ministries to band together if we are going to hear the words, "well done, good and faithful servant."

Earlier this year I had the privilege to speak at Miller College of the Bible in Sunnybrae, BC, and Nipawin Bible College in Saskatchewan. Many young men and women are making plans to serve overseas with Ethnos and other ministries. Only God can do this! Only God can answer our prayers for more labourers.

There is one church on PEI that has three young families preparing to serve in career missions in the coming years. The church leaders are excited, but also overwhelmed. The responsibility of caring for these families will be huge.

This is where the team-approach comes in. As we come together, as schools, church planting ministries and churches, and we follow earnestly after Christ, we can do more together than we thought possible.

God is plucking at hearts strings across Canada. Some are feeling called to be sacrificial givers. Others are feeling led to be sacrificial goers. But all are seeing that the fields are white unto harvest. God is answering our prayer for more labourers.

As we come together, united in our focus to complete the Great Commission and bring the gospel to the last unreached people groups, let us never forget that it is God who is the One who is leading. And He is doing something BIG!

Yours in Christ,

Tim Whatley

Tim Whatley
Co-Executive Director, Ethnos Canada



NEWS AROUND THE WORLD



THE DINANGAT CHURCH

It was an exciting day as we got to watch 12 people follow the Lord in baptism! Ten teens and two elderly ladies were baptized and declared their faith publicly. Such a blessing to get to see them honour the Lord this way! The church is not without its problems, and we are continually asking the Lord to raise up more leaders,

but overall we were excited to see [both] the elders teaching faithfully and the believers growing in their understanding of the Word!

Ralf got to spend a whole week hiking through the beautiful mountains of the Uruwa language group, which borders the Dinangat village. With two new missionaries and three Dinangat believers, they visited every single village



of this group and were overwhelmed by the welcome and positive responses like, “Yes, please come and translate the Bible into our language!” Or them saying, “We are like rocks who understand nothing of the Word of God! Please come and explain it to us!”

Recently a group of men from town came into Dinangat and committed a serious crime. The Dinangat

church responded to this with much compassion, care and prayer. On top of this, something happened which they say has never taken place in Dinangat history. Instead of revenge, they chose to leave this matter in God’s hands and forgave this group of men publicly. Wow! Thank you, God, for changed hearts!

—Ralf and Elli Schlegel
Papua New Guinea



CULTURE CORNER

New Year's Mud

On January 1, Luke and I were out the door fairly early to start driving from where we live in Goroka to a city called Lae. We wanted to get an early start for security reasons. With this in mind, we were a little cautious as we saw about 30 people gathered in the middle of the road while driving.

As we approached them, they had yet to move out of the way. They were excited! “Hey, it’s our friends,” Luke said. “Our Upegu friends!”

“Happy New Year!” they told us as one guy, Samson, climbed on our car. They rubbed mud all over the car, they smeared some on us too, and they left their mark with handprints and UPEGU in bold letters down the side.

In PNG Highland’s culture on the morning of January 1, they run around and rub mud on each other to celebrate and welcome the New Year.

—Luke and Jessica Thek
Papua New Guinea



STEPPING UP TO LEAD

Recently our evangelical Bible teaching program was completed for the third time. The students—56 in total—have been very faithful in their attendance over the last 10 months and have finally finished the 90 lessons. Well before the end of the program, the students were giving clear testimony as to their repentance and belief in Christ as their Saviour.

But the exciting thing is that we didn't have an "up-front role" in any of the teaching. All the teaching was done by the four Bible teachers that we have been training up specifically for this purpose. For us both, it's a milestone reached and therefore a double celebration.

During a Sunday church celebration, we welcomed these new believers into our Christian family. It was planned that the teaching for that day would be on baptism. And then on Monday morning, with joyful spirits, we all walked down to the river and baptized all the new believers. Jon did the first few to show the Bible teachers an example of how it was done, and then they took turns in baptizing the rest.

The previous believers have really stepped up and taken the new believers under their care and are discipling them with love and the Scriptures.

—Jon and Janet Mitchell
Papua New Guinea



SPLITTING IN HIS FACE

Sweet baby W died. In the Maliyali culture, death is blamed on sorcery done through people, not on sickness or accidents. Sadly, baby W's older brother, A, a believer, called for two "witches" (innocent women) to be "courted" for "eating W's spirit" (killing her). These two women are the missionaries' dear friends and sisters in Christ.

Despite knowing it was wrong, A gave in to pressure to blame them for the death. When they held "court" the following day, the missionaries stood to remind the Maliyali that the two women believed the gospel and are SAVED. Then they read from God's Word about how believers cannot have both the Holy Spirit and an evil spirit.

Amazingly, they agreed with God's Word and decided to stop the court! A declared, "We are not going to spit in God's face. We are ending this."

—Nathan and Rachel Mueller
Papua New Guinea



GUAHIBO GRADUATIONS

We as a team are thankful that 63 Guahibos graduated recently from the in-home two-year Bible course. Yes, our first graduates! There were 29 couples and five singles. This semester we have 70 students studying. How thankful we are for a huge amount of good Bible study material we have in their language for this course, as well as a good, clear, understandable Bible!

Please pray that these students will want to know God deeply and apply what they are learning. Pray for all our tutors who oversee them that they will be transparent and help these students grow. We are counting on them to be our future disciples in this large people group of 120,000 people.

—Joyce Cain (Retired)
Guahibo, Colombia



SIMBARI BIBLE DEDICATION

The translation of the Simbari Bible was recently completed!

Before the Bible dedication ceremony, the Bibles had been hidden in a simulated "mumu," which is a pit dug into the ground filled with hot coals and covered with banana leaves for cooking feasts. This symbolized the Word of God for the church to feed upon.

At the end of the ceremony, the missionaries removed the leaves and coverings from the hole where the spiritual feast of God's Word had been prepared. The speaker narrated that all the work of preparing the feast had already been done, and now it was time to simply come and eat. As the boxes of Bibles were pulled out, the Simbari believers came forward, holding out their hands for the Bibles.

—David and Shari Ogg
Papua New Guinea

MOI BIBLE DEDICATION

January started off with a momentous day when hundreds of Bibles were flown into the Moi village! After more than 20 years of Bible translation, evangelism, discipleship, teaching literacy and more, the Moi people now have the Word of God in their heart language. God has produced a bountiful

harvest of believers who love Him and love His Word. We are humbled by their knowledge of Scripture and their ability to quote it from the heart. They are a people who once lived in fear of the spirit world around them but are now confident followers of the Lord.

—Nathan and Abby Burris
Asia Pacific



**Imitate me, just as
I also imitate Christ.**

1 Corinthians 11:1

TOGETHER, FOLLOWING CHRIST

God has been the one leading Ethnos since our inception in 1942. For more than 80 years, He has proven Himself incredibly capable. Those 80 years have not been without challenges and change.

One thing that hasn't changed is our commitment to a team approach to ministry. From the beginning, we have valued interdependence and a team approach to ministry.

What *has* changed over the years? — who is providing leadership. On one hand, the number of men who have shouldered this responsibility continues to grow. On the other hand, it is God who is in charge, and these men have simply been following Him.

Since 2010, Tim Whatley has been the Executive Director* of Ethnos Canada. But really, God was the one leading before Tim assumed this role. God is leading now, while Tim Whatley and Shaun Humphreys share this responsibility. And God will be the one leading when the mantle is passed onto future leaders.

TIM WHATLEY

How did your childhood shape you and prepare you for leadership?

"I had the privilege of growing up in Asia Pacific, where my parents and their coworkers presented the gospel to the Lauje people. There are now thousands of believers in a growing group of churches among the Lauje.

"As a child there were two things that had the greatest impact on me. When I was eight years old, one of my closest friends died of cerebral malaria. I watched her die a horrible, grotesque death. As an eight-year-old, it struck me; she's never heard of Jesus. That's driven me pretty much my whole life; that those that have never heard need to hear.

"The second impact was watching my dad. He was an Air Force officer. He was trained in leadership; he was a good leader. Seeing how my Dad led in so many contexts had a

big impact on my heart and my appreciation for leadership."

Were there others that had an impact on you during your childhood?

"When I was a teenager, Tom Embaugh was our Field Chairman. I remember 'Uncle Tom' would always sit and listen. He had a heart for people. I remember one time I went to his wife with concerns about the dorm I was living in. She sat and listened; I understood my concerns were important to her. And then I saw Tom and her make changes within weeks. I was just a teenager, but they took my concerns seriously. That had an impact.

"As an adult serving on the field, I also highly respected Don Alderman, our Field Chairman. I saw him fail a couple of times. Mistakes were made. Unwise decisions were

* Over time, the use of the term of "Chairman" has been replaced by "Executive Director" within Ethnos.

made. As I watched it just struck me, 'He's just like the rest of us; he's still human.' I saw him own his failure. I saw that God works with our failings and uses them.

"I learned to not be devastated by failure. I learned to forgive others, and to forgive myself. I learned that my ability to lead is not based on my strengths, my ability, my perfection. Any success in leadership is totally because of the Lord; we need to always keep that perspective."

What was one of the first seasons of leadership you had on the field?

"My wife, Kathy, and I were one of five families working together to open a new region on the field. It wasn't very long before we had more families joining and the need for local leadership became evident. I felt I was an obvious choice, but two other men were chosen over me. This was good for me. I wasn't all that I thought I was. Not being chosen for leadership had a big impact on me; it was very positive but also very disappointing and embarrassing.

"Then within a year both of those men were no longer leaders, and the field committee asked me to lead. By this point, my heart was set on getting into the tribe; I was no longer interested in being in leadership. Being thrust into leadership when I wasn't looking for it or wanting it anymore also had a big impact on me."

How did God position you as a co-chairman of the Field Leadership Team?

"When I was asked to join the Field Leadership Team for Asia Pacific, I was young compared to the rest of the team. One of them was in his seventies. One of the men who had helped open the field in 1970, Ron Berglund, didn't like to buy his bananas green because he didn't know if he'd live long enough to eat them. That's what he told us often. They were getting older, so they had asked me to join the leadership team. There was an intentional investing into me as an up-and-coming leader.

"There were 4-5 years when Kathy and I were still part of a church planting team in the remote Moi tribe, and I was serving on the leadership team. During that time, Kathy got very sick, so we moved to town, just temporarily we thought. The number of families serving on the field began to grow for the first time in many, many years. We had 20 new families coming to the field.



"Then our Field Chairman, Don Alderman, died unexpectedly in a car crash while visiting the USA. We were surprised, but God wasn't.

"I didn't have the age or experience, I was still pretty young to be the chairman of the field. Another candidate for chairman was Doug Berglund, but neither of us had the time nor the desire to be the chairman.

"There were areas I excelled in, like recruiting young families from North America and working with them when they arrived on the field. Doug's strengths were more with our national families and working with families who had been serving on the field for years.

"As the Field Leadership Team met and prayed about which of us should take up the mantle of 'chairman', by the grace of God, a third option surfaced.

"The idea of a 'co-chairmanship' was suggested even though it had never been done before. Immediately Doug and I realized we could do this and do it well, together. We were very different, but we complemented each other very well with our different strengths. Sharing the responsibility



Clockwise:
Tim and Kathy Whatley

Kathy Whatley with her children and some Moi friends, 2004

Tim (far right) and his parents and siblings, 1974

Tim with his son, Brandt, and some Moi friends, 2004

The Whatley family, Durham, Ontario, 2023

"I learned to not be devastated by failure. I learned to forgive others, and to forgive myself. I learned that my ability to lead is not based on my strengths, my ability, my perfection. Any success in leadership is totally because of the Lord"

made it doable, and to this day, the field still has a co-chairmanship. Looking back, I can see God leading in a strong way. "

How did God reposition you to be the Co-Executive Director of Ethnos Canada?

"We loved serving on the field. In 2009, we were heading home for a 10-month furlough and the Lord just gave us the clearest impression that there was a change in seasons coming. We assumed it was to somewhere else in Asia Pacific, maybe to another region we thought we'd be opening up. Before leaving for Canada we sold everything.

"On our way home we stopped for some leadership meetings in the USA. Ray Jones, the Chairman of Ethnos Canada at the time, pulled me aside and said, 'I am recommending you to take my place.' My answer was very simple: 'Frankly, I'm not interested.'

“Ray was ready for retirement, and the Board of Directors for Ethnos Canada was looking for someone to take the mantle. Up to this point, Ethnos Canada had never had a chairman with field experience; the Board wanted the next chairman to have field experience.

“It took Kathy and me a long time to say yes. The Lord had to convince us this was what He wanted.

“The night Ray first told me that he'd recommended me, I had gone home and told Kathy, 'I'm not interested, but maybe when I'm old. If I ever did, I would revamp some things.' That night I mapped out on a napkin how I'd update the leadership structure of Ethnos Canada.

“I avoided meeting with the Board of Directors for months. The morning before I finally did meet with them, Kathy and I prayed that I could say no. In the meeting, the first thing the Board did was slide a piece of paper across the table. They had mapped out how they would like the leadership re-structured and it was exactly what I had mapped out on my napkin all those months earlier. On my napkin I was serving as a co-chairman.

“That made me realize I had to listen at least. God was up to something.

“I have had the privilege of serving alongside a number of men over the last 13-plus years. They have all been wonderful, but one that stands out is Ed Esau. When Kathy and I were training to be church planters, Ed was one of our trainers. He had disciplined me. The way Ed has chosen to take my lead with great humility these last 13 years has had a huge impact on me.

“Like Ed, the others I have led alongside have been older than me, that is until Shaun Humphreys joined me as Co-Executive Director.”

SHAUN HUMPHREYS

How did your childhood shape you and prepare you for leadership?

“I was born in Paraguay and grew up there. As a family, we moved to a tribal village when I was one and a half. I learned English at the same time as I learned Manjúi, the language of the people my parents were planting a church among.

“One of the things that really had an impact on me, even as a young kid, was the drastic change I saw in the village when the gospel was understood.

“Every night we'd go to sleep to the noises coming from the outside. The beat of drums, the



Top: Shaun and Melanie Humphreys

Middle: Shaun, far left, with his parents and siblings, leaving the Manjúi tribe on their first home assignment, 1983

Bottom: Shaun holding the neighbour's pet anteater, 1981

"That fear that the people had in the village had disappeared. Seeing them move from darkness to light had a huge impact for me as a young kid."

chanting of the witchdoctors, the wailing of people who were either sick or had a loved-one who was sick — all of it communicating hopelessness — these were the sounds we fell asleep to.

"After the Manjúi heard the gospel and learned about the true hope available from God, the difference at night was shocking.

"Before, we could barely hear the animals of the forest. Now we were hearing frogs. Now we were hearing owls and the crickets at night. But we weren't hearing the drums. We were not hearing the wailing and witchdoctors. That fear that the people had in the village had disappeared. Seeing them move from darkness to light had a huge impact for me as a young kid.

"Then when I was 16, I was baptized with the first Manjúi believers. The part of Paraguay I am from, it is like South Texas, there is hardly any rain. So for the baptism, they dug a hole in the clay, filled it full of water. Seeing the joy on their faces was incredible. As they were coming out of this muddy water, with mud running off their heads, down their bodies, their smiles were huge. They couldn't help but tell the rest of the village, 'Hey, I want to tell you that I am following something different now.' That had a huge impact on me."

What examples of leadership have had the most impact on you over the years?

"Paul Wyma is one person that comes to mind. He had a huge love for people. Even though I was just a kid, there was never a time when I felt like I didn't matter.

"He had a natural desire to disciple others and see them grow. He wanted to pass on to others what God meant to him. He modeled what godly leadership looks like, with a desire to lead others in the same way God was leading him.

"Another person I learned from was James Camacho, the Field Chairman in Paraguay at the time my wife, Melanie, and I first moved to the field. We were a young family with a couple of toddlers. James came alongside us and we got to see how he led his family. We also got to see him make mistakes and fail and own those and continue to lead.

"I was a nobody, we were fresh on the field and his willingness to invest time and essentially take a risk on me was huge. One thing I remember him saying is, 'Don't ever waste your time by going anywhere by yourself.' He was always taking me or someone else with him so that we could see what serving people through leadership looked like. He saw each trip as an opportunity to disciple someone."

What was one of the first lessons God taught you about leadership?

"The first time I remember being given a leadership role was in high school. I was asked to oversee the AWANA program at the boarding school I was attending in Bolivia. The program was for kids at the school, and kids from the community.

"As a senior in high school, I thought I was better at it than I was. The fact that the other leaders had all turned to me and said, 'We want you to lead' fuelled my self-confidence. But I didn't know what leadership was all about.

"God giving me a chance to lead was actually a chance for me to see my own inadequacies and my need for a team around me. I learned that I did not have what it takes to lead even that small endeavour."

Can you think of a time when God trumped your plans and led in an unexpected way?

"Absolutely. After about two years of culture and language study among the Nivaclé people, we had settled on a place we thought would work great to plant a church. We had talked to landowners and plans were already in place to buy land right adjacent to the village; a place where we could build a house and be in a great location to teach the Bible.



Top: Shaun with Juvencio, a Nivacle friend, 2021

Bottom: Shaun with his children and Eudelio, a friend and Nivacle church leader, 2021



"Suddenly doors were opening in a location different than what we've been shooting for. We had our perfect plan, but God shut it down and said, 'I have something better.'"

"We took a three-month furlough and shared our plans with our sending church. When we returned to Paraguay and the community we hoped to move to, we found out that the local government would not allow us to build our house and live there. We were never given a reason. We had to start over and look for a different village to begin our teaching ministry in.

"We found out years later that the village we picked would have been the worst place to start. We had done everything humanly possible to narrow it down to that village. It ticked all the boxes of being a great location; being central to the people group and having great access by road.

"Years later we learned that village was one of the lowest villages status-wise among the Nivacle. It would have been an uphill battle to spread the gospel out from that location. God used that local government and their 'no' to redirect our path.

"Another time we saw God step in and change our plans was with the new ministry in Arctic Canada. Leading up to 2020, a lot of energy had gone into moving a church planting team up north to work with the Inuit, but the doors kept closing. We were praying and asking the Lord to show us if it was simply an issue of timing, or if we needed to give up on this dream of starting a ministry in the Arctic.

"Then, almost without any effort, things started to come together. We had people come forward who wanted to join this new ministry. Suddenly doors were opening in a location different from what we had been shooting for. We had our perfect plan, but God shut it down and said, 'I have something better.' Today we have three families in the Arctic, and Lord willing, more are moving there this summer."

In 2020, four men were added to the Executive Leadership Team of Ethnos Canada. Shaun was one of them. In the spring of 2022, at the request of Tim and the rest of the leadership team, Shaun was appointed by the Board of Directors as Tim's Co-Executive Director.

SERVING AS A TEAM

Tim, what are the benefits of having Shaun as a Co-Executive Director?

"Shaun and his wife are more gifted than I am in a number of areas. Their ability to organize and bring clarity, it's just not my strength.

“Shaun brings a lot of courage and the ability to make tough decisions.

“As a couple, they bring an ability to connect with and care for younger people. I love to disciple and shepherd people, but they bring a level of patience that I just don't have. They take the time to dig deeper.

“Having Shaun join me as the Co-Executive Director helps us care for our most valuable assets, our people. On a relational level, some people will connect with Shaun and Mel better than with Kathy and me. There are others that find it easier to connect with Kathy and me, and take our lead.

“Shaun's focus is more on the internal aspects of Ethnos Canada, which frees me up to focus on relationships with churches, schools and ministries across Canada. I also travel internationally a lot. So when I am away, our team of missionaries serving in Canada and overseas gets the care and leadership they need because Shaun is sharing the load with me. It was too much for one person.

Because Shaun and I both function as Executive Directors, it actually makes us more nimble. We can get stuff done quicker. Discussions and decisions don't have to wait if I am away. Shaun is able to keep moving forward and care for people while I am away.”

“Having Shaun join me as the Co-Executive Director helps us care for our most valuable assets, our people.”

Shaun, what does Tim bring to the table?

“Tim is never scared to have huge dreams. One area where this is true is with younger leaders. He sees so much potential and is not afraid of the possible failures that people may have but actually sees them as opportunities for growth. Tim's desire to walk with me as I entered into this is something that I want to emulate as we move forward and we look to younger leaders to develop.

“While Tim primarily focuses on connecting with Canadian churches and Bible colleges, and I focus more on the internal operations of Ethnos, we are both highly engaged on international aspects of Ethnos Canada and our ministries around the world. Tim has a depth of relationships and experience in this area that is a real asset.

“Tim and Kathy also have an incredible love for people. When they come for a visit,* we feel loved

and encouraged; that's one of the wonderful things they bring to the table.”

MOVING FORWARD WITH FAITH

What are your goals for the organization going forward?

“I'll tell you one thing that we're passionate about: there's still a lot of people groups that don't have the gospel, so we're passionate about seeing Canadians challenged to give their lives in a career, a long term life commitment, to see something way bigger than them accomplished. We want to see more Canadians be a part of a team that's bringing hope to a people group that is still waiting for the gospel. It is not okay that people are begging for missionaries and ‘God's Talk’ and we don't have enough people to send.

“We want to challenge and equip and help send as many Canadians as God will raise up. We want to see more Canadians going to places where people have never had a chance to hear one word about their Creator and His love for them. That's our heart's desire as long as we're in leadership.

“We are excited to see that God is already doing this. We have a bunch of young people making plans to come be trained by Ethnos. Some of them are wanting to move to Arctic Canada, which is amazing. Others have their hearts set on Africa or Asia or Latin America. Others don't know yet, but want to be used by God where the need is greatest, where the darkness is darkest.”

Use your vocational skills with Ethnos, or be trained for cross-cultural church planting. Find your place at ethnos.ca/go



Jason Bechtel and Angie, his wife, were both raised in rural Ontario. They moved to Durham to serve with Ethnos in 2006. In order to see a thriving church established for every people, Jason helps shape what people across Canada read, hear, touch, and click from Ethnos Canada. Angie serves in the K-12 school on the Ethnos campus. Huron Chapel in Auburn, Ontario, is their sending church.

* Tim and Kathy moved to Prince Edward Island in 2020 in order to deepen relationships between believers in the Maritimes and Ethnos Canada.



PRAY On Their Own

The Lord has been faithful! The Menya Bible teachers taught all the way through the book of Acts on their own. This is the first whole book of the New Testament that they have led the church through without us helping and guiding. Praise the Lord for these faithful teachers who trust Him to enable them to study Scripture, apply it to their lives, and then lead the church body in understanding and obeying the truths.

Pray for unity in the body of believers and strength as they share the gospel with those around them.

—Wes and Penny Chappell
Papua New Guinea

PRAY Intense Interest

The church among an ethnic minority group in West Africa that we have been in our prayers for over 30 years is growing. The gospel was first shared in their language in 2000. Since then, the believers have been discipled and taught through the Scriptures.

We were so encouraged to read about the mature believers taking the gospel to two villages of their same group that were steeped in sorcery. God opened the opportunity for them to teach chronological Bible lessons after seeking permission from the chief. Some of the older people in the group were interested, which is unusual because older people are steeped in what they believe.

These older people had heard some Bible teaching when they were younger, but the teacher never returned. They wanted to hear the entire story. The women believers encouraged everyone as they arrived. They said, “We want you to know the rest that we now have. Keep listening all the way to the end. It is a rest that you have never known before.”

The interest became so intense that the teachers taught nearly all day and night. Normally the teaching takes weeks. After three days and nights of teaching, many people came to rest in the finished work of Christ as their Saviour. There was much rejoicing. Now there are believers in nine of the



approximately 35 villages of this people group. The church is not only growing but deeply encouraged at what God has done and how He used them.

Please pray for this group.



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ENCOUNTER

Did You Know?

Did you know that for the past 40 years Ethnos has been sending people on short-term trips to help them learn about missions around the world? Ethnos' Short-Term Trips team seeks to mobilize the Church as goers and senders with Ethnos. These trips accomplish this task through cross-cultural ministry experiences, biblical education and personal discipleship. In 2024, we have a total of 10 trips scheduled. Over 165 participants will be experiencing cross-cultural ministry in very hands-on ways. Eight of these trips are in the summer, and two are during the winter. Join us in our endeavour to bring more labourers to the fields by praying and sending.

Please pray for

- The safety of the teams.
- The hearts of the participants.
- God to direct each participant to the role He has for them.
- The ongoing works in those fields.
- The field leaders as they prepare to share about their field.

Learn about our mission trips:

go.ethnos.ca/mission-trips



Megan's Encounter Trip

I never would have thought that I could have so much fun and learn so much in the short two weeks I was in Brazil. It was so cool to be among Brazilian [believers] and hear their heart for the people of their own country. They were so passionate about reaching the unreached people of Brazil, and I am so grateful for the opportunity to listen to their stories and to ask so many questions. God really showed me how big the need for missionaries is and His own heart for the lost. If I feel broken over those who don't have access to the gospel, how much more heartbreaking is it for our Creator to see people with no access to His Word? On another note, the Brazilian culture is just a lot of fun! So there was never a dull moment, whether we were cleaning toilets or hiking through the Amazon jungle.



PRAISE R66 #2 Joins the Operational Mix

You prayed for it. You heard that our newest helicopter arrived into the Port of Lae in Papua New Guinea (PNG) in July 2023. But did it ever start flying?

Sometimes it's almost miraculous how fast an R66 can be reassembled and put into service. But for R66 #2, God's providential timetable proved to



be different. The inspections and paperwork seemed unending. Many of you have been praying this whole time.

Finally, December 4, 2023 — five months after it arrived in PNG — R66 #2 officially joined the “operational mix,” according to Imie Mark, Maintenance Controller of Ethnos360 Aviation's fleet in PNG. Its first job? To take supplies to the team learning language among the Kovol people. Pilot Josh Verdonck posted: “Very honoured to conduct the first mission.”

While Josh was fulfilling already-scheduled supply runs in existing church planting locations with R66 #2, R66 #1 (serving since April 2022) was free to break

new ground. Pilot Stuart Sims flew a survey team to a location “about as far west as you can get and still be in PNG,” according to Imie. He said that missionaries “are evaluating the opportunity to move out there to serve among a people group yet unreached with the true gospel who have been asking for someone to come learn their language and teach them God's Talk.”

The whole team in PNG thanks you for all your prayers and investment to get R66 #2 to Papua New Guinea. Because of you, the people groups like the one in the far west of PNG will have an opportunity to hear God's Talk.

— Wonita Werley

Ethnos360 Aviation

PRAY Pawaia

It had been a while since the last missionary visited a Pawaia village. The people expressed their gratitude for the visit by dressing in traditional clothing and singing.

The next two days were spent hiking to a remote village—requiring 11 river crossings over six rivers – where the meetings were held. The leaders who attended were representing 16 different churches from the same language group. The workshop went well and

seemed to be an encouragement to those involved. One of the many blessings of these types of workshops is the time of fellowship, since most of these people are isolated from each other, and this time was no different.

Please continue to pray for the Pawaian leaders as they continue to equip the churches in a rapidly changing environment.

—William Michaud
Papua New Guinea



PRAISE It's a Funny Story

Way back in 1997, we were often asked, “So how long do you think it will take to complete the Banwaon New Testament translation?”

Back then we were part of a three-family team in the Banwaon tribal ministry. Albert would reply, “Well, we expect it will take another six to 10 years to complete.”

Over the next few years, we were so sad when health and family reasons took our colleagues back to their homelands. We understood. We supported them. We knew the Lord was still in control. But we missed them.

We took a deep breath and, side by side with the Banwaon believers, we picked up the baton our colleagues left behind and kept moving ahead.

A few years later the same

question arose. “How long do you think it will take to complete the New Testament translation, Albert?”

Now juggling the many and varied aspects of ministry – discipleship, lesson development, literacy, medical work, community projects, field leadership plus family commitments – Albert would think for a minute and reply, “Hmm, well, we’re not sure, but we’re estimating another six to 10 years.” To which our kids, sitting in the congregation, would roll their eyes and chuckle.



And so it continued for the next decade or two. “Another six to 10 years.” We simply couldn’t estimate accurately. There was so much to be done. Six to 10 years seemed feasible.

Well kids, we’re here to tell you: The six to 10 years is over! On November 27, 2023 – more than 20 years since we first started translating the New Testament – the official check of John’s Gospel was finished. Which means the Banwaon New Testament is now formally checked and approved!

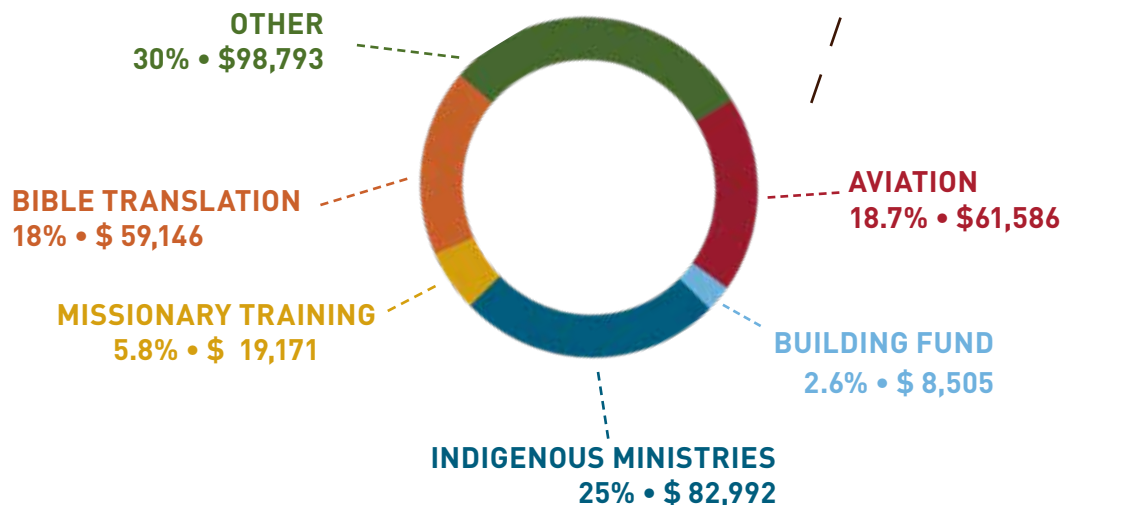
It’s still hard to believe. In our hearts we’re doing cartwheels of joy and lifting hands of praise to our wonderful Father who has enabled this. Rejoice and praise Him with us!

—Albert and Lynne Castelijn
Philippines

Ethnos Canada 2023 Donor Report

Praise the Lord with us for His ongoing generosity through His Church in 2023. Ethnos Canada receipted a total amount of \$9,435,598.

Project Breakdown:



MISSIONARIES • 90.4%

Serving local churches by processing funds for their missionaries has been a core activity since our founding in 1942.

OPERATIONS • 6.1%

Ethnos Canada does not take a percentage of donations to cover operations.

100% of gifts are used as designated.

PROJECTS • 3.5%

Our goal is a *thriving church for every people*, and there are a number of pieces to that puzzle.

A thriving church needs the Word of God in the language they know best. Missionaries serving with Ethnos Canada and our partners are currently working on 120 New Testament translations.

Indigenous churches need leaders that are capable of teaching the Word of God. Ethnos has training programs in many of the countries where we serve.

And as these churches send out missionaries of their own, we come along side them and provide sponsorship of flights.

CONNECT WITH NEW MISSIONARIES

BRIAN & MICHAELLA BITTNER

Sons: Olivander, Inica,
Leicori, & Kilegend

Enroute to Arctic Canada

Sent by South Milford Church of Christ,
Wilcottville, Indiana

Connect with Brian & Michaella at
ethnos.ca/brian-and-michaella



Hello from the Bittner family! I, Michaella, and my husband, Brian, are the parents of four wonderful boys with a 5th baby on the way! Both Brian and myself were raised in a Bible believing and teaching church in Virginia. We're all Americans by birth, except the youngest who was born Canadian, but we are so excited to see how God has led us to Canada and continues to keep us here.

Brian originally intended to become a youth pastor and I became an x-ray technologist, but we loved ministering in our church. We never felt particularly gifted in evangelism or missionary work, but when both of us were challenged to go into cross-cultural church planting, we didn't have a reason to say no. We attended a 2-year Bible program and have continued to pursue missions ever since. We first came to Canada for the mission training

we received from Ethnos, but are now enroute to serving in cross-cultural church planting in the Arctic.

We seek to do missions as a family since we see our home and children as the first responsibility God has given us. Our kids play a vital role as we travel, visit churches, meet individuals, and seek to serve the Lord in all that we say and do. Our eldest, Olivander, makes us laugh and never gets tired of the endless journeys we make. Inica helps keep us grounded and has an attitude of joy unshakeable that we're all wishing we could emulate. Leicori is a never-ending source of excitement and always has an idea for what to do next. Kilegend tempers all our different personalities through his sweet smiles, laughs, and endless love for adventure. And we look forward to what the newest member will bring to our family!

We hope to arrive at our field of service soon and continue our journey of service to the Indigenous Peoples of Canada. We plan to serve as remote church-planters, learning the language and culture of the people and then presenting the gospel through clear Biblical teaching and exegesis. The highest goal is to see a church comprised of indigenous believers thriving with a Bible in their heart-language. We love being a part of the work God has set for the church to do, this side of Heaven. We know we are nothing special in and of ourselves, but God gives grace to the humble and chooses to use those who rely on Him. We love being a part of this mission and we're excited to encourage others to join us in the ministry God is doing world-wide. Come join us and find out what God would do through you!



LEVI & MEDORI FRIESEN

Supporting cross-cultural church planting
from the Ethnos Canada home office.

Sent by Portage Evangelical Church, Portage La Prairie, Manitoba

Connect with Levi and Medori at
ethnos.ca/levi-and-medori

We met in 2017 while working at summer camp in Manitoba, where we are both from. A year later we headed to Ethnos360 Bible Institute in Waukesha, Wisconsin. Medori had already graduated from the Bible school in 2015, so while Levi was going through the Bible training, Medori served as a dean of single ladies.

We headed to Ontario and the Ethnos Canada campus for missionary training in the fall of 2021. During our time in Durham, we enjoyed connecting with a local church as well as learning

principles of cross-cultural ministry.

While in the training we began to pray about where the Lord would have us serve Him. We wanted to serve in a role that would assist the missionaries who are serving in remote contexts. Helping maintain a guesthouse where missionaries can stay on their way in and out of hard to reach places, or doing paperwork so missionaries can focus on learning language and teaching Bible lessons — these are just a couple of the options.

At this time we are planning on moving back to Durham, Ontario to assist the home staff in the home office. We are looking forward to how the Lord will use us in this area of ministry and seeing how he will use the gifts and strengths that He has given us. We also know He is going to work through our weaknesses.

Our hope is to eventually head overseas, but we are resting in the Lord's timing for this.

\$tocks: A Gift with Eternal Dividends

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go.ethnos.ca/ways-to-give or call toll free
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Image by
Rawpixel

Triumph and Heartbreak in Reaching the Unreached

It's easier said than done, as the saying goes. And there is certainly nothing easy about making inroads to an unreached people group living unbelievably far into the jungle. The following is a compilation of accounts from missionaries who risk life and limb as they navigate their way through rugged terrain, swollen rivers and deep woods to reach those who need to hear the Truth of God.

Out of reach or simply unreached?

Out there—in the middle of nowhere—there is a tiny village—and another—and another—and still another. Each made up of only a handful of houses, these villages are sprinkled across hundreds or even thousands of square miles. These people are spread far and wide. They live extremely isolated, tucked into valleys, on the steep inclines of mountains and along ambling riverbeds.

After hours of research, combing through old records and studying (almost) every pixel of known satellite imagery, we found at least 30 villages in this people group. A co-worker and I hopped aboard an airplane and then a helicopter to confirm as many of these village locations as possible.

In April 2023, I visited this people group for the first time. The purpose of that survey was mainly to determine the people's interest for missionaries, find out some details of the language divisions and get feet on the ground. Our survey team was very positively received, and a great desire for missionaries was communicated.

On the heels of such a successful survey, I planned and studied for a second survey to answer questions raised from the last visit. Planning for this survey involved staging fuel, an airplane and a helicopter—all within tight time constraints. We needed to map out specific flight paths to locate villages from the

air, and we planned to land the helicopter in locations it had never been before.

The villages we visited were nestled into valleys with rolling mountains rising up on every side. The climate was a gentle tropical heat, but the rivers were cool and refreshing.

My heart was burdened once again by the isolation and lostness of these people. It is sobering to see their faces, hear their desire for something—anything—more than what they have. This people group is large and yet so spread out that it makes determining a strategy for reaching them very difficult. Getting supplies, travelling and planning out a trajectory to bring them the gospel will all be difficult.

Is that thing going to capsiz when I step in?

This was running through my head as I was urged forward. The skipper was telling us to climb aboard his dugout canoe, about 30 feet long but only about as wide, at its widest, as my hips and the 4-foot, 10-inch-tall man who squeezed in next to me.

A 15-horsepower engine was strapped to this hollowed-out tree. There was no keel or other such method of keeping the boat from turning over.

These jungle-dwelling people groups do live deep in the jungles—further away than you can imagine from cities, stores or real medical care—but they are people just like you and me. They have hopes and dreams, likes and dislikes, and beliefs to which they hold very strongly. They think just as deeply as you do and need just as desperately to understand that the One true Creator God once came as a Man named Jesus and died in another faraway land to pay the sin penalty we all deserve.

And that right there is the reason I had flown more than an hour in a Cessna 208 Caravan to a grass airstrip out in the middle of nowhere and stepped into that seemingly very unstable floating tree-boat that bright morning, with plans of going even further into the “nowhere.”

The sun was hot, the day was long, and after three coats of sunscreen, six hours of river travel, and 17 times of clambering out and back into the canoe to push it over shallow, fast-moving, rocky riverbeds, we arrived at our first destination—only to discover we



Bottom Left: Isolated in Papua New Guinea

Top Right: The hiking trail and new gospel outreach location

hadn't actually arrived. We were close, but the sun was setting, and all the knowledgeable information told us the river gets too shallow to navigate with a motor beyond this point. So, we stopped at this much smaller village with a few families living there and proceeded to ask questions, set up our mosquito nets in one of their thatched roof garden houses, and retired for the night.

The following morning revealed that these people, who we were so certain had requested us to come, were not convinced they wanted Bible translating and teaching missionaries to come live with them and learn their language. They want education, sure, and medical care, government representation, an airstrip, and on and on. But Bible teachers? They had one of those come through years ago.

You see, the reality is that years upon years of poorly conducted so-called evangelistic efforts have divided this nation of 800+ languages into varying labels of Christian, even though the majority of these different language groups—the majority of these PEOPLE—have never heard the gospel shared clearly in a way they understand, whether because it wasn't shared in their heart language and with their cultural worldview taken into consideration, or perhaps it wasn't shared at all, and instead they were given a list of dos and don'ts to please this god-overlord they have never heard of and do not understand.

And so it was with heavy hearts that my companions and I got back into the canoe to head back down river just a day after we had come up it. Sitting in that boat, my heart was breaking for those people who have no idea how desperately they need a Saviour for their souls, not one who merely brings them stuff.

But that's not the end of the story, because just around a different river bend, it turns out the fields are more ripened for the harvest. Over the next two days we spent time in other villages within the same language group as the first, but these people are thirsty for the rich wealth of information stored between the pages of the Bible shared in their heart language.

And so, we press on.

—Jacob and Charis Doerr, Papua New Guinea



Building an Airstrip in the Middle of the Jungle

Getting there is only the beginning.

The flight was the easy part: just an hour and a half to a remote airstrip. My fellow pilot shut down the airplane engine, and we unloaded our cargo: pickaxes, shovels, a chainsaw, a wheelbarrow and a couple of hiking backpacks. Looking comically like a turtle, one of the local church elders strapped the green wheelbarrow bucket to his back and tested the feel of it; the trails to a new airstrip site are so rugged that the only way to deliver any supplies is on your back.

Pretty soon the group was off on foot, and I took the controls of the plane and flew home, passing their destination in just 10 minutes. My co-workers wouldn't arrive for another 50 hours, after fording multiple rivers and sleeping in the jungle.

And then the hard work would begin. So many measurements must be taken: length of the airstrip, the slope (lengthways and sideways), the angle of obstacles over the departure path, the firmness of the ground, the orientation of the runway and so much more. After verifying that the location will work for an airstrip, the heavy lifting starts: preparing a sample section of runway for the villagers to follow as a pattern.

Digging drainage ditches is crucial in a tropical rainforest, as well as making a crown so water flows sideways off the airstrip. Any soft areas must be hardened with rock or gravel, but the surface still must be smooth — potholes and airplanes don't mix.

Why can't we just use a helicopter? It would be much simpler, but a helicopter lacks range, meaning it would run out of fuel long before it ever got close. This location is just too far away to be served by helicopter.

The site is one of our gospel outreach locations, with many people eager to hear the Word of God, but few missionaries can visit due to the rugged terrain.

—Jamin and Elizabeth Peck, Asia Pacific

What mountain is God asking you to cross or what river to ford to reach someone who needs to hear the gospel? It may just be next door or across the street, but are you willing to challenge the limits of YOUR mental, physical and emotional abilities? Let's fly, sail or walk until the last one hears.

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EVENTS ACROSS CANADA



WESTERN CANADA

SASKATCHEWAN

Come to Rikapuna, a missions weekend retreat at Christopher Lake where you will learn all the aspects involved in reaching an unreached people group. May 31-June 2.

MANITOBA

Come hear Gracia Burnham share a timely message of triumphant faith in an age of growing terror and fear. Three events June 14-16.



ONTARIO

KIDS OPEN HOUSE

Come meet students training for missions overseas, experience and learn from unique activities scheduled throughout the day. Geared for families. June 26.

JUNGLE CAMP OPEN HOUSE

Visit students training for missions overseas and learn about their commitment to sharing the gospel around the world. July 6.

CULTURE ENCOUNTER

Bring your grade 7-12 students and explore the language, geography and culture barriers that hinder the gospel from reaching unreached people groups. Check online for fall dates.



EASTERN CANADA

PRINCE EDWARD ISLAND

Come to Rikapuna, a missions weekend retreat in Charlottetown where you will learn all the aspects involved in reaching an unreached people group. September 13-15.

go.ethnos.ca/2024-events

