



MISSION TO
Unreached Peoples

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The Unreached Peoples' ADVOCATE

NEWS ON GLOBAL EFFORTS TO REACH THE LEAST REACHED



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The Unreached Peoples' ADVOCATE

A Newsletter of Mission to Unreached Peoples

News on Global Efforts to Reach the Least Reached

Director's View

by David Hupp, U.S. Director



Seeing the church planted and growing in unreached peoples around the world is very fulfilling

and certainly the heartbeat and the calling of Mission to Unreached Peoples. The articles in this issue highlight two current church planting outreaches, and we're delighted to share them with you.

By God's grace, we're seeing God's hand in sending a growing army of Mission to Unreached Peoples workers to the harvest fields, and we

sense His urging that we continue to raise the causes of unreached people groups even more widely than we have to date. The Board of Directors and the International Leadership Council have approved a target annual growth rate of 15%. That translates into a target of doubling the number of missionaries we serve within 5 years.

The increase in missionaries and the reaching of unreached peoples with the Gospel of Jesus Christ won't happen automatically. We need 10's of thousands of prayer supporters to stand with us. The Lord challenged me during our worldwide conference in February to target 100,000 prayer pledges for MUP missionaries, target people groups, and for the mission by the end of this decade. We need you to stand with us in prayer.

We also need additional faithful financial supporters for the general fund of Mission to Unreached Peoples to enable us to recruit and serve more effectively, including expanded member care/pastoral ministry to our missionaries. We've set a goal and are believing for \$5000/month in new general fund support. We expect to continue to pray for and to communicate this need until it is met.

Will you stand with us and consider a personal commitment? Your response is important. We need to hear from you. Please see the response form on page 3 of this issue of the Advocate, or drop me an e-mail note at mupinfo@mup.org. We need you to partner with us as we serve the cause of reaching the unreached together.

Reflections on Church Planting in Japan

by Dawn Birkner

Church planting in Japan is becoming an increasing focus of many foreign mission agencies as well as Japanese churches and organizations. At the same time, other agencies, churches, and individuals in America are withdrawing their support from the Japan field because it is a difficult field. In spite of the difficulties, by almost anyone's definition, the need for making disciples and planting reproducing churches in Japan is great. Many smaller towns have no church of any denomination, and even in large cities with several churches, the percentage of the population that is Christian is less than 1%.

Of the twelve units that MUP has on the field in Japan, there are four units currently or soon to be involved in rural or urban church planting in Honshu and Shikoku. Until the last few years, MUP missionaries in Japan were not involved in church planting. However, this has changed in recent years. A church was started in Chiba about 2 years ago and now averages over 20 in attendance. The focus is on mixed Japanese and International couples. In another location(Nagano Ken) a new church is being started using English and Spanish teaching. Later this year, a family that has been with MUP in Japan for six years will move to the city of Osaka and switch their focus to church

planting. Another individual is just beginning a church plant in Ayauta on Shikoku. She has the primary responsibility for starting the church in Ayauta. However, she is working under the guidance of some veteran missionaries who live one hour away and have 50 years of church planting experience in Japan. Ayauta has never before had either a church of any denomination or a resident with a missionary visa.



The four MUP units doing church planting in Japan have different focuses and methodologies, but there seems to be the following common threads: a commitment to more lay-empowered, more reproducible methods, and perhaps independent cell-type churches; some desire to reduce the role of English teaching; and a common recognition that none are experts in this and all have much to learn as we move forward in faith. Four different views seem to exist regarding how to address the key problems of meeting location, the

- 1 Church Planting in Japan eAdvocate Available
- 2 Openings & Opportunities Mission Insights
- 3 Church Planting in Asia Response Form
- 4 Director's View

eAdvocate: The Advocate is now available in electronic form. We can send new issues to you in Acrobat (pdf) format or you can view it as well as all past issues on our website at www.mup.org. Let us know at advocateml@mup.org if you would like us to send you an email when a new issue is published or if you would like to receive it as an attachment.

role of the missionary in pastoring, whether and how to prepare or secure long-term pastors for churches that are started, and the importance of staying or moving to another location at some point.

MUP's focus in Japan seems to be broadening to increasingly include church planting. However, assisting established churches through English teaching, pastoring, or other contributions continues to be part the work of a good number of MUP Japan missionaries.

THIS ISSUE

EVERYWHERE

(1) *Evangelists & Church Planters* for Unreached Peoples

CAMBODIA

(2) *Medical Personnel* for village clinic work & AIDS hospice

(3) *Church Workers* of all types for ministry with Cambodian churches

VIETNAM

(4) *Sr. Pastor for International Church*

INDIA

(5) A health and evangelism project needs *Physical and Occupational Therapists* to equip nationals to minister to the disabled

NEPAL

(6) *Engineers & Managers*

(7) *Medical Personnel*

(8) *Teachers*

CHINA

(9) *English Teachers and Teachers* at international schools

(10) *Cross-cultural Church Planters* among tribals

(11) *Doctors, Nurses, Therapists*

(12) *Community Development Workers, Orphanage Workers, Agricultural Specialist, Small Business Developers*

ASIA

(13) *Certified Teachers* needed at international schools

(14) Field or North American-based *Member Care Personnel*

(15) *Asia Short-Term-Teams Project Coordinator*

HUNGARY/POLAND/EUROPE

(16) *English Teachers* needed in public schools or for private tutoring

(17) *Theological Training Teachers & Admin.*

(18) *Youth Worker* for local churches

(19) *Evangelists & Disciplemakers*

TURKEY & CENTRAL ASIA

(20) *Evangelists, Disciplemakers, & Church Planters*

(21) *Team Facilitators*

(22) *Teachers(ESL), Medical Workers, Engineers & Business Professionals*

(23) *Students of various types*

NORTH AMERICA

(24) *Recruiters/Placement Representatives*

(25) *Webmaster*

Mission INSIGHTS

What Is a People Group?

by Keith Hook

In this issue as well as in other contexts you may hear individuals talking about “a people” or “a people group”. What do they mean when they use that term? The most commonly accepted definition of a people group is “**the largest group within which the gospel can flow along natural lines without encountering barriers of understanding or acceptance due to culture, language, religion, geography, etc.**” It’s different than a nation. While there are about 200 nations/countries in the world, there are thousands of people groups. The criteria that Caleb Project, a missions research organization, uses to identify a people group are as follows:

1) Social Identity: To what degree does the group see itself as distinct within society? Do they think of themselves as similar to each other and different from other people? Bob Sjogren refers to it as an “us them” mentality.

2) Group Allegiance: To what degree are group members connected to each other through relationships, through which they influence each other’s behavior?

“Go therefore and make disciples of all peoples....” Mt. 28:19

The two tests of people group identity and allegiance are:

1) Boundary maintenance:

How big are the “walls” between members of the group and people who aren’t members? Do members of the group keep others out by placing social limitations on who group members can marry, befriend and do business with?

2) Durability:

A group’s identity and allegiance must remain over time. University students are, therefore, not a people group. We would not envision a special cluster of churches of, by and for university students because within a five-year period, they would no longer share that identity. Groups of people in which grandparents and their grandchildren share the fundamental identity are more likely to be a people group.

Likewise, a people group’s identity should remain intact after repentance. Therefore, we would not see “prostitutes of San Francisco” as a people group for pioneer church planting because the gospel would dissolve the distinctive feature of their association. Such groups may require specialized evangelistic approaches, but not their own church planting movement.

Keep all this in mind when you think of the Great Commission in Matthew 28:19-20 and see what difference it makes in your thinking when you understand that the word “nations” (ethne in Greek) more accurately could be understood and translated “peoples” or “people groups”.

Church Planting Among the “Rainbow” People of Asia

The following quotes are taken from prayer letters and newsletters of a MUP couple that is working in Asia. For security reasons, the people group is referred to as the “Rainbow” people in an Asian country that will also be left unnamed. However, the Lord knows who the “Rainbow” people are and those that are working to reach them so pray for them using this name. To our knowledge, there is no church among the “Rainbow” people and few churches or organizations have targeted them. Please pray with us so that these colorful people are reached with the gospel.

“Thank You, Lord, for helping me learn the “Rainbow” language quickly. You have already been using that ability as a bridge in making friends with our people. Last weekend I did some more traveling in the countryside and found

some more “Rainbow” villages. The people were very curious when they heard me speaking their language. I met the village head and he invited me to spend the night in his home. He was excited to help me learn their language and to become friends.”

“Last week we asked for more opportunities to share with Grace’s family in the countryside. When we got to the village, I sat down and made friends with Grace’s brother-in-law. At first I tried practicing “Rainbow” on him. He liked that. They always laugh when they hear me speaking in their own language. I asked him if the “Rainbow” people had a story about the origin of man. He said I’d have to ask the old man in their house. ‘So, you don’t know where you came from?’ I said, ‘No’ was his reply. ‘Well’, I said, ‘we know. Are you interested in finding out?’ He said, ‘Yes!’ **I went on to explain the whole story of Creation, Adam & Eve, sin, and Jesus as best I could in a more common language we both understood. Meanwhile, my other teammates noticed I was sharing with him and started silently praying for me. God just gave me the words to say.** Finally, I asked him if he thought this story was believable. He just said that his people had never heard this story before. So, I welcomed him to come to our home sometime to hear more stories.”

“...It was special to go visit the “Rainbow” people together. To our surprise we arrived when the largest yearly festival was going on. There were literally thousands of our people there, and some we even knew. We were able to make some good contacts for the summer teams that are coming to help.”

“Last week I flew to another city with a teammate to network with a man who has been working with our people. We found out he has actually disciplesd 10 people over the past four years. He told us that they are planning to send out 40 nationals to reach the “Rainbow” area in a few months. We need to pray for these 40 men and for the villages to which they will be going. Pray also that we would be able to provide them with the useful materials and even recordings in the “Rainbow” language to use at that time.”

“The harvest is plentiful, but the laborers are few. Therefore, pray” Luke 10:2

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Mission to Unreached Peoples (MUP) is an interdenominational agency helping people fulfill God’s call in evangelism and church planting; often through holistic, creative strategies such as tentmaking and community development.

We would like to hear from you. If you desire more information about MUP or any articles, please contact the editor at the address above.

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MUP is a non-profit 501 (c)(3) organization. Tax-deductible donations to the general fund, designated missionaries, and projects are greatly appreciated and can be sent to: Mission to Unreached Peoples P.O. Box 30947, Seattle, WA 98103-0947.

Our Mission

Our mission is to obey the Great Commission of Jesus Christ by investing our lives, gifts, resources, and vocational skills in God’s work throughout Asia and Europe.



Prayer and General Fund Response Form

Please send in the following form or respond by e-mail to mupinfo@mup.org

I pledge to pray for Mission to Unreached Peoples ministry ___ times per week, and/or for this specific Missionary or People Group/Project: _____.

Please count on me as part of the \$5000 in new general fund monthly pledges beginning _____ in the amount of \$ _____ / month for a minimum of one year.

Name: _____
Address: _____
E-mail: _____