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“Prostitution is a billion dollar business that contributes upwards of 14 percent of Thailand’s economy... The lack of viable job options is a primary factor which makes people vulnerable to trafficking and other forms of exploitation.”

From Corporate America to Southeast Asia

Former lawyer and her husband develop ministry to help victims or those at risk of sexual exploitation.

The following was adapted from an article written by Elise Rambaud of the Midland Reporter-Telegram in Midland, Texas regarding the work of MUP workers, Mark & Christa Crawford, who minister to prostitutes in northern Thailand. The original article was written May 17, 2006 after Elise attended a presentation that Christa made in the area. Check out Mark & Christa’s website at www.justfoodinc.org

The thought of prostitution often elicits images of a seedy underworld replete with practitioners and patrons devoid of any sense of morality. It is the oldest profession and the women who sell their bodies are looking for an easy way to make a quick buck, right?

Christa Crawford paints a different picture for us concerning the thousands of prostitutes working in Thailand who feel prostitution is not a choice. And even for those who are not “forced prostitutes” or victims of sexual trafficking, there oftentimes is no alternative.

A Harvard-educated former corporate lawyer turned missionary, Crawford and her husband Mark have been living in Chiang Mai, Thailand for five years. Their ministry, Just Food Inc., seeks to provide

spiritual support, counseling, English-language education, and training in the restaurant and hospitality industry for men, women and children who are victims or who are at risk of sexual exploitation.

According to Christa, “The lack of viable job options is a primary factor which makes people vulnerable to trafficking and other forms of exploitation. At the same time, the hospitality/food and beverage sector is a growth area in Thailand. Western-style four-star restaurants and hotels are beginning to be built in our city.”

“Prostitution is a billion dollar business that contributes upwards of 14 percent of Thailand’s economy. There are more than 200,000 prostitutes in Thailand, and more than 12,000 of those are children. Though much of the sex industry is overt, there is still a very large underground prostitution scene. Prostitution is

illegal, but the laws are not enforced. In fact ‘tourist police’ can be seen in the red light districts just to make sure the tourists are safe.”

“The Thai culture also reinforces the demand for the sex industry. Antiquated traditions of men having multiple wives and concubines are illegal but still



The Unreached Peoples' **ADVOCATE**

www.mup.org/advocatemain.htm

October 1, 2006

A newsletter on activities of *Mission to Unreached Peoples* and other mission efforts.

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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 or any articles, please contact the editor at the address or email above.

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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.



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MISSION INSIGHTS

Focus on China

The growth of the church in China constitutes probably the largest Christian revival in 2000 years of church history. Currently there are an estimated 70 million believers in China with many more waiting and hungry to hear the good news of Jesus Christ. Following are some factors identified by Tony Lambert, director of China Research for OMF, that we must seriously consider as we think of ministry in China. Further information on these and other factors can be found in the [China Resource Handbook](#) which can be purchased at www.omfbooks.com.



Urbanization: The greatest growth of the church has been in the rural areas yet 50% of China could be urbanized in the next 20 years. Nearly 200 million people are already on the move in either seasonal or permanent migration to the cities in search of work. They represent the greatest rural to city mass migration in human history and there are increasing needs among the urban poor. This has also caused a decline in many rural churches. In many villages, over 90 % of the young people have left for the cities. These once strong house churches are now more vulnerable to cults.

Wealth and Poverty Gap: In the midst of the fastest growing economy in the world, the gap between the newly rich and poor continues to widen with increased materialism and corruption. The church in China is not immune to this temptation. Many segments of society have been left behind by the economic boom such as the blind, deaf, physically and mentally disabled, migrants, HIV/AIDS sufferers, drug addicts, etc.

Children and Youth: It is illegal to evangelize those under the age of 18, but in practice many churches discreetly run Sunday schools and various youth activities. Much remains to be done in this area and passing the torch from one generation to another is a weak spot in the Chinese church overall.

Intellectuals: It is striking how many educated Chinese are turning to Christ, both within the country and abroad. This is great news for they can provide much needed spiritual and theological educated leadership for the church.

Minorities:

China is home to hundreds of distinct ethnic people groups such as the Tibetans, the Miao, the Hui, and the Uighurs to name a few. Though often overlooked, these groups are in desperate need of the gospel in addition to the millions of Han Chinese.

Cross-cultural Missions: There are encouraging signs that the church in China is beginning to catch a missions vision. Han Chinese believers are already taking the gospel to Tibet, the Muslim northwest part of China, and to some of the minority groups in the southwest. Some have even begun training to take the gospel to the Middle East.

Much remains to be done in China and you and your church can be part of it. People are needed in almost every occupational field you can think of. Pray and ask the Lord what He would have you do in this great harvest field and then let us work with you in fulfilling the vision/burden He gives you.



OPENINGS AND OPPORTUNITIES

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From Corporate America to SE Asia: continued from page 1

practiced.” Christa said that people even ask her husband how many wives he has. In modern times, more men prefer to patronize the bars and brothels instead of taking on additional wives and families.

“Prostitution is just considered a natural part of what it means to be a man in Thailand. We hear about the problem of sexual tourism, where men from America and other countries come to Thailand in search of sex, but 97 percent of the demand is local. Ninety percent of Thai men say they have visited a prostitute at some point in their lives and 40 percent of Thai men visit prostitutes regularly.”

The Crawfords are using their educational and career backgrounds to help give hope and a future to people who see no way out of a bleak situation. Before answering a call to ministry, Mark was training manager for the Ritz-Carlton Hotels. After leaving her career in corporate law, Christa began working for Christian legal aid in low-income areas of Los Angeles. They had both felt drawn to the cause of prostitution in Thailand, but had yet to connect the dots and find a way to help.

“We went to China and Thailand and we fell in love with Thailand. We tried to see what God was doing in the area and what opportunities there were for us to work with prostitutes there. We found there were a number of Christian organizations that help women in forced prostitution, but none that addressed the needs of men and women in “voluntary” prostitution. God’s heart breaks

just as much for them as the women who are kept in bondage.”

They opened “The Garden of Hope,” a non-residential vocational training center and the Just Coffee Café inside a Christian bookstore to provide an alternative source of income for people who are vulnerable to or who have left the sex industry. They make Western-style baked goods and gourmet coffee drinks. They are also developing a culinary arts program to provide in-demand job skills.

“The food and beverage industry is highly diversified, providing jobs and markets at a variety of levels. On almost every street, at any time of the day or night, vendors can be found selling food. The start-up costs are low and there is a constant demand. Additionally, western-style cafés are highly popular in Chiang Mai among Thai nationals, the more than 3 million tourists who visit each year, and the several thousand member expatriate community (including 5,000 Americans alone).”

As part of this work, Mark and Christa have also been heavily involved in training four Burmese women who are working in a new anti-trafficking project in their country. It is difficult work and there is much persecution of Christians in Burma. Whereas most people flee persecution and these women could have easily stayed in the jobs that they had, they responded to the call of God and moved directly into the face of persecution. For further information on Mark & Christa’s work, you may contact them through the website listed at the beginning of this article.

PROPERTY NEEDS UPDATE

The US Board and leadership of MUP believe that it is time for us to seek a permanent office facility. We need your continued prayers for this important step before us as we continue to explore various options. We would appreciate any suggestions and ideas you may have, including specific property available and vacant land. We are also seeking financial contributions toward this end. Thank you for keeping this prayer need before the Father.

Director’s View: continued from page 4

of believers. Together, we certainly can change our world!

Mission to Unreached Peoples continues to seek willing hands for the task of unreached peoples. Whatever your skill, age, or stage of life, there is a task for you. Drop me a note - I’d love to talk with you about God’s call on your life. Just maybe, you can do more because God can use you in ways you never imagined!

Mission to Unreached Peoples

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NEWS ON GLOBAL EFFORTS TO REACH THE LEAST REACHED

Director's View

by David Hupp, US Director



Reflecting on Making a Difference



A few weeks ago, our oldest son, along with the enthusiastic and able help of my wife, pulled off a surprise 60th birthday party for me. I was expecting

a quiet, family celebration and it was my "worst nightmare" realized as I was taken completely unaware by waiting friends. This included supporters, family, and friends dating back to, and even prior to high school.

There was opportunity for some sharing, and I was reminded that many of us there that night were both baby-boomers and products of the '60's. We were reminded of

some of our conversations of those years - promises to "make our lives count." We were reminded of some of our optimistic pledges of youth to "change the world" in our generation.

I am thankful that God gives us some opportunities to reflect upon what He has done and is doing in our lives and to consider the opportunities for ministry that He gives us. Are we making a difference in our world - wherever He plants us? Is Mission to Unreached Peoples, as a family of believers (senders and goers) working together, making a difference? **"You bet" it is!** The reality is demonstrated in the individual lives that are touched, such as the street women being served in Thailand, as well as families, villages, and people groups who are responding to the Gospel

"Is Mission to Unreached Peoples, as a family of believers working together (senders and goers), making a difference? You bet it is!"

message around the world. One of the advantages of "sixty years" is the ability to look back and see how the Lord takes our acts of obedience and our often feeble and confused efforts to answer the prayers of our youth that our lives will count and make a difference.

Mission to Unreached Peoples is literally a family of all ages (newborns to 85) seeking to make a difference among the unreached peoples of the world. The path is

not always straight, and it is often difficult. We learn that it is a spiritual battle and that prayer makes a difference. We learn that we don't have all, or even many, answers to the mysteries of life. But we see and learn that God does answer prayer, that His heart is for the unreached, and that he works through His church

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