



EMBRACING THE OPPORTUNITIES

“And pray for us, too, that God may open a door for our message, so that we may proclaim the mystery of Christ, for which I am in chains. Pray that I may proclaim it clearly, as I should.” Colossians 4:3, 4

JOEL & BARB WRIGHT / SUMMER 2016

China is the world’s most populous nation with nearly 1.4 billion people, followed by India with a population of approximately 1.3 billion citizens. Within seven years, however, India will most likely overtake China and become the most populous nation on earth. Four Asian neighbors, Indonesia (258 million), Pakistan (192 million), Bangladesh (162 million), and Japan (126 million) offer major challenges as well. A glance at the maps and resources of the “Joshua Project” (<https://joshuaproject.net/resources/maps>) highlights both drastic needs as well as opportunities towards “UPG’s” and “UUPG’s” (Unreached, Unengaged, People Groups). Not all news is negative with respect to China and India, as rapid church growth continues to take root. In our days of accelerated globalization, God often appears to be all the more on the move in places and in ways formerly thought nearly impossible or rarely dreamed of.

OPPORTUNITIES TOWARD INDIA & BANGLADESH - A remarkable 80,000+ individuals have now tagged “like” on our social media outreach page entitled “God’s Love for the World”! Based on the text of John 3:16, this represents 4x growth over the beginning of the year! Long lists of names like Aturezaman, Sohidul, Kamrarel, Anester, Dinejapur, Kohibbir, Rhuzina, Shehriar (slight alterations to avoid exposure) form regular reports of the response to posts of Christian text with pictures and contextualized worship. Only for the sake of budget are we not able to do more, and we ask for your increased considerations as to support. A simple \$25 provides average 25,000+ ‘ads’ in Bangladesh and India for our posts, with an average of 2,500+ individuals responding with either page or post “likes” (average of 1 for every 10+ individuals!). Christian Worship songs and links in Hindi, Tamil, Telugu, Punjabi, Urdu, Bengali, create opportunities for individuals to grow further with the witness of faith. Much needs to be improved, certainly, but there are many genuine signs of sincere and positive appreciation. see: <https://www.facebook.com/Godslovefortheworld>



OPPORTUNITIES TOWARD CHINESE MINISTRIES - May 19 & 20, 2016 were significant days for Converge International Ministries – a first gathering of Chinese leaders to reawaken our Chinese Diaspora Missions and church planting projects among Chinese USA. Converge IM Ex. Dir. Ivan Veldhuizen and Dr. John Baxter were on hand to pray and open dialogue together with Daniel Luc and Rev. Matt Lin on the campus of Chicago Chinese Christian Missions (May 19th) On the following day the Chicago Northwest Chinese Church of Rolling Meadows, CCC Missions and Logos Chinese Seminary (Chicago) shared a fellowship luncheon together hosted by Converge IM. These initial steps were followed in July with the hosting of a Converge Asian couple working with Muslim outreach. Then on August 20th, Joel traveled to the University of Illinois Champaign-Urbana to witness up-close a united effort on behalf of several Chinese ministries reaching out to the 5,000-7,000 Chinese students on campus (“Quad-Day”), with numbers of individuals praying to receive Christ.

OTHER CHINESE DEVELOPMENTS:

Chinese Ministry Network. Initial identification has been made of four Chinese churches currently affiliated with Converge (Olympia, WA; Oakland, CA; Rolling Meadows (Chicago), IL; Quincy (Boston), MA). Contacts are underway to form a more coordinated ministry network — both in Chicago and towards the Chinese Diaspora in Mission.

Logos Chinese Seminary, Chicago. On September 25, 2016, approximately 250 guests from the Chinese community of Chicago came together for a united dinner and worshipful program in support of and fundraising for the seminary.

Logos Chinese Seminary, California. Earlier in September, church planting and leadership resources by Gary Rohmayer (Converge MidAmerica District Executive Minister) were presented to Dr. Doug Vavrosky. The resources were well received for his teaching in Mandarin at the Logos Chinese Seminary, in El Monte, California. Dr. Doug Vavrosky is a Bethel Seminary Graduate and Converge (BGC) Ordained missionary with OMF.

Chinese Church in Rolling Meadows, IL / CCLife Fellowship. Numbers of visits were made over the summer in a growing friendship with Pastor Pine Wang and others church leaders. The Chinese church in their great concern for America asked Joel to take part in a special prayer and worship night praying for our nation.

Laotian Peoples. Initial identification of 4 “Laotian” churches affiliated with Converge. These are three Yiu-Mienh (Yao) peoples (Oakland & Fairfield, CA; Minneapolis, MN; and the identification of one Tai Dam peoples church (NuLife Church, Des Moines, IA). These groups share roots within China.

Early Mission roots within China. A rich trove of biographical and mission data has been recently discovered as to the early Swedish Baptist Mission within China starting in the 1890’s. For more details on the Vingren, Lindburg, Rinell and Holmquist stories (an unpublished book) by Lennart Holmquist see: <http://www.earthwander.com/Roots/Rinell-Book/001-ReadThis.htm> To read also the autobiography of Sten & Alice Lindberg (born in China, BGC’s early official missionary to China and Japan), and more of the story of the Johan & Anna Lindberg, please also see the unpublished book at: <http://www.earthwander.com/Roots/Rinell/Docs/Diary/FromMyDiary-Lindberg.pdf>

OPPORTUNITIES WITH BRAZILIAN MINISTRIES – It has been a busy summer for our Brazilian churches as well, with ongoing varieties of home Bible Study groups, sports programs, and church retreats. A special opportunity was to be at the Brazilian church retreat at Timber-lee Camp in WI (September 3rd-5th—front page, top photo). Barb took upon herself in incredible fashion the leadership for the children’s ministry portion, and Joel took part in a baptism at Peter’s Lake. In Minneapolis, at the Brazilian Church of Hope in St. Paul, MN, Rev. David Eby led the church through a successful Pastoral search process. Joel traveled to Minneapolis / St. Paul, MN and took part in the well-attended installation service of the new Sr. Pastor Sérgio DeLima (with wife Elaine and daughters), on the weekend of May 22nd (pictures extending to page 3):





CONVERGE ADOPTS 30 “UNENGAGED, UNREACHED PEOPLE GROUPS”

In addition to all the above, we celebrate the newly announced Converge commitment toward “Unreached, Unengaged People Groups” This commitment is toward identifying and reaching 10 new groups in India, 10 in Nepal and 10 in Indonesia. See: <https://converge.org/operation-uupg/>
UUPG Contacts. Leadership conferences and social media has also afforded us new friendships internationally towards UUPG’s. Christian ministers most recently from India, Pakistan, Nepal, are seeking further prayer and help. Pray with us as we seek to grow in such matters.

PROGRESSION WITHIN MISSIO NEXUS

Missio Nexus - The Mission Handbook publication (22nd edition) continued its survey and data search process over the summer, Joel working an average of one to two days a week under Dr. Marvin and Peggy Newell. More details can be found here: <https://missionexus.org/mh22/>

SUGGESTED ELEMENTS NEEDING PRAYER:

Pray for wisdom, discernment and spiritual strength for the initial stages of the Converge Chinese Ministries network.

Prayer for effective contacts, choices and trusted new partnerships regarding Unreached Peoples. Pray for P. K. and the Yanadi Peoples of Andhra Pradesh, India. Pray also for Pastor S.S. in Pakistan, and Pastor D. N. in Nepal. All three share schools and / or orphanages & children’s Ministries (see photos at right).

Pray for the ongoing social media outreach to India and Bangladesh through Facebook (Scriptural posts, creative worship, effective follow-up).

Pray for Brazilian pastors and churches facing ministry transitions (Chicago, Boston area, Minneapolis)

Pray for Barb's important financial and broad daily tasks at Converge Headquarters, Arlington Heights office.

Pray for our adult children Josh, Sarah, Gabriel and their spiritual lives.

Pray for ongoing stressed financial concerns, and limited resources.



With thanks!!!!!!!!!!

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