

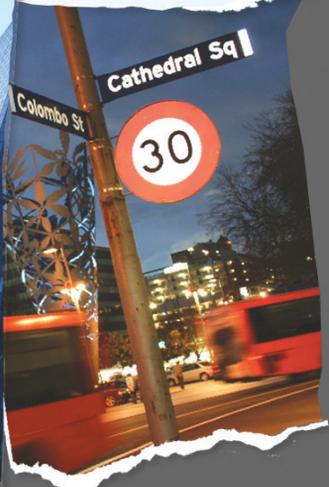
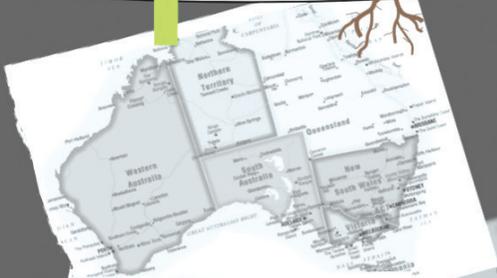
OCTOBER-NOVEMBER 2013

Horizons

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editorial

Lessons Learned at Midnight from a Jail Cell -- Complaining Changes Nothing!

Mark Twain once said, “Don’t complain and talk about all your problems--80 percent of people don’t care; the other 20 percent will think you deserve them.” I can think of better reasons not to complain!

In Acts 16:16-40, on their way to the place of prayer Paul and Silas were met by a slave girl possessed by a demon. She followed them shouting that these were men were servants of God who could tell everyone how to be saved. Her actions created several problems. Paul and Silas realized the girl was tormented by this spirit and created an obstacle for their ability to reason with the people around them. Their merciful response to her behavior was to set her free from the demon that drove her actions beyond control.

As the result of their act of love, Paul and Silas were now in an absolutely miserable situation. The slave girl’s owners falsely accused them. They had been arrested, stripped, and fiercely beaten. Now they were chained inside a prison without light, without sanitation, and without medical treatment for their open wounds. In all likelihood, death awaited them at sunrise. All this because they had been kind to a girl whose owners were using her for their own profit!

If anyone seemed to ever have a “right” to complain, Paul and Silas did. Life was not fair at all. Why did God allow these trumped up charges to be brought against them? Why did God allow these good men to be savagely beaten when their actions were in the loving service of God’s kingdom? Why was God allowing their life to be ended in the painful manner of Roman execution? Why did all this happen to them, and all their friends were allowed to go free? Oh yes, there were friends

Reggie
Hundley

Editor,
HORIZONS

and

Executive Director,
Mission Services
Association

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who were not arrested. Luke, and probably others, were with them. The writer of the book of Acts included this in the record, "She followed Paul **and the rest of us**, shouting." Oh yes, if anyone ever had a legitimate opportunity to complain about how unfair life (and God) can seem to be, it was Paul and Silas.

Why did they not complain? Why do we read about them singing instead? The answer is simple, complaining does not change anything. Complaining about their open wounds would not heal them. Complaining about the false charges would not eliminate them. Complaining about the unfairness of others being allowed to go free would not have released their chains. Complaining would have only increased their suffering while singing praises to God lifted their spirits! These two servants of God neither ignored their suffering nor pretended it did not exist. They leaned upon the promises of God and mustered all the power of their faith instead. Choosing praise of God over complaining changed things!

Complaining about circumstances is part of human nature. Thankfully, the power of God changes the natural person into a spiritual being. May we learn what Paul and Silas knew to be true. Complaining changes nothing. On the other hand, praising God for His glory has great power (see 2 Chronicles 20:21ff). You think about that!



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In other words, we've got to live it in such a way that it's attractive. . . . We must know how to speak to those who have no biblical knowledge whatsoever. That's challenging to those of us steeped in churchified activity and the related vocabulary.

Much of Christianity is repulsive to outsiders. I rarely speak of Christianity or things Christian, preferring instead to talk about Jesus. He has relatively little social baggage compared to the common religious terms and institutions.

"He is the one we proclaim, admonishing and teaching everyone with all wisdom, so that we may present everyone fully mature in Christ. That's why I work and struggle so hard, depending on Christ's mighty power that works within me," said Paul in his letter to the believers at Colossae.

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2013

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Kansas City, Kansas

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Jill Shaw

Missionary,
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Staying in the conversation, even when it's uncomfortable

While serving in Zimbabwe for over a decade, I thought I'd always be an African missionary. After all, I was good at it and that's where the biggest needs are - right? I even lost financial support when I came to New Zealand because it "wasn't a real mission field."

I was ashamed of myself that, over all those years, I hadn't explained the missional purpose better. I hadn't helped supporters grasp the degree of spiritual need worldwide, especially in post-Christian societies like New Zealand, Australia, England and other European countries.

In most of these places, the *good news* seems divisive, judgmental and the cause of hate and rejection. People have never glimpsed Jesus in a way that would attract them to Him. They consider re-purposed church buildings as progress; they know what a pub or café offers, but a church, no idea. I have friends who've never held a Bible or been inside a church building.

And so I give you snapshots of my life on the streets with real people who aren't likely to wander in to your church or mine.

Anita & Little John

You almost didn't notice the snake tattoos on her neck anymore, or the others that covered every exposed area of skin. She was just Anita, saved by grace, and smiling from the depths of her heart.

She was a hooker, walking home from God-only-knows-where one Sunday morning when a man from our church offered her a lift. I don't know how long it took before he realized *what* he'd picked up!

After hearing where she wanted to go, David said, "I'll be happy to take you, but I'm on my way to church. I can drop you off afterwards." He gave her the option of waiting for him on the road, waiting for him in the parking lot or going in to the service.

She came in with him.

Jeff rarely referred to prostitutes in his sermons; not a major

theme. But that Sunday he did. Anita perked up, looked around wondering if she was being targeted, realized she wasn't and sat back to listen.

I greeted her after the service. I'm always on the watch for visitors and she wasn't hard to spot as an irregular.

David dropped her off as promised and they must've exchanged contact info because she rang him during the week and asked to come again. He picked her up and brought her back to the service.

I met with Anita afterwards, with some other ladies who didn't know quite where to look, and we prayed. As the discipling coordinator I met with Anita several times, usually in cafés between her house and mine. One day, on my day off and as I was sweeping out my garage, Anita called sobbing. She just couldn't believe that God could *really* forgive her.

"You just don't know what all I've done!" she said. "How could He forgive all that?"

"Do you have a Bible handy, " I asked.

"I knew you'd ask that. Yes, I have it here."

"Good. Turn to 1 John in the New Testament."

After a bit she started reading, but I realized it was John 1, the gospel, so I interrupted and tried to explain about the epistle later in the New Testament.

"Anita, I didn't give you enough information. John wrote more than one book. There's the Gospel of John and then three little Johns at the back. Turn to the first of those smaller books."

There was a pause as she took in what I said. Then she asked, "I've found it, but *-pause-* is that the way you explain it to everyone, or just me?"

Only then did it hit me that a former prostitute referred to her clients as Johns! Moving on, we arrived at 1 John 1:8-9,

If we claim to be without sin, we deceive ourselves and the truth is not in us. If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just and will forgive us our sins and purify us from all unrighteousness. NIV

I said, "Either it's true, or it's not. Which is it, Anita? It can't be true for some and not for you."

I then tried substituting other words for all:

"... *some* unrighteousness? ... *most* unrighteousness?"

Crying on the other end of the phone, Anita said, "All. It says all!"

About then I realized I'd stopped sweeping and had been speaking my side of the conversation toward the open garage door which was uphill from my little cul-de-sac street. My words were very likely magnified across the neighborhood. So be it.

[Santa Parade](#)

Another day I attended the Auckland Santa Parade. People lined Queen Street 6-8 deep, craning to see, lifting their kids for better views of passing floats. One

mom had arrived early, staked out a great spot curbside with her little girl and was taking it all in. As each float passed the mom talked with her daughter, thoroughly explaining the float's theme or story.

There was the mayor, Nemo & friends, charities, the police, horses, clowns, fire trucks, actors from the nearby theater, etc. Each float was explained and cheered. I admired the attention she gave her little girl. I love to see good parenting.

Eventually, but just before the much-anticipated Santa appeared, a float came by with a donkey, sheep, robed and hooded figures and a baby in a hay-strewn feeder. The little girl looked up questioningly when no explanation came, "Mummy, what's that one about?"

"I don't know, honey. That doesn't have anything to do with Christmas."

Sonia: Sunday School?

When some good people from one of my supporting churches came to visit, a local friend of mine borrowed a van from her mum who coordinates community events on Auckland's North Shore. Sonia offered to drive so as to watch, listen in, and get to know my visitors.

I accepted her offer as when I try to drive and be commentator, I am prone to earning traffic tickets; not good anytime, especially when your supporters are with you.

So we're tooling along the main road south toward Rotorua and the conversation turns to biblical themes. One woman in the middle seat mentions that in Sunday School class they had recently discussed...

Sonia's head went up, followed by her eyes in the rear view mirror. "Can I ask a question?"

"Sure. What?"

They all leaned in, remembering I'd explained that Sonia was not a Christian, but having no real idea as to what she did or didn't understand or believe. They were possibly ready to explain the profound theological implications of propitiation or the eschatological ramifications of...

Sonia asked, "What's Sunday School?"

Where do we begin?

As Nate Hutchison of ReChurch, South Pacific Christian Fellowship's church plant in the city of Christchurch, says, "We must remember to be soooo patient with people. They are skeptical and are looking for a reason to walk away from a journey towards Jesus. We've got to develop a relationship, over a period of time, and show them what it's like to be an authentic follower of Christ."

In other words, we've got to live it in such a way that it's attractive. I try to live in a way that confuses people. Often it confuses Christians as much as non-believers. Either way I get questioned and conversations follow.

Incarnational ministry is living the Gospel, earning the right to speak it. We must

know how to speak to those who have no biblical knowledge whatsoever. That's challenging to those of us steeped in churchified activity and the related vocabulary.

Much of Christianity is repulsive to outsiders. I rarely speak of Christianity or things Christian, preferring instead to talk about Jesus. He has relatively little social baggage compared to the common religious terms and institutions.

"He is the one we proclaim, admonishing and teaching everyone with all wisdom, so that we may present everyone fully mature in Christ. That's why I work and struggle so hard, depending on Christ's mighty power that works within me," said Paul in his letter to the believers at Colossae.

There's no priority of physical or economic poverty, but need of a relationship with Jesus, who by His own admission, is the only way to the Father; whose name is the only name by which we may be saved.

In his first letter to the Corinthian believers, Paul said, "Yes, I try to find common ground with everyone, doing everything I can to save some. I do everything to spread the Good News and share in its blessings." 1 Cor 9:22b-23

Everyone. Common ground. Struggle. Doing everything I can...

So I was invited to coordinate discipling in a church plant in New Zealand's largest city. Now I also serve as a chaplain at the university where the church used to meet, provide a refuge in my home for women at risk, resettle refugees and network for better discipling and church planting throughout NZ; all of this in a post-Christian context where Jesus' name is used often, but rarely with reverence.

Sound familiar? The US is on a similar track; New Zealand's just further along the post-Christian continuum.

The everyday challenge here, as in most communities, is how to do ministry in a way that glorifies God and attracts outsiders, whether those outsiders are Muslim, wealthy, gang members, intellectuals, sufferers of mental illness, prostitutes, indifferent, antagonistic or alcoholic. The challenge is to make Jesus accessible, anticipating the Holy Spirit at work, staying in the conversations even when we're uncomfortable. This is our calling, yours and mine.

South Pacific Christian Fellowship is a church planting organization of the Christian Churches/Churches of Christ. Joe & Amy Flammer, Nate & Whitney Hutchison, Jodi Taylor, Tony & Kelsey Collins serve with ReChurch, while Jill Shaw is in Auckland with the Shore Community Christian Church.

Jill blogs randomly at <http://www.conversationsatintersections.blogspot.com>, but not primarily for a Christian readership.

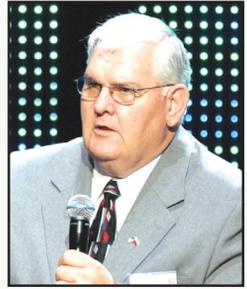
LIKE South Pacific Christian Fellowship NZ on Facebook for regular updates. <https://www.facebook.com/SPCFNZ>

Referenced in this article: 1 John 1:8-9; Col. 1:28-29; 1 Cor. 9:22b-23; John 14:6; Acts 4:12

How would you explain the Gospel to an English-speaking, educated urban person, much like yourself maybe, who has no Bible knowledge, no concept of sin or acknowledged need for God?

A Conversation with Wayne Murphy

By Judy J. Harris, PCM Board of Directors



C. Wayne Murphy

On March 1, 2013, Wayne Murphy became Executive Director Emeritus of Polish Christian Ministries capping almost twenty years of leadership for the organization. During his tenure, Wayne encouraged substantial growth as the Polish churches evolved more and more into self-reliance from their earlier years of great oppression under various political regimes.

Describe those early years when Paul and Adela Bajko founded Polish Christian Ministries.



The Bajko Family traveling to Poland in 1960.

Paul began working with people in Poland in 1954 while he led the Department of Missions at Eastern Christian Institute in East Orange, NJ, later Eastern Christian College in Bel Air, MD. It was in 1968 that he invited several faithful supporters to serve with him as a Guidance Committee. They met once a year to hear reports, approve the finance report of the previous year, and approve a budget for the coming year.

When Paul Bajko established this mission, Poland was under Communist rule. PCM began as an opportunity for Paul Bajko to help people



in his home country. The Bajkos sent hundreds of boxes of used clothing to Poland to assist people who needed them. Medicines and other items were provided as many things were not available in Poland. During the years of Solidarity, Poland experienced a famine because the Soviet Union confiscated as much food as possible. At this time tons of food were sent to Poland by Christians in the United States. Paul Bajko engineered much of this.



Paul & Dela Bajko

One of the preachers told me this story. In 1980 when the Olympics were hosted in Russia the Polish rail workers noticed many box cars headed to Russia labeled "Art." They began questioning the need for so much Polish art in Moscow. Some of them pried the doors open on boxcars and found them filled with Polish hams. The workers welded the boxcar wheels to the tracks.

Churches had many needs at this time. PCM provided salary support for preachers and funds for church buildings. Many medical needs were met. Excedrin was a favorite remedy of the Polish people because for many years it could not be obtained there.

For many of the Polish pastors Paul Bajko was like a father to them. He provided much guidance for them as well as helped meet many of their needs. Even today there are those who still consider him like a father.

What were your early experiences with PCM?

I went to Poland for the first time in 1987 as a member of the Guidance Committee because the committee had its annual meeting in Poland that year. It was truly an enlightening trip. These were my first mission trips. Experiencing a different culture was educational. I saw farmers using horse-drawn equipment like my grandfather used when I was a child. A "milk truck" consisted of a horse-drawn wagon with several milk cans in it.

That trip and a subsequent one in 1991 provided me an opportunity to get acquainted with a number of the Polish people and pastors. That helped prepare me for my eventual service as Executive Director of PCM.

The first Sunday morning worship service I attended was in Kolobrzeg. I was one of three preachers for that service which lasted two and a half hours. I did not realize the length of it until we had finished. It was a most spiritually uplifting service.

In 1991, I attended the dedication of the new church building in Bielsk Podlaski. The 80th Anniversary of our churches was also held that weekend and it was an honor to be one of the speakers.

It was a Saturday afternoon in May of 1991 that my wife, Diana, and I stopped for a visit with the Bajkos. Paul had always said he would step aside as Director when he turned 70. That particular afternoon Paul told me I would be his

replacement as the next Director. I was a bit speechless. After a few minutes I told him we would talk about it after returning from Poland. A couple of months later I told him, "No," because I did not feel it wise to leave the church I was serving at that time. Another couple of months passed and he asked me if I had reconsidered. I realized then that those earlier reasons were no longer valid. I told him I would think about it. That day much to my astonishment he told the Guidance Committee I would be his replacement. I was grateful the Guidance Committee gave me a month or so to give them an answer. At that time I consented to be the next Director, even though I would not begin working for PCM until January of 1993.

In worshipping with churches in Poland, we always had someone who would translate for us. This was true one Sunday as we worshipped with one of the churches. We had someone who translated everything until we came to the Lord's Supper. Our translator was then silent. I thought, "No, don't stop now." Then I realized I needed no translation. What was being said and done I had experienced my entire life. I didn't need words to tell me what was happening. Together we were remembering the same Jesus as I had done since I became a Christian at the age of 10. The memorial service has always been a part of my life regardless of the country.

How has Poland changed during your tenure?

As I watched Poland develop during the post-Communist years, it was amazing how westernized Poland became. Many fast food places appeared, especially McDonald's, Pizza Hut, and Kentucky Fried Chicken. Roads were improved – and they surely needed much improvement. Traffic in the cities has created many slow-downs and traffic jams.

A remnant of the Soviet years is the lack of initiative and planning. It is very difficult at times to help some understand the concept of long range planning. I have contacted preachers months in advance about something I would like to plan with them and their churches. Too many times nothing has been done on their part until a week or two in advance. That has created problems occasionally in being prepared with the proper teaching or arrangements with groups traveling with me.

Another of the difficulties coming out of the Soviet system relates to build-



ings. A partially constructed building was purchased in the small city during communist days. Over a period of several years almost every part of that original structure has been replaced due to inferior materials – the footers, the windows, the roof, the heating system. This happened so often that the pastor became embarrassed every time he asked for help to replace something but we have worked with him to accomplish what was needed.



What are the significant changes you have seen in working with supportive churches here in the United States?

The most significant change here in America has been in fund raising. The size of the church has a lot to do with that. Twenty years ago I made presentations in churches and knew that day or within a week whether that church would provide financial support. That day is gone. Today churches or mission committees get to know you first and trust you before supporting a mission. With the advent of mega churches, obtaining support is even more difficult. One must get well acquainted with the missions pastor and earn his trust before a step is taken towards receiving support.

It used to be a common thing to be invited to speak at the morning worship service. Presentations were made to the entire congregation. Today that seldom happens. With multiple worship services it is not as easy to present to the congregation. Sunday evening services were a good time for presentations but many churches no longer have Sunday evening services.

What are the significant changes you have seen in Polish churches?

Fifteen to twenty years ago when we went to Poland it was easy to have a service almost any night of the week, but today if the church does not have a service during the week, it is difficult to get to churches during the week.

The style of music has changed in many of the churches. The changes are very similar to what we have experienced in America over several decades. Once there were just hymns and now contemporary music is used. In some of the churches in Poland hymnals are still prevalent whereas in others they are not used.

In preparation for a trip to Poland when I was just Director-elect, Paul Bajko asked me to work with the Polish leadership in planning what would become an annual conference. Due to my work with conventions here in America for many years, this was an easy task. The difficult part was simply getting the Polish leadership to comprehend what needed to be done and help plan the week. It



was a great success as preachers and their wives gathered at Camp Ostroda for five days. This became an annual event and one of my favorite times of the year. Every year since then through 2012 I had a part in this annual conference. This annual gathering, today known as the Annual Leadership Conference, provided a time for all of the preachers, their wives, and some church leaders to come together for a few days of spiritual enrichment, challenging teaching, and some time of relaxation. Seven or eight years ago I began what became a tradition with the conference. One evening following the activities of the day, I provided ice cream for everyone. What a hit! This year (2013), though I was not attending the conference, I'd heard that someone said, "No ice cream?" It was still provided for them. We'll see how long we can maintain this tradition, whether present for it or not.



What trends are you seeing in this mission field that bode well for the future?

I believe the most significant trend is that of Polish churches becoming self-supporting. This is something I have talked about to the preachers for more than ten years. I knew it would take time for that to happen. Over the past year the current Executive Director David Hatfield, and I have met with the leaders

of ten different churches to talk about what they can expect in the future from PCM and what PCM expects of them. Agreements of Understanding have been signed with these ten churches. The goal is to accomplish this with each of the churches receiving support through PCM. Churches signing agreements will be evaluated after three years to determine the progress being made. In each case one of the goals is for the church to become self-supporting. Another important goal is evaluating how they are preparing leaders for the future.



Some of the churches are planting other churches. This is a great need and we are grateful to see this happening.

David Hatfield has a heart for utilizing interns and short term mission workers in Poland. This is a good direction. Soon PCM will need additional staff to help with this endeavor. Using Americans as short term workers in Poland has been a great asset to PCM. A result of this is their churches here become stronger partners in the work in Poland.

Do you have concerns as you see changes occurring?

Some of our Polish churches and pastors fear the future. They worry that PCM might not continue to provide financial support. That is not the case. While our goal over the last few years has been to assist churches in becoming self-supporting, funds not needed for those preacher salaries are used for new church planting.

There is also concern for the development of future pastors and church planters. Some pastors are concerned about their own church and their present needs. A few churches don't have church bank accounts. Others have difficulty making it a priority to pay their pastor's salary. A group of current pastors in Poland are a great help in supporting the change of these perspectives.



* * *

As Executive Director Emeritus of PCM during 2013, Wayne continues in a supportive and advisory capacity insuring a smooth transition for this organization and the people so dear to his heart.

continued, next page

Paul Howey, current chairman of the board of PCM wrote the following to Wayne on March 1, 2013:

“What a milestone day. I think of the decades you have led PCM, endless hours of prayerful and steady-handed nurturing of the organization, and of the lives that have been touched by that service. There is no way of reckoning how many have been introduced to and grown in their relationship with Jesus Christ, either directly, or indirectly as a result of your service, but certainly thousands, and probably tens of thousands. It’s been humbling and an honor to work beside you these past several years, and I look forward to many more years of service and friendship together.

I used to work as a carpenter, to help pay my way through college. I collected many tools, some very specialized, that I pulled out for those infrequent occasions when called for, like a gouge or a spoke-shave; and some were more commodities, like a nail set, or tape measure, which would get used so often that they had dedicated locations in my tool belt, so I wouldn’t even need to look for them – they were always where I needed them, and often, despite heavy use could be depended on to perform year after year. Like many craftsmen, however, I developed a particular fondness for a select tool. In my case it was a 28 oz Eastwing Framing Hammer. I spent many days, particularly when building decks or roofs, where that hammer was in my hand more often than not. I could drive a 12 penny sinker in a single swing, and a 16 penny in no more than 3, almost never developing a blister or getting fatigued because it wasn’t well balanced. I love that hammer and still use it when I go on mission trips.

Our Lord was also trained as a carpenter, and I am certain that when he looks into his collection of tools, that among his favorites is Wayne Murphy. We are so thankful that he has lent us the use of one of his favorite tools for these many years. Just like I pull out that Eastwing when I go to serve, I know that He still has more jobs for you to do, including continuing to serve with us in the new role you undertake today. For the service you have given in the past, today, and going forward, you have the sincere thanks of the Board of Directors, the Executive Committee, and myself.”



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HOT TAMALE

Northern Ghana Adventure

Did you ever go on a trip where nothing went as planned? Come with me on an adventure to Tamale in northern Ghana. I was leading a team of 16 to visit Mole National Park to see elephants, then to visit our missionary friends Terry and Amy Ruff, ending in a wonderful craft market before we flew out the next morning to attend Faithway Christian Church in Accra and visit Stephen and Bea Ofori. Consider that delightful itinerary then read what happened.

Amy Ruff called and said their truck was broken down 3 hours from home. They would not meet us at the airport in Tamale and go with us to the game park. Ok, I can deal with that. "Tamale International Airport" was little more than a small bus depot. We collect our luggage and sought our bus. No 22-passenger bus is in the small lot. I call Amy who is still far from home getting their truck repaired. She calls her bus company who says: "whoops, we sent that bus the other way. I can send an open flat bed truck to pick the people up." Whoa, no way our team is riding 4 hours in an open truck.

At this moment Mr. Beam (yes, beam me up...) introduces himself and says he has a bus in Tamale 25 minutes away. I get the details. Wow, it is a Mercedes bus. Does it have air conditioning? Oh, no. The roads are too rough for that. That was my first premonition that not all was good. We worked on a price - it was roughly twice what Amy's driver was going to do in the air-conditioned bus. Oh well, we didn't come up here to see a hotel pool (as if there were one in Tamale).

Forty-five minutes later this ancient Mercedes bus chugs up smoking and growling. I am sure I am in a bad movie. We all check it out. It has 5 rows of broken seats and a rear door that doesn't seal but is held together with rope. What a team! They don't grumble and climb in. The bus "conductor" ties



Our "dust buster" Mercedes Bus. Or, how to get red hair in 4 hours of travel!

our luggage on top to get the full effect of the dusty roads. Basha is our driver; he smiles and chugs off. First off, I have to give him \$100 to buy diesel shortly after our journey begins. This gives the team a second chance to reposition for the long journey. Meanwhile the smell of diesel fuel permeates the bus.

Off we go! The road takes us around Tamale on the Kumasi road. Wow! New blacktop. Then a mile or two of rough unfinished followed by one lanes and construction for 15 miles. Then another new stretch till we come to the Mole park turn off. The bumps, corrugation and dust begin. Every vehicle coming at us left a huge cloud of red dust in its wake. Marilyn's hair turns red; my hair turns red; Van's lovely head of gray hair is rusty indeed. Unbelievably, the road for the middle two-thirds of the three-hour trip has been graded, elevated and smoothed since last year. We maintain 40 miles an hour- I think, as the speedometer is non-functioning. I glance again and the oil pressure warning light is flashing. I point it out to Basha who immediately covers it with a dirty rag! Dear God, what have I got us into?

It is Muslim holy day on Friday. The north of Ghana is majority Muslim. There are mosques in every little dusty town. As we chug through one such town with a mosque there are forty or so Muslim men gathered outside the mosque. We exit the town and Basha suddenly stops and jumps out of the fun-mobile that we will call "Dust Buster" and grabs a red plastic jerry can. I think he is checking the oil or adding water to the radiator. Did I mention the radiator has no cap because it constantly boils over? This way the cap won't hit them as it explodes Basha told me.



I say to the team - men on the right women on the left. Of course there are neither trees nor bushes. We begin to assemble back at the bus and see Basha and the conductor dropping their prayer rugs after washing themselves with water from the red jugs. Prayers begin. Oh, well. A prayed up man is a happier man.

Back to the journey. This team is not grumbling, continuing to talk and occasionally Dr. Herb opens his ukulele and we sing praise songs. It is a fun-mobile.

After driving through extremely poor villages and seeing meager farms we see a sign that says Mole Park is 5 km. Spirits soar. We all cheer. We stop at the entry; while I pay the fees the group picture is taken at the sign. Steve told me we cannot walk a mile in the African's shoes but we did ride a few miles in their bus!!

Soon we are at the Mole Motel - is it possible for a motel to have negative 3 stars? But beds are clean and there is electricity. Water is in big blue containers in the bathrooms. I go and check on our safari. We are 45 minutes late for the evening safari. No vehicles. No guides. I barter for a night safari. We "confirm" two land rovers and two guides. I slip some money in the people's hands. Confirmation is a nebulous idea in Ghana.

Dinner is served promptly at 6 on the patio. It is our usual fried chicken (chicken that was chopped like with a machete in non-recognizable portions) and chips (that are really good french fries). We head down for the safari 300 yards away. Excitement mounts. We put 8 on the roof of each vehicle on low seats. Personal safety and standards are abandoned. (Did I mention this excursion to the north is post-GHO and has no direct connection to GHO?).

As in most animal safaris a lot of time is spent looking at trees. But with sunset at 6:10 it was completely dark at 7. The African sky has no comparison. It lights up with millions of stars. People marveled at the Milky Way that was so visible. No animals, no problem. But then a huge gray beast crosses the road in front of us. An elephant! How do you hide an elephant? It is easy in the dark but this one walked across the road. We stayed there 20-30 minutes and viewed his friends in the bush around us. The party bus trip was worth it. Thank you Dust Buster!

We confirm a morning safari with a few more tips. That afternoon we noted at least 60 other people as guests in our motel and this one safari operator. Sure enough, the next morning we went early and "guarded our vehicles" while at least 60 other people came for safaris. The morning drive was fun. We concluded on the plains below the hotel escarpment and did a 30-minute hike. Three elephants obliged by walking up to us and then into a water hole to play. What fun they had and we had.

We climbed the escarpment to our hotel. Departure was after a quick breakfast. Basha and the conductor were there waiting for us after our safari. We got back to the main Tamale-Kumasi road and I said we wanted turn down to Buipe. Basha said that was not in the deal so he called Mr. Beam. I had told him this initially was in the arrangement and had witnesses from our group but we were stuck. So I agreed for another \$100.

Soon we were at Terry and Amy Ruff's mission house and his permaculture gardens. Yea. They had guests Myra and Jeff Wells there. This couple is also from Indiana and interested in returning to work with the Ruff's. We knew them because they have come to our home twice for dinner. We were served a traditional

Ghana meal and got to meet many of their Ghana team. Elijah is a Bible storyteller as the ministry focuses on orality. Most of the area people cannot read. Elisha told us a story to illustrate what they do. Then we were asked questions like a local church would be asked. It is very effective. A tour of the gardens followed. It is so much more mature than last year when we visited.

Myra Wells had been in Zimbabwe a few years ago and had been stepped on by an elephant she was trying to ride on a safari. It was a horrible couple of weeks to get it stabilized and to get her back home. I particularly like the time when recovering in Johannesburg and her roommate in the hospital was behind the room dividing curtain. She would ask out in her South African accent: Oh Elephant Girl, Elephant Girl. Are you there? Myra added a personal and challenging testimony as to how God has used this significant happening to help and encourage others.



Peggy Welch admiring elephants

After surrounding the Ruff's with prayers, we jumped back into Dust buster and headed for Tamale. Basha found the craft market. Peggy and Lauren each purchased 6 lovely baskets. What a site to see them carrying them. Our hotel for the night was the Garigus. It is beautiful on the outside but three rooms were infested with bedbugs. Yuk. Our supper was a buffet.

We were enjoying breakfast the next morning when the manager came running up to us. "Amy Ruff called and said they are holding the plane for you at the airport." Raphaell had made our air arrangements and had confirmed on Friday that the plane was now leaving at 11 AM. Apparently they changed the time to 8:45 AM.

Literally in five minutes we were all in the bus with our stuff. 25 minutes later we arrived in time to see the plane taxiing away. I pleaded for it to return but to no avail. That led to 9 hours in the lovely Tamale airport! But, you know, we all enjoyed it. I really liked the hour or so Herb led us in singing. Several at the airport marveled. One person thought we were a singing group. We were all in Accra by 6:30 PM. All of us made our flights out of the country.

Would we do a Tamale extension again? What do you think? We do think there was a reason for a lot of our difficulties. When we re-boarded the bus at the Ruff's, Basha asked Marilyn if he could be a part of your church and be a Christian. Marilyn gave Amy his information and will have a pastor in Tamale guide him. Wow.



Terry & Amy Ruff in Buiepe, Ghana with their orality teachers

Gwendolyn Brooks Rogers Ray

January 30, 1924 - August 26, 2013

Gwen was born and raised in Louisville, KY. She attended Johnson Bible College outside of Knoxville, TN, where she enjoyed singing in the choir, performed in the touring production of “The Everlasting Arms,” and built life-long friendships. While a student there she began dating Howard Ray (also from Louisville), and they married in 1951 following his graduation from JBC. They started their marriage in Etowah, TN, where Howard had held a student ministry.

Their next ministry was in Mt. Vernon, KY. While there, all three of their children were born. In the following years they served churches in Ladoga, IN; Grayson, KY; a return to Mt. Vernon; Kissimmee, FL; Portsmouth, OH; and Eden, NC.

During all those years of ministry, Gwen enjoyed what was the traditional life of a preacher’s wife. She was a great supporter of her husband and a gracious hostess and cook. She loved singing in and directing choirs and was also a soloist for church services and many weddings and funerals. She enjoyed teaching children in Sunday School, VBS, and other programs.

In 1978, Howard and Gwen joined the staff of Mission Services in Indiana. When MSA relocated to Knoxville, TN in 1982, they were part of that move. Gwen served as bookkeeper for almost 20 years. She faithfully wrote notes on contributors’ receipts and came to know many friends of MSA over the years. She loved getting to know the missionaries and especially proofreading the newsletters MSA produced.

After retiring from MSA in 1998, Gwen worked at Dollywood. Gwen and Howard also held a weekend ministry near Newport, Tennessee. In 1999 they moved “home” to Louisville and became active in a church there. Gwen helped with children’s church and later coordinated the “Bake & Take” ministry which provided new visitors with homemade cookies. Not a timid soul, she also loved to contribute to class discussions, where her years of Bible study continued to complement her bright mind well.

Gwen was a great mother and grandmother, always being a great encourager. She was especially happy when family came to visit. She enjoyed crocheting afghans for all her kids and grandkids—as well as for many babies who were born in the churches where she served.

Gwen has always been a strong person, so her later years of physical disability were frustrating to her. But she tried to make the most of her situation by praying for others and sending cards and calling others to encourage them. She finally grew tired after 89 plus years and told those around her that she was ready to go home—her heavenly home. Her life has been one of service, so rest is now her reward.

Gwen was preceded in death by her husband in 2006. She is survived by her children, David Ray (Carol) in Cincinnati, Becky Ramirez (Humberto) in Indianapolis, and Charlotte Ray in Louisville; seven grandchildren; and one great-grandchild.



focus on

Prayer Needs & Praises

Africa

- In light of the recent tragic events in Nairobi, Kenya, pray for missionaries working there.
- Mark & Tina Gebhard (PBT-Guinea) request prayer as they finalize steps necessary for their return to the mission field soon.

Europe

- Please pray for Dick & Sarah Robinson, missionaries for the last 32 years in Portugal, who are retiring this fall. They will be returning to the US after 50 of missionary service.

Asia

- Please pray as the people of Pakistan face the consequences of flood, terrorist attacks on churches, and major earthquakes. Praise God for assistance given.

South America

- Bill & Karleen Crandall (Ecuador) request prayer as they raise up leaders and churches willing to plant new congregations.

USA

- Pray for the USA. We need wise leadership in government as our nation faces many challenges.

Team Expansion

- Join Nathan and Kayla Traver (Hope Inner City Cincinnati) in asking for eyes to be opened to the need in the urban community.
- Join Teresa Berry (International Services) in praying that she would learn how to “work from rest instead of resting from work.”
- Pray for healing from cancer for Tim Bright, a regional mobilizer living in Arizona.
- Join PC in asking for wisdom and discernment for the work in a sensitive field in North Africa.
- Join Dave Damron, regional mobilizer living in Georgia, in seeking God’s will as he works among an unreached people group.
- Ask God to give wisdom to PH as she mentors female apprentices serving through Team Expansion around the world.



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