

# mission crossroads

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POVERTY ALLEVIATION  
THROUGH EDUCATION

BRINGING QUALITY EDUCATION TO  
ONE MILLION CHILDREN BY 2020





## When people believe, God does great things

“As Joshua 3 opens, the Israelites are camped on the bank of the Jordan River. . . . They are in sight of the Promised Land, but they have an enormous problem: a river, in flood, is right in their path. There’s no way around it, and the usual fording places are impassable. The waters are deep and turbulent.

“God could easily make the river subside before their eyes. He could throw a wide bridge across it. But he doesn’t. Instead, He gives Joshua some strange instructions, which he passes on. . . . Joshua commands the priests to pick up the ark and go stand in the

river. . . . In spite of the problems, the priests had faith enough to obey, and this is what happened:

“As soon as the priests, who carried the ark, reached the Jordan and their feet touched the water’s edge, the water from upstream stopped flowing. . . . The priests who carried the ark of the covenant of the Lord stood firm on dry ground in the middle of the Jordan, while all Israel passed by until the whole nation had completed the crossing on dry ground (Josh. 3:15–17).

“God didn’t give any guarantees or any evidence of a positive outcome. He did nothing until they put their feet in the water, taking the first step of commitment and obedience. Only then did He stop the flow of the river. In the same way, mountain-moving faith will be given to us as we step out and follow the Lord’s direction.”\*

Poverty is such a mountain in our world, standing huge, intimidating, and seemingly immovable. But we have learned that educating children gives them both internal and external energy to budge that mountain—to open new vistas of opportunities for their lives.

At the Eighth Assembly of the World Council of Churches in Zimbabwe in 1998, Nelson Mandela said that words could not adequately convey the gratitude of Africans for the schools that missionaries have started. “I would not be standing before you today were it not for those mission schools which educated me,” he told the Assembly.

We have been, and are, a church that takes education seriously at home and around the world. Education and Christian education have been and continue to be an integral part of the PC(USA)’s ministry. While our partner churches have taken over the management of many of the original mission schools, they continue to request our assistance and support to help them develop new programs to meet the needs of the children in their fast-growing congregations and communities. Through our partnerships, we have the privilege of making an impact on many children and future leaders around the world. Now, we want to focus and broaden our impact, knowing that quality education is the gateway out of poverty and that it transforms lives! Presbyterians from across the United States are joining together in the “Educate a Child, Transform the World” campaign—each congregation committing to generate the collective impact needed to help children reach their God-given potential.

John Matlosa herded cattle for his uncle on the hills surrounding his rural mountain village in Lesotho until his mother enrolled him in a mission school when he was 10. There he discovered a love for and facility with numbers. There he met Jesus and grew in faith and confidence. Today he is an accountant and an entrepreneur, running several businesses, caring for his family, and involved in both leadership and stewardship at his church. And WE were a part of John’s story. By our faith and obedience and commitment, by the sharing of our resources, God did great things in John’s life and in his community. John was able to move the mountain of poverty weighing him and his family down.

Working with partners in this country and around the globe, we are committing to offer a million children like John a future many of them never thought possible . . . a future built on hope and possibilities.

Will you join us?

*Mission Crossroads is a Presbyterian Mission Agency publication about the church’s mission around the world.*

*Presbyterian World Mission is committed to sending mission personnel, empowering the global church, and equipping the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) for mission as together we address the root causes of poverty, work for reconciliation amidst cultures of violence, and share the good news of God’s saving love through Jesus Christ.*

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Presbyterian World Mission  
[www.pcusa.org/worldmission](http://www.pcusa.org/worldmission)

\*Bill Hybels, *Seven Wonders of the Spiritual World*, 1988, Word, Inc., Dallas

*Global Poverty Alleviation Catalyst Frank Dimmock is filling in for Director of World Mission Hunter Farrell, who is on sabbatical writing a book that will be published in 2015.*





Nelson Mandela said, “Education is the most powerful weapon which you can use to change the world.” Mandela should know—the education he received from missionaries in the Eastern Cape Province enabled him to envision a future of hope and reconciliation that changed the course of history for South Africa. Is one of these boys or girls the next Nelson Mandela?



# Poverty alleviation campaign hopes to bring quality education to one million children globally by 2020

By Kathy Melvin

It began in Dallas in 2008 with a group building a shared vision for the future of World Mission in the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.). More than a vision, it was a call to action to address the root causes of some of the most critical problems facing our world. And in 2014, at the 221st General Assembly in Detroit, it became a reality with the launch of “Educate a Child, Transform the World,” a campaign with the goal of providing quality education to one million children by 2020.

The campaign is a joint effort between Presbyterian World Mission and Compassion, Peace and Justice with World Mission focusing internationally and CPJ focusing domestically.

Addressing the underlying causes of poverty as one of three critical global issues is the platform on which the campaign was built.

It is generally understood that quality education is the best pathway out of poverty. Nearly 59 million school-age children worldwide are not enrolled in school, and many who are lucky enough to be in school are not getting the skills they need to be successful. In some countries, one hundred children may crowd into a single classroom without books or adequately trained teachers.

Recognizing the enormous scope of the challenge, Presbyterian World Mission is focusing on alleviating the effects of poverty on women and children. Research shows that communities with higher educational attainment are more likely to do well economically and enjoy healthier lives. Improved education, especially of girls and women, raises income and health and educational outcomes.

“Working together, we can bring about significant change,” says Frank Dimmock, who was hired by World Mission in 2013 as the global poverty alleviation catalyst. “By keeping girls in school, we know their life opportunities can expand exponentially. Girls with access to education not only greatly improve their own lives, but also bring positive outcomes to their families and communities.”

Prior to accepting the position, Dimmock served in Lesotho as the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.)’s Africa health liaison. He has earned a BS in botany and zoology at North Carolina State University and a MPH in epidemiology and tropical medicine from Tulane University School of Public Health in

New Orleans. He previously served as a volunteer in mission and as a mission specialist in public health in Zaire (now Democratic Republic of the Congo) before being appointed as a full-time mission co-worker.

As a catalyst, Dimmock is connecting resources and developing priorities for the educational campaign that spans from Sudan and South Sudan to Malawi, Ethiopia, Congo, Guatemala, the Dominican Republic, Pakistan, Egypt, Syria, Lebanon, Bangladesh, Thailand, and beyond. He is traveling around the US linking organizations, presbyteries, and congregations together.

Rev. Dr. J. Herbert Nelson, director of the Office of Public Witness, who is working with the US campaign said: “We are living in a nation of immense wealth and opportunity. Still there are children who enter kindergarten and first grade who do not know their colors or numbers.

“There are also children who complete high school without a diploma and no ability to work because they have not garnered skills to support themselves.

“If there is a Presbyterian Church nearby, this should not happen.”

## How can you join this growing movement?

- Mentor at-risk children in your community.
- Partner with a school in Thailand.
- Commit to pray for children in the schools of the Church of Bangladesh.
- Advocate for adequate funding in your city’s public schools.
- Give generously to Presbyterian World Mission’s effort to help 14,000 children in South Sudan acquire a quality education.

Nelson Mandela famously said, “Education is the most powerful weapon which you can use to change the world.” He should know. He received his education from missionaries in the Eastern Cape Province, which enabled him to envision a future of hope and reconciliation that changed the course of history in South Africa.

If you would like Frank Dimmock to speak to your organization, presbytery, or congregation, contact him at 800-728-7228 x 5039, [frank.dimmock@pcusa.org](mailto:frank.dimmock@pcusa.org).

## » Support

Make a gift to support the campaign and include in the memo line of your check: D500101 for congregations or E200101 for individuals.



# How can we help?

This handy list of 10 things can help you or your congregation partner with World Mission

Designate according to the 'E' numbers listed within the project:

1. Partner with PC(USA) mission co-workers working in education.

- Leisa Wagstaff serves with the Presbyterian Church of South Sudan working with some of the most vulnerable communities in Jonglei and Upper Nile States as a teacher mentor. [pcusa.org/missionconnections/wagstaff-leisa/E200501](http://pcusa.org/missionconnections/wagstaff-leisa/E200501)
- Gwenda Fletcher partners with the Presbyterian Church in the Democratic Republic of the Congo facilitating teacher training, administration, and community involvement. [pcusa.org/missionconnections/fletcher-john-and-gwenda/MI910005](http://pcusa.org/missionconnections/fletcher-john-and-gwenda/MI910005)
- Jan Heckler is working with the Education Department of the Church of Jesus Christ in Madagascar to implement an "Evidence-Based, Method of Instruction." Teachers are provided with a toolbox of appropriate teaching methods. [presbyterianmission.org/ministries/missionconnections/jan-heckler/E200490](http://presbyterianmission.org/ministries/missionconnections/jan-heckler/E200490)

2. Participate in a PC(USA) World Mission network that is working with global partners to educate out of poverty. Examples include: the Congo Mission Network (Congo Education Excellence Program) [congopartners.org](http://congopartners.org); the Ethiopia Mission Network (Ethiopia Rural Education program) [erep-schools.net](http://erep-schools.net) and the Early Childhood Education work or the Zambia Mission Network that is supporting the Church of Central Africa, Presbyterian to build and operate congregation-based, community schools for vulnerable children. [Facebook.com/ZambiaCommunitySchoolsProject](https://www.facebook.com/ZambiaCommunitySchoolsProject)

3. Engage with advocacy efforts of Presbyterian World Mission Networks and PC(USA) to urge governments to dedicate a significant share of available revenues to finance primary education. See EFA Policy Paper #8: [unesco.org](http://unesco.org)

4. Host education programs in your church. A pre-school program will impact children during the most important developmental phase of their lives. An after-school program for elementary school children will provide tutoring help, and a time for safe play. A wonderful model of this program is the STAIR Program (Start the Adventure in Reading) established in New Orleans by the Presbyterian Action Council. [stairnola.org](http://stairnola.org)

5. Support the General Assembly of the Church of Central Africa, Presbyterian, to provide scholarships for teacher training in Malawi and teacher mentors at community schools in Zambia. E051843, designate to CCAP GA Education Program

6. Support the National Evangelical Synod of Syria and Lebanon in their efforts to plan and provide educational opportunities for Syrian refugee children. E340202

7. Support literacy training of women, teacher training and resourcing with partners in economically impoverished rural presbyteries in Guatemala. E864600, designate Guatemala Education

8. Support scholarships for displaced children in Presbyterian schools in Apartado, Colombia. E862562

9. Support the expansion (from grades 6 to 9) of the Saha Christian Suksa School of the Church of Christ in Sangklaburi (western Thailand) serving children of the Karen minority community. E052433

10. Support scholarships for girls to attend Mission Girls High School of the Church of Bangladesh in Rajshahi (western Bangladesh). E052123

## » Support

Please support financially through an Extra Commitment Opportunity (ECO) gift via web: [presbyterianmission.org/donate](http://presbyterianmission.org/donate) or by mail to: PC(USA), P.O. Box 643700, Pittsburgh, PA 15264-3700.

Presbyterian World Mission brings God's global family together to address poverty, work towards reconciliation, and proclaim God's saving love in Jesus Christ.

The theme for the 221st General Assembly 2014 in Detroit, was "Abounding in Hope." It seems difficult to be hopeful when there is so much conflict from the border crisis in Central America and the US to what seems like constant fighting in the Middle East and parts of Africa. But our mission co-workers around the globe see stories of hope every day. Here are just a few.



### **Developing women's leadership skills in Guatemala**

Sandi and Brian Thompson-Royer began full-time mission service in Guatemala just this year. They have been impressed by the beautiful weaving by the indigenous women of the country.

"Girls begin weaving at eight years old. They seem to just know from watching their mommas weave on back-strap looms attached to trees and then they begin themselves. The beauty they create is amazing: magnificent colors woven together in combinations you wouldn't imagine together. These weavings connect them to their culture and identity as indigenous people in Guatemala. The colors and designs all have meanings and lead back to their Mayan roots. One weaver told me she prays as she weaves. Her prayers are woven into her weaving."

Guatemalan women, particularly those of indigenous origin, struggle to have their voices heard in society, churches, and families. The National Evangelical Presbyterian Church of Guatemala has invited Sandi and Brian to help Guatemalan women develop leadership skills.

If you'd like to support Sandi and Brian's work, please click on [presbyterianmission.org/donate/make-a-gift/gift-info/E200334/](http://presbyterianmission.org/donate/make-a-gift/gift-info/E200334/).

### **Hope in Central America**

#### *Indigenous education in Guatemala*

Mission co-workers **Richard and Debbie Welch** recently wrote about two men who are living examples of the hopeful change resulting from the growing educational opportunities for the indigenous people of Guatemala. "The two oldest of nine children born to indigenous subsistence farmers, Carlos and Jorge saw the well-worn path to illiteracy and poverty stretching out before them. Their small town did not have a high school so they quit school and joined their father in the fields to help support the family.

"The life trajectories of these two young men took a new direction when the pastor of their small rural Presbyterian congregation noticed their potential and submitted their names as applicants for scholarships to support their continued study through the high school in Sayaxche. This scholarship program is an example of what can happen through active, long-term mission partnerships, established between a local church or presbytery (in this case Sayaxche Presbytery), a Presbyterian Church partner (in this case Hillsboro Presbyterian Church of Nashville, Tenn.), and Presbyterian World Mission. Fifteen years ago these partners committed to the goal of easing the crush of poverty by giving children better access to education. Volunteers from Sayaxche Presbytery created living space in their presbytery center and opened its doors to house and care for students from nearby villages during the week. Hillsboro Church provided resources to staff the center with a cook and adult supervisors and helped with incidental school expenses and supplies. PC(USA) mission workers coordinated the communications and hands-on activities between the partners.

Jorge and Carlos are now attending college. They work during the week and attend classes on the weekends. Jorge is studying



to be an accountant. Carlos hopes to be a lawyer.”

*To support the Welches' ministry:*

[presbyterianmission.org/donate/make-a-gift/gift-info/E200505](http://presbyterianmission.org/donate/make-a-gift/gift-info/E200505)

## The good news in South Asia

### *New Christians in Cambodia*

While visiting in Phnom Penh, Cambodia, **Barry and Shelly Dawson**, regional liaisons for Southeast Asia, met with several pastors of the Khmer Presbyterian Fellowship. A pastor from Kampong Cham talked about his church's prison visitation ministry that now includes a Bible study. He told the

group that due to God's life-changing power, more than 100 prisoners have been baptized. A seasoned pastor from Kompong Speu shared the good news of his “mother church” giving birth to “daughter churches” in the same region. With limited resources yet passionate faith, the Dawsons report the churches of the Khmer Presbyterian Church are modeling Jesus' love to the people of Cambodia.

Barry tells this poignant story: A little more than one year ago, Chey Thyda (her name changed to protect her identity) was brought by a sister to a mobile medical clinic in a small village in Battambang Province, Cambodia. She was no longer capable of caring for her six children, whom she adored. Her future, her chances of survival, seemed bleak. She was suffering—day and night—from severe emotional/mental health trauma. But at the mobile medical clinic sponsored by the Eliot Presbyterian Church (EPC) of Lowell, Massachusetts, Thyda was examined by a doctor and given medication. She also received compassion and blessings from Dr. Thysan Sam, a Cambodian pastor at EPC. As her health improved, Thyda and her children began to attend worship services at the village church. One year later she was baptized in front of the Khmer-speaking congregation.

*To support the Dawsons' ministry:*

[presbyterianmission.org/donate/make-a-gift/gift-info/E200493](http://presbyterianmission.org/donate/make-a-gift/gift-info/E200493)



## Connections in the Holy Land

**Kate Taber** spent months in the Holy Land as a seminary student on a Parish Pulpit Fellowship, an award from Princeton Theological Seminary. She was happy to return in 2014 as a mission co-worker in Israel and Palestine, serving at the invitation of the Palestinian churches in Bethlehem and elsewhere in the Holy Land. She serves on the ministry team of Christmas Lutheran Church in Bethlehem, assisting US Presbyterians visiting the Holy Land and facilitating Presbyterian involvement in volunteer opportunities. In addition Kate helps build relationships between US Presbyterians and church partners in Israel and Palestine.

Despite being center-stage in an area of ongoing conflict, Kate sees much splendor in Israel-Palestine. “The land is beautiful, the food is delicious, the culture is rich, and the people are the most welcoming I have ever met,” she explains. She also is moved by the deep love the region's people have for their land and culture. “I am eager to continue to watch and learn from this love.”

Her goal is building relationships with other Christians, “a heartfelt need of Christians living in the Holy Land,” she said. “The Christians of Palestine and Israel especially need and ask for this communion and partnership as they struggle with daily life in a conflict zone, and I feel called to connect U.S. Presbyterians with them and their stories.”

Prior to entering mission service, Kate was a resident pastor at Central Presbyterian Church in Atlanta, serving in a Lilly Foundation-funded residency program for new ministers. She holds a BA degree from Coe College in Cedar Rapids, Iowa, and an MDiv degree from Princeton Seminary. She is a member of the Greater Atlanta Presbytery.

Kate is accompanied in Israel-Palestine by her husband, Nathan Stock.

*To support Kate's work in the Holy Land:*

[presbyterianmission.org/donate/make-a-gift/gift-info/E200516](http://presbyterianmission.org/donate/make-a-gift/gift-info/E200516)





# Moved to generosity

## A trip to Madagascar inspired Vernon and Sallie Hunter to make another generous gift

By Pat Cole

When Sallie and Vernon Hunter visited Madagascar in May, they saw both overwhelming poverty and endless hope.

"When you step on the earth in Madagascar, you just see need everywhere," says Vernon, a retired Presbyterian pastor. Amid the gripping poverty, Vernon and Sallie were delighted to see the Church of Jesus Christ in Madagascar (known by its Malagasy acronym FJKM) and Presbyterian mission co-workers putting their faith into action and making a difference.

The Point Clear, Alabama, couple were so moved by what they saw they made a \$60,000 gift to support mission in Madagascar. A few years ago they gave a \$30,000 gift.

A 2009 coup in Madagascar brought chaos and increased the economic distress in an already impoverished country. The difficult situation didn't deter the FJKM's resolve. "The church has rushed in with limited resources to beef up medical care and the schools," Vernon says.

The Hunters were impressed with the deep sense of partnership between the FJKM and the three Presbyterian mission co-workers, Dan and Elizabeth Turk and Jan Heckler.

Vernon describes them as "magnificent examples" of why most Presbyterian mission personnel are

called co-workers. "They work with and under the guidance of the indigenous church," he says.

"They work hard," says Sallie about the three mission co-workers. "They are savvy and diligent workers. We thought they had developed a dangerous unselfishness."

The Hunters have long been familiar with the Turks, who've served in Madagascar since 1996. They have high praise for the Turks' expertise and their work. Dan, who holds a doctorate in forestry, has helped the FJKM distribute thousands of fruit trees and has trained farmers in how to propagate them. Elizabeth, a nurse with a master's degree in public health, has aided efforts to prevent and treat illnesses such as malaria, measles, diarrhea and pneumonia.

On their trip, the Hunters, met Jan Heckler, a mission co-worker since 2012. She's been working with teachers in FJKM schools to improve teaching methodologies. "Her teaching methods were demonstrated for us," Sallie says. "She's already made a great difference."

During visits with FJKM leaders, the Hunters heard high praise for the three mission co-workers, Vernon says. "They would welcome more mission co-workers."

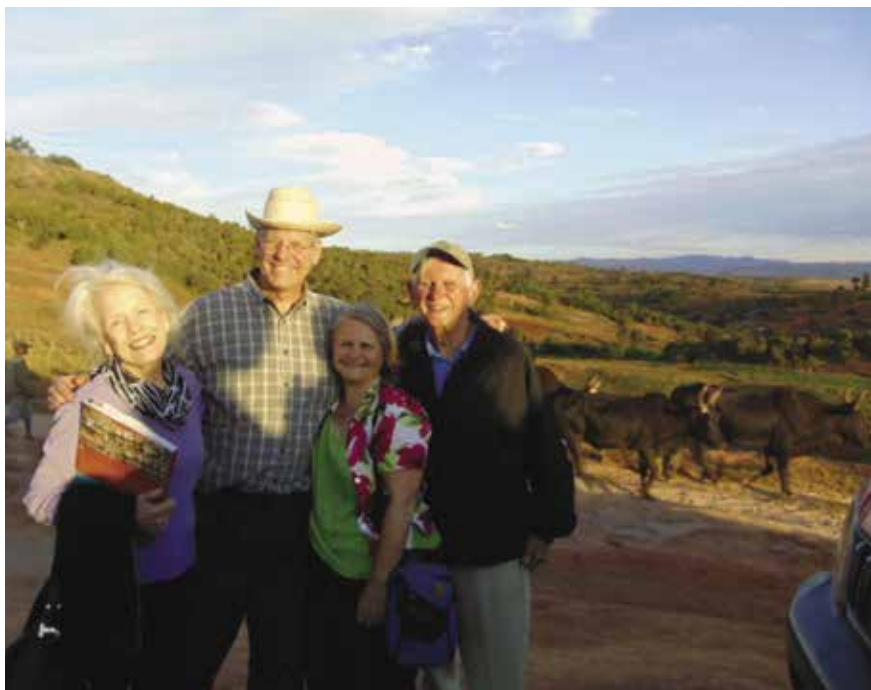
While their visit to Madagascar was recent, the Hunters' support of mission is longstanding. In addition to Madagascar, they've made mission-related trips to Mexico, Hungary, Zimbabwe, Mozambique, and China. "Every time we've gone [on a mission trip] we've been changed," Sallie says. "It is a profound experience."

Supporting mission was a priority for Vernon during his lengthy pastoral career. His longest and last pastorate was at Spring Hill Presbyterian Church in Mobile, Alabama, where he served for 20 years before his retirement in 1997.

During Sallie's childhood, mission was a regular conversation topic in her family. Her great-grandfather was John Calvin McMullen, a Presbyterian missionary to China. Both Sallie and Vernon grew up attending Presbyterian mission conferences in Montreat, North Carolina.

The Hunters say the church's call to international mission they learned about early in life continues today. Mission that is faithful to the holistic teachings of Jesus can address the world's urgent needs, Vernon explains. "People are hungry for a faith that meets those needs."

*Sallie and Vernon Hunter visited Dan and Elizabeth Turk in Madagascar in the spring and were impressed with the deep sense of partnership between the FJKM and the three PC (USA) World Mission co-workers in Madagascar.*





# Donor's gifts offer opportunities for mission co-workers' children

By Pat Cole

When mission co-workers follow God's call to serve cross-culturally, they do not leave behind the desire for their children to lead happy and well-rounded lives.

World Mission works with parents to locate good schools and pays for K-12 education. However, other opportunities, such as preschool, tutoring, and enrichment activities are not covered in the standard benefits package. They can be elusive and expensive for mission co-worker families.

Over the past five years, an anonymous donor has contributed \$65,000 to help mission co-worker children expand their educational and extracurricular horizons. The fund has benefited about one-third of the mission co-worker families with children. It has paid for opportunities ranging from early childhood education to ballet lessons.

Due to the program's success, an Extra Commitment Opportunity account (see sidebar) has been created for student enrichment scholarships, and all World Mission supporters are invited to contribute.

"Many very important needs of our mission co-worker children may have gone unmet if these funds weren't available," says Ben Albers, associate for mission personnel for Presbyterian World Mission. The scholarships, he notes, help children and relieve anxiety from parents worried about how they will pay for services their children really need.

Jim and Jodi McGill, mission co-workers in Malawi, say the expense of an online course to help

two of their children, Selina and Salome, improve math skills would have been "difficult to manage" without help from the fund.

Two other McGill children, Jason and Michael, received scholarships to attend a summer camp in North Carolina. "They had the opportunity to participate in several sports that they never would have experienced in Malawi, and they received Christian teaching and exposure to camp counselors who were wonderful role models," Jodi says.

Five-year-old Alejandro Chan Craft was able to "attend a wonderful Montessori-style preschool in Antigua, Guatemala" thanks to the scholarship fund, says his mother, Amanda Craft, regional liaison for Guatemala and Mexico. She serves under mission appointment with her husband, Omar Chan. "This kind of education is unique in Guatemala, and the Montessori style fit him so well. He had teachers from Guatemala and the United States, allowing for a truly bilingual experience."

While in the United States completing a master's degree in public health, mission co-worker Barbara Nagy, a physician serving in Malawi, enrolled her nine-year-old daughter, Happiness, (*pictured left*) in ballet lessons using scholarship funds. "It provided enjoyment and enrichment, and it helped her confidence a lot," Barbara says. The family recently returned to Malawi, and Barbara has been exploring opportunities for Happiness to pursue ballet lessons there.

Alifa Dimmock, 16-year-old daughter of Frank and Nancy Dimmock, received a scholarship to attend a global issues convention in Kenya with some classmates from her school in Lesotho. "Our group made a presentation called 'the Hunger Games' dealing with hunger in Lesotho," she says. "We decided to help in Lesotho by giving food and building a playground at an orphanage, and playing with the kids there. Not only did we give ideas, but we got some good ideas from others, too."

In addition to learning from presenters, Alifa met an "amazing man named Spencer" who had lost his legs due to a disease. "He shared how he got through life and stayed positive," she says. "He was very inspirational." To the one who donated the scholarship funds, Alifa has a heartfelt message: "Thank you for making this trip possible for me."



## » Support

Gifts to the Student Enrichment Scholarship Extra Commitment Opportunity account (E052175) may be given by check or online. Mail checks to Presbyterian World Mission, P.O. Box 643700, Pittsburgh, PA 15264-3700. Write E052175 on the memo line. Online gifts may be made at [presbyterianmission.org/donate/E052175/](https://presbyterianmission.org/donate/E052175/)

# South Sudan project will help build capacity for national education system

By Kathy Melvin

Presbyterian World Mission and its global partners will assist the world's youngest nation, South Sudan, in developing its most important resource, its children, through quality education.

The new government of South Sudan, which is struggling to meet an enormous array of challenges, does not have the capacity to build a national educational system without assistance.

Millions have been forced into poverty by decades of civil war. From 1956 until the Comprehensive Peace Agreement was signed in 2005, the region that became known as South Sudan experienced only 12 years of peace. Since one in four children dies before the age of five, many families are focused on keeping their children alive rather than sending them to school. As a consequence, South Sudan's educational indicators are among the lowest in the world. A vast majority of the nation's children and youth have received no formal education.

Save the Children reports that less than 25 percent of an estimated 2.2 million primary school-aged children are enrolled in school. UNICEF says a girl in South Sudan is three times as likely to die in childbirth as she is to complete eighth grade.

In addition to low enrollment, the quality of education is poor. Many teachers lack professional

training and are seldom paid. They are tasked with teaching an average of 77 children. Teachers lack books and educational materials, and school facilities are poor or nonexistent.

"We have chosen as two of our top priorities to address the root causes of poverty, with a special emphasis on women and children; and to work for reconciliation amidst cultures of violence. South Sudan was [the] logical place to begin," said Frank Dimmock, Presbyterian World Mission's global poverty alleviation catalyst.

World Mission is committed to supporting church partners to provide quality education for children in South Sudan that instills Christian values, respect for women, loving our neighbor despite ethnic differences, and service to others. The goal is to help the country gain its educational footing while fostering a sustainable culture of peace. The project partners include the Presbyterian Church of South Sudan (PCOSS), RECONCILE, and ACROSS.

RECONCILE International was established by the New Sudan Council of Churches to promote civic education, conflict transformation, and trauma healing in Sudanese communities destabilized by violence. ACROSS is an international interdenominational organization aimed at building

*Teachers in South Sudan will receive training through this project.*



## » Support

To donate to the South Sudan Education and Peacebuilding Project, click on [presbyterianmission.org/donate/E052172](http://presbyterianmission.org/donate/E052172).





communities, improving education, strengthening churches, improving livelihoods, and teaching healthy practices.

There are four primary goals of the South Sudan Education and Peacebuilding Project. The first goal is to encourage at least 17 communities to take part in a participatory community development program and to contribute to the education of their children by helping build and manage community-based schools.

The second goal is to train educators by providing 32 scholarships for promising teachers to attend the two-year teacher-training program at Yei Teacher Training College, providing both basic in-service training to 180 teachers in the most marginalized areas and training for 60 educational administrators.

The third goal is to develop the educational leadership of the Presbyterian Church of South Sudan's Education Department for sustainability by providing resources for the department's personnel to increase capacity and skills to operate schools effectively.

Sharon and Lynn Kandel will serve PCOSS. Sharon will be an educational administrator, and Lynn will assist as South Sudan administration and logistics facilitator. Leisa Wagstaff will work in primary and secondary schools in Jonglei and Upper Nile states. These two states are among the most underserved areas of South Sudan in government support, provision of educational and health services, and police protection.

The ultimate goal is to improve the quality

of education for 14,000 students and increase educational opportunities for girls. Studies show that educating girls is one of the most effective ways to fight poverty and that education provides a platform for girls and women to stand up against injustice and for women to be integrated into the economy.

A fourth important goal is to assist with peacebuilding for the communities of South Sudan and its various ethnic groups. In some ways, it is the primary objective since there must be a degree of stability in order for the educational initiatives to move forward. Conversely, education will be an important factor in achieving sustainable peace.

RECONCILE will be the lead partner in the peacebuilding initiative. Two mission co-workers, Reverends Nancy and Shelvis Smith-Mather, are working with the Yei Teacher Training Institute, which trains grassroots leaders over three months in peace studies, conflict transformation, and community-based trauma healing.



*School children in South Sudan sometimes face great hardships to get to school, but they come eager to learn.*

*South Sudan Mission Co-workers Shelvis and Nancy Smith-Mather proudly pose with their children. They will return to South Sudan this fall.*



## The fullness of time

### An opportune moment awaits us in South Sudan

By Terri Bate



In Galatians 4:4, Paul tells us that God sent Christ to earth in the “fullness of time.” It was the opportune moment for the world to receive the gospel’s message of love, grace, and redemption.

God continues to act in history. I believe God’s providential timing is at work in South Sudan and that God is calling the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) to increased mission involvement there. South Sudan is the world’s newest country and one of its poorest. The PC(USA)’s history with South Sudan goes back to 1902 when our missionaries arrived in the Doleib Hill area of the Upper Nile state.

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A high point of the 2014 General Assembly was the announcement that three congregations have pledged a total of \$1.65 million to mission in South Sudan:

Westminster Presbyterian in Minneapolis, Fourth Presbyterian in Chicago, and Second Presbyterian in Indianapolis.

.....

The Presbyterian Church of South Sudan (PCOSS) has invited us to help improve and expand its primary and secondary education program. Its leaders know that education is one of the best ways to help people escape poverty.

Along with evangelism and reconciliation, poverty alleviation is one of Presbyterian World Mission’s three critical global initiatives. World Mission’s current focus related to poverty alleviation is education. As you may have read in other pages in this publication, the PC(USA)’s “Educate a Child, Transform the World” initiative is attempting to provide quality education for one million children in the United States and around the world by 2020.

In South Sudan, decades of civil war have left the country’s educational system in ruins. A vast majority of South Sudanese children and youth have not received any formal schooling. *Save the Children* reports:

“Less than 25% of an estimated 2.2 million primary school-aged children are enrolled in school.” Unless educational opportunities are broadened, South Sudan has little hope of improving the quality of life for its people and succeeding as a nation.

The PCOSS is South Sudan’s largest church and one of its top providers of education. The PC(USA), the mother church of the PCOSS, is in a pivotal position to join with our South Sudanese partners to shape the course of history. I believe Christ is calling us to walk alongside them in this journey.

World Mission is striving to help the PCOSS offer training for teachers and administrators, construct new schools, and increase awareness of the value of education. The major thrust of the project is focused on the community level. Without community buy-in, leaders of World Mission and the PCOSS agree that any success will be short-lived.

One of the high points of this year’s General Assembly was the announcement that three congregations have pledged a total of \$1.65 million to mission in South Sudan. The three congregations are Westminster Presbyterian in Minneapolis, Fourth Presbyterian in Chicago, and Second Presbyterian in Indianapolis. Tim Hart-Andersen, senior pastor of Westminster, told the GA commissioners, “Any time someone tries to tell you the PC(USA) has lost its compassion and energy for global missions, they are wrong.” His congregation pledged \$1 million.

“I invite you to consider joining us,” Tim said. “It’s not just for large congregations. All our gifts matter. Let’s do this together.”

Indeed, all gifts do matter, and we need gifts of all sizes from congregations and individuals. Please join with us through your prayers and financial gifts. If you would like more information on how to give, please call 800-728-7228, x5611.



# An Invitation

## Sessions and Congregations

For your convenience, we are providing a few simple options for you to use in submitting your gifts. Congregations can send contributions through their regular receiving channels, or send your Directed Mission Support gifts directly to the address below. Those gifts designated to Directed Mission Support (DMS) accounts will be reported to your presbytery. We urge you to report DMS contributions directly to your presbytery in order to keep them informed of your denominational support.

## Individuals

Individuals should use the numbers beginning with E to provide financial support to these mission workers. If you desire, you can also give online at [presbyterianmission.org/supportwm](http://presbyterianmission.org/supportwm).

You may also write the name of the mission coworker on the memo of the check, mail it to the address below and we will confirm your designation and intent.

## Give to the sending and support of your mission co-workers:

- Visit [presbyterianmission.org/supportwm](http://presbyterianmission.org/supportwm)
- Call 800-728-7228 x5611

## Please send gifts to:

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P.O. Box 643700  
Pittsburgh, PA 15264-3700  
Please make checks payable to Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.)

## For additional information please contact:

Nicole Gerkins  
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# 2014 summer orientation

## New mission co-workers prepare for ministry around the globe

By Jerry L. Van Marter

Seven new mission co-workers and another mission co-worker preparing for a new assignment came to Louisville in July for orientation. They are now in their countries of service or will arrive later this fall.



**Myoung Ho Yang** and **Ji Yeon Yoo** are going to Hong Kong, where Yang will teach liturgy and sacred music at the Divinity School of Chung Chi, part of the Chinese University of Hong Kong. Yoo will study Chinese languages and, she says, “build

relationships.”

Myoung and Ji Yeon met while working at a bank in South Korea, married, and then came to the United States so Myoung could attend seminary. “It has long been our desire to be part of the proclamation of the gospel,” says Myoung, who grew up in a Christian family. “When my father became Christian, my grandfather removed him from the family genealogy,” he says, “but my mother always encouraged me into ministry.”

Ji Yeon grew up Buddhist, but since becoming Christian as a young adult, says, “I want to give my life to God and share the love of God with others.” Yang says his teaching goal in Hong Kong is “to equip future ministers in China to share the love of God.”

Ji Yeon’s home congregation is New Providence Presbyterian Church in New Providence, New Jersey. Myoung, a teaching elder, is a member of Eastern Korean Presbytery.



**Sook Nim and Don Choi** are giving up a comfortable life in the San Francisco Bay area to serve at Duta Wacana Christian University in Yogyakarta, Indonesia. Don will be

an international adviser to the university’s president, seeking to strengthen its growing graduate program

by building relationships with universities and the non governmental organizations in the United States and other countries. Sook Nim will teach art and English.

Don, a fourth-generation Christian whose family roots trace back to North Korea, comes out of a successful career as an engineer in the computer industry. Saying his life has “not been a straight line career from a cradle Christian to this call,” Don says, “nothing beats the satisfaction of finally getting your product out to market, but God has given me a heart to work with people my focus has shifted.”

Sook Nim describes her life to this point as “soccer mom and art teacher,” but says mission service has been a dream of hers “for more than 10 years. I have a beautiful art studio overlooking San Francisco Bay and I wondered ‘Why give all this up?’” But as she has prayed she keeps hearing God’s voice “insisting that she go. I keep hoping God would forget he told me this, but he didn’t.”

Don and Sook’s home church is Daesung Presbyterian Church in Sunnyvale, California. Don will be ordained as a teaching elder by San Jose Presbytery later in 2014.



### Jenny Koball

remembers when, at age 11, “terrorists” came to her remote village in Peru “and took away many children. Then my father was paralyzed in an accident and I was so angry, with so many

questions.” But she also remembers her mother always saying that “God is always present.”

At age 16, Jenny went to the Peruvian capital, Lima, for school and there became involved with Joining Hands Against Hunger-Peru, a ministry of the Presbyterian Hunger Program that works alongside Peruvian churches and nongovernmental organizations. “I have learned so much about Peru and the United States,” she says. She met and married PC(USA) mission co-worker Jed Koball and began working with him in the Joining Hands ministry and with the Young Adult Volunteer (YAV) program in Peru. She now officially enters mission service as the YAV site coordinator.

“God is present in this moment and in my job,”



Jenny says, adding that she always tries to remember her mother's advice: "Don't forget to smile!"

Jenny is a member of Broad Street Presbyterian Church in Columbus, Ohio.



**Sharon and Lynn Kandel** met in Juba, South Sudan, in 1980. Sharon was the daughter of Presbyterian missionaries serving there, and Lynn had given up his truck-driving job to join Wycliffe Bible Translators and was sent

to South Sudan.

"I was Christian but not part of any church," Lynn says of his truck-driving days. "One night when I stopped to get fuel at a truck stop, an attendant cleaned the outside and the inside of my windshield I took it as a sign that God was helping me see more clearly."

Sharon says she always wanted to do mission work. She served in Tanzania with the Mennonites until the money ran out. "I came back to the US and prayed and only 19 years later I heard about this position in South Sudan and applied. We're excited to be going back to where we met 34 years ago."

The Kandels will be helping the Presbyterian Church of South Sudan rebuild the war-torn country. Sharon will be serving in education and administrative ministries, and Lynn will work in construction, building renovation, and logistics.

Lynn and Sharon are members of Martins Creek Mennonite Church in Millersburg, Ohio.

**Dr. Barbara Nagy**, a physician at Nkhoma Hospital in Malawi since 2004, has added a new role to her mission duties. She will be working in public health with the Nkhoma Synod of the Presbyterian Church of Central Africa.

"Malawi is one of the poorest countries in the world and basic needs are difficult to meet," says Nagy, noting that she became a Christian while praying with other teenagers for an end to the Vietnam War more than 40 years ago.

Nagy's work as a public health consultant

focuses on maternal health. "Maternal death threatens children," she says, with one in 10 Malawian children not surviving to school age. During her decade of mission service, Malawi's maternal death rate has declined 75 percent and the mortality rate of children under five has declined 85 percent.

"Perceptions of Malawians are changing," she says, "and I'm so thankful for this."

Barbara is a member of First Presbyterian Church in Morganton, North Carolina.

Two other Presbyterians participated in orientation. Kendall Cox, director of education with Living Waters for the World, came to learn about World Mission's orientation program. Living Waters is a ministry of the Synod of Living Waters that partners with communities around the world to install and maintain basic water filtration systems. Andy Smothers, a recent graduate of Dubuque Theological Seminary, joined the TEEZ (Theological Education by Extension) staff in Kitwe, Zambia this September. Andy is in Zambia through a two-year fellowship, sponsored by New York's Madison Avenue Presbyterian Church. He will train lay pastors.



*This article was adapted from a story published by the Presbyterian News Service.*



## » Connect

To connect with these mission co-workers: [pcusa.org/missionconnections](http://pcusa.org/missionconnections)

Summer 2014 orientation  
for new mission co-workers

# Partners in empowerment

## World Mission working with Asian churches to alleviate poverty through education

By Pat Cole

As a beacon of the Christian faith, schools supported by Presbyterians in Asia shine brightly across a region where Christians constitute a small minority of the population.

They serve students across lines of class, gender, religion, and ethnicity, help build positive interfaith relations, and afford opportunities for a respectful Christian witness. They also help people escape the shackles of poverty. Presbyterian World Mission and its Asian partners are examining ways to address poverty's root causes in that region by strengthening education quality.

Along Bangladesh's border with India, six community schools that serve the Garo people are among the priorities of the education project that Presbyterian World Mission is pursuing with the Church of Bangladesh (COB).

"Some of the schools are mud huts with the roofs falling in," says Les Morgan, a mission co-worker in Bangladesh. "There are no blackboards and the chairs are broken."

A project has been proposed that will improve facilities and provide for teacher training. The Garo have limited access to public education, so for many the community schools are the only opportunity for formal learning.

"Most of the Garo are landless," Morgan says. "They are rice farmers, but they usually don't own the fields that they farm."

The Garo are both an ethnic and religious minority. They are among just 2 percent of the

population of Bangladesh that is not of Bengali descent, and they are mostly Christian in a country where 90 percent of the people are Muslim.

In another section of northern Bangladesh, the COB's education project will aid preschools that serve the Santal people. The focus will be on teaching preschoolers the Bengali language, the language of instruction in primary schools. Many Santal children enter first grade without enough fluency in Bengali to succeed.

Morgan and his wife, Cindy, both physicians, have served in Bangladesh since 1989. They've seen how education helps people make positive choices and opens doors of opportunity. "Education is one of the cogs of human development," Les says. "Without it, you just can't make it. It's a great investment to educate people. They do better all around with health, family, and integrating into society."

The Morgans are pleased that more people in Bangladesh are seeing the value of educating girls. "That is really a great change," Cindy says. "When girls get in school, they want to stay in school, [where] there is real excitement" about learning.

Across Bangladesh, church-related schools are highly regarded. In fact, the Morgans have met many Muslims in government leadership who attended one of the COB's five secondary schools.

In Thailand, schools of the Church of Christ in Thailand (CCT) also enjoy a good reputation among people of the majority faith, which in Thailand is Buddhism. And, like the Church of Bangladesh, the CCT is seeking to improve educational access for minority populations.

The Saha Christian Suka School, located near Thailand's border with Myanmar (formerly Burma), enrolls students from several ethnic groups. It wants to add three more grades to its current K-6 offerings. The Karen (pronounced Ka-rin) is the largest ethnic group represented at the school. Many of them fled Myanmar due to persecution. "There are people who have been in refugee camps for decades and are fearful of going back to their home country," says Barry Dawson, Presbyterian World Mission's mission co-worker, serving as regional liaison for Southeast Asia. Currently, students in the area served by Saha Christian Suka School cannot go beyond sixth grade without leaving the community, which is not a realistic



*A student works through a math problem at a classroom in Thailand.*



option for most. The school would like to build seven new classrooms to accommodate grades 7–9. The projected cost is approximately \$200,000.

The positive impact of three more years of schooling will reach far beyond the students, Dawson says. In many Asian cultures, family members rely on each other for support because there are no major social safety nets, he notes. “Education benefits the student, immediate families, and the communities.”

At Saha Christian Suka School, the language of instruction is Thai, a second language for most students. Now there is a growing emphasis on a third language, English.

English proficiency is becoming increasingly important across Thailand because of a free trade agreement among the members of Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) that will go into full effect in December 2015. It will expedite the movement of goods across national borders and loosen immigration restrictions. English is the working language of ASEAN.

The CCT is stepping up its English language instruction in all of its schools. This emphasis will help the Thai people improve their economic plight and will provide outreach opportunities for the CCT. Mission co-worker Sharon Bryant works

alongside the CCT coordinating its Christian Volunteer Teacher program, which brings native English speakers to Thailand to teach English in church schools.

In the Klongtoey area, an economically distressed section of Bangkok, people think more about survival than the effects of international commerce. The CCT operates a preschool there that is dedicated to instilling self-confidence and a love of learning in students. Readiness for school is important because the community’s public school is among the lowest achieving in Thailand.

The education project seeks to upgrade and grow the preschool. “To have teachers recognize that each one of these children is a child of God and [that they] can help them develop their potential at that age is such a significant witness because these families are really struggling,” Dawson says.

The struggle against poverty in Bangladesh, Thailand, and many other places often continues from generation to generation. Presbyterian World Mission leaders and their international colleagues insist the cycle can be broken. For them, it’s a matter of addressing poverty’s causes rather than its symptoms and of joining hands in faithful Christian witness.

*Students at the COB girls school, Rajshahi, Bangladesh*



# EBMI helping children of Madagascar

By Kathy Melvin

On the island nation of Madagascar, a group of primary school children are smiling and holding up math flash cards. The room is filled with energy and activity, but the students are serious about their work. It's clearly an interactive and fun way for the children to learn. This is Evidence-Based Methods of Instruction (EBMI) in action.

The woman watching from the corner is Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) mission co-worker Jan Heckler, who is behind this activity at a primary school in Ambodimita, a neighborhood in the capital city of Antananarivo. Heckler is working with the Schools Department of the PC(USA)'s partner in Madagascar, the Church of Jesus Christ (Malagasy acronym: FJKM), on a test project to improve the effectiveness of teachers, and student learning, through EBMI.

"Children find the success that EBMI brings is easy and likeable," said Heckler. "EBMI fights the frustrations and failures of a typical learning experience, reducing or eliminating them entirely. Attendance improves. School drop-out rates decrease. Children are noticeably happier and become ebullient in the classroom. They like themselves, their teachers, their school, and their subjects more, quite naturally, when they succeed. They feel good about themselves."

In order to be "evidence-based," a practice or method must have been tested and have a record of success. She says FJKM recognizes that education is the primary way to address the root causes of poverty on the island and erase its image as one of the world's poorest nations.

FJKM schools, headed by Mme. Prisca



*Elementary school children in Madagascar practice math using skills their teacher has learned from Mission Co-worker Jan Heckler.*



*Jan Heckler works at the elementary school with Sarah Ravel, senior teacher trainer/coach for the EBMI Demonstration Project in Madagascar. Sarah went to college in Nashville, Tennessee, but returned home to Madagascar to use her skills to educate children in her native country.*

Ratsimba, operates more than 700 schools around the island nation for more than 107,125 learners. On average, children attend school for 5.2 years, and the primary school dropout rate is 65.4 percent. In a country of 23 million, about half of the population is under 18 years of age. Many children are forced to leave school to support their families, and the quality of education is in question. For instance, on national exams for students completing primary and secondary education, the grades required to pass can be shockingly low—as little as 50 percent in some subjects.

Mme. Ratsimba believes they can do more to equip children for lifelong success, and that's why her department has partnered with Jan Heckler. With a long and successful career in education, Heckler could teach anywhere in the world, but her faith pointed her toward Africa where she knew her skills could be of value to youth in a developing country. Prior to becoming a mission co-worker, she had made seven trips to Africa, each lasting about 10 months, and had served as a teacher and educator in Ethiopia, Malawi, and Namibia. Before entering mission work, Heckler started the World Literacy Initiative, a small nongovernmental organization dedicated to improving global literacy. She has also written a book on effective methods of instruction. She is delighted to be in Madagascar and has quickly seen the results of EBMI.

"With EBMI, learning occurs more quickly, reaches higher levels, and is sustained longer," she

said. "Children actually learn to learn, which in turn facilitates their learning better than they would in everyday situations outside the classroom."

But as an educational expert, she knows that learning moves children far beyond the classroom.

"We know that children who are literate grow up to become better parents with healthier children who attend more school. These generational improvements are especially pronounced for girls and women. Improved literacy is directly related to improved development of countries, improved distribution of wealth, and reduction of the gender gap in society," she said.

She said research shows that higher female literacy is related to reduced infant mortality, improved agricultural productivity, and reductions in malnutrition.

EBMI has demonstrated such promise that Heckler is now involved in the preliminary steps necessary to expand the system to all of FJKM's 723 primary and secondary schools. From a larger "demonstration" group, she said that they will identify and explore possible solutions they know they will face in systemic change and certainly, some they don't expect.

Jan Heckler will next be in the US mid-September 2014 through mid-March 2015. Email her at [jan.heckler@pcusa.org](mailto:jan.heckler@pcusa.org), or the Mission Connections office ([rachel.anderson@pcusa.org](mailto:rachel.anderson@pcusa.org)) to extend an invitation to visit your congregation or organization.

## » Support

Support Jan Heckler's ministry with a gift, click on [presbyterianmission.org/donate/make-a-gift/gift-info/E200490](http://presbyterianmission.org/donate/make-a-gift/gift-info/E200490) to make a gift online. To write a check, individuals can put E200490 in the memo line, sessions and congregations can use D507556. Congregations, you can send contributions through your regular receiving channels (this is usually your presbytery). Please make check payable to Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) and mail to: P.O. Box 643700, Pittsburgh, PA 15264-3700.

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