

# International Evangelism

n e w s l e t t e r



## Presbyterians Do Evangelism

The Office of International Evangelism (OIE) works within Presbyterian World Mission (PWM) to do evangelism in many parts of the world. Much of our work is helping to fund partner organizations to engage effectively in evangelism. Some of our work supports frontier evangelism, bringing the gospel of Jesus Christ to people who have never heard it before. And some of our work is in Bible translation and distribution, making the Word of God available to people who would not otherwise have it.



Because OIE often works in areas that have security concerns, we cannot always publicize our efforts on the Web or in print as we would like. Consequently we need the trust and support of Presbyterians to fund this work. The best way to do this is to give to the general evangelism Extra Commitment Opportunity (ECO) account E 863001.



Read on to learn of some of the programs and projects that OIE is currently supporting in different parts of the world, and consider if God might be calling you to support this important work.

**Michael Parker**  
**Coordinator for International Evangelism**  
**Presbyterian World Mission**

## New Opportunities in China

Mission scholar Philip Jenkins writes compellingly about the growth of Christianity around the Pacific Rim:

“Conceivably,” says Jenkins, “the richest harvest of all might yet be found in China... Some projections suggest that by 2050, China might contain the second-largest population of Christians on the planet, exceeded only by the United States.”

Presbyterians in the 19th and 20th centuries played an important role in bringing Christianity to China. When the Board of Foreign Missions was established in 1837, one of its first decisions was to send missionaries to China. The Board believed that China was “open and waiting for the Gospel.”

After nearly a century of vigorous efforts in China, all missionaries were expelled from the country

following the Communist revolution in 1949. In recent years missionaries have been returning as English teachers and other types of professionals. And many now believe that we are poised on the threshold of a new Christian movement in China, one that could see the number of Christians in that nation reach over 300 million by the middle of this century.

As the 21st century becomes the “Pacific Century,” PWM will be working to make the Pacific Rim, in Jenkins’s words, a “Christian Arc.” In China we are working with and through the China Christian Council, the Amity Foundation, and some of the numerous seminaries and Bible schools in the country to advance kingdom work in this land. If this is work that you would like to support, please give to the general evangelism fund, ECO E 863001 and designate your funds for China.

# Opening doors in Vietnam

A Presbyterian house-church movement is committed to spreading the gospel

For an entire generation of Americans, images of Vietnam are frozen in time from the 1960s and 70s: jungle warfare, soldiers coming home in body bags, Americans fleeing from the U.S. embassy in helicopters at the war's end. But since then much has happened.

Vietnam's government has largely abandoned communism and embraced the market economy. It has made peace with its neighbors, ending a military occupation of Cambodia, and now enjoys normalized relations with the United States. And though the government has generally been hostile to Protestant churches, in the last few years it has given official recognition to eight of them.

"The heart and soul of Vietnam's house church movement is evangelism, and this core value is deeply embedded in every pastor and leader," says Paul Friesen, the PC(USA)'s regional liaison for Southeast Asia.

## Birth of a church

Vietnam is traditionally a Buddhist country. Because of the efforts of French Catholic missionaries in the 19th and early 20th centuries, Vietnam today has about 6 million Catholics, about 8 percent of the country's 87 million population. The first Protestant missionaries entered Vietnam in 1911. Today there are about 1.5 million Protestants, or about 1.2 percent of the population.

In 1988 a small group of Christians began to meet in the home of Ho Tan Khoa and his wife Mary Lien in Ho Chi Minh City. This became the nucleus of the United Presbyterian Church of Vietnam (UPCV).

As Khoa's group sought resources for training leaders and learning the Bible, they were aided by Mercer

Island Presbyterian Church, in Seattle, Washington. The church's membership has grown to about 6,500, divided among over a hundred small fellowship groups. Most are located in the southern part of Vietnam, but the northern city of Hanoi now has four congregations. The members gather in homes or rented facilities. Among the church leaders are ten pastors, sixteen candidates for the pastorate, and thirty-three evangelists.

## Presbyterian worshippers in Ho Chi Minh City

U.S. Presbyterians are supporting the fledgling church in Vietnam in a variety of ways. The PC(USA) Office of International Evangelism (OIE) is helping to provide leadership training, and funds for an office headquarters, annual leaders' meetings, and an annual women's gathering. In the future, OIE will be supporting the mission outreach of the UPCV and the work of the church's Bible school.

## Toward a more public witness

Official recognition will enable the church to proclaim the gospel publicly and reach out more visibly to the non-Christian population. It may also open the way for the church to host officially a mission co-worker from the PC(USA), a position we hope to have in place this year. Mission leaders expect a growing number of house churches to surface in Vietnam as more and more Protestant denominations receive official recognition.

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*If you would like to support the work of OIE in Vietnam, give to the Extra Commitment Opportunity account for Vietnam, ECO E040079. You may also give to the General Frontier Evangelism account, ECO E863001.*

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**"The heart and soul of Vietnam's house church movement is evangelism, and this core value is deeply embedded in every pastor and leader . . ."**



## Good News from Pakistan

Evangelism has quietly been going on in Pakistan for decades through two PC(USA)-supported organizations, the Pakistan Bible Correspondence School and the Pakistan Christian Recording Ministries.

These two ministries are located at an old Presbyterian mission compound called David Villa, in the city of Faisalabad. The Pakistan Bible Correspondence School was started in 1957 and is directed by Rufin Williams. The correspondence school currently has five centers: Karachi, Hyderabad, Faisalabad, Rawalpindi, and (remarkably!) Peshawar. The Office of International Evangelism is supporting the one in Faisalabad, which was started in 1962.

The school's program includes twenty courses in Urdu and sixty in English. The total number of students in the national program at any one time is about 4,000, and Faisalabad has about 1,200. About 500 to 1,000 graduate in any given year. There are fellowship meetings every month in every city in which about thirty to fifty people come.

David Villa is also the home of the Pakistan Christian Recording Ministries, started in 1978 and directed by Amos Pervez. It is a sound studio where Christian radio productions are prepared, which are later broadcast throughout Pakistan. The studio produces a 45-minute program that is aired at 7:00 PM from a station in Dubai. Also, three times a week for fifteen minutes between 7:00 and 7:15 AM a short program is aired from Uzbekistan.

Through its short-wave radio programs, this ministry is proclaiming the Christian message to Muslims and Hindus in respectful but compelling ways. The recording ministry is also involved in other activities. It sponsors the Listeners' Summer Camp. A four-day conference in June held at a camp site in the North, the camp theme last summer was the life and work of Jesus. The ministry also dubs religious films into Urdu, the most recent being the thirty-minute English-language film "Road to Emmaus," which used professional artists from Karachi.

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*The work at David Villa can be supported through two ECOs: the Pakistan Bible Correspondence School through ECO E863302; and the Pakistan Christian Recording Ministries through ECO E863319.*

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*Rufin Williams, director of the Pakistan Bible Correspondence School, and Amos Pervez, director of the Pakistan Christian Recording Ministries.*



# Reaching out to the Roma People of Eastern Europe, Russia, and Chile

At the very doorstep of prosperous Europe sits the developing world. On crossing the border from Hungary into Carpath-Ukraine, one passes from a modern European state into an impoverished area; and within this challenging region are the Roma, a people doubly marginalized.

The Roma live primarily in Eastern Europe but exist all over the world. The word Rom means man, and Roma is the plural, meaning men or humankind. The Roma are probably more commonly known as Gypsies, a name that derives from the mistaken belief that they originate from Egypt. Actually, they come from India. Current estimates of the population of the Roma in Europe are between 10 million to 12 million people.

Christian work among the European Roma is difficult for a number of reasons. Most important is that many Europeans continue to harbor age-old prejudices against them as wanderers, thieves, baby-stealers, and fortunetellers. Consequently, they suffer from governmental neglect and have become a target of the xenophobic and neo-Nazis in Europe. Also, their religious beliefs often tend to be mixtures of Christian ideas and traditional practices, which makes them resistant to biblical Christianity.

In the past few years Presbyterians have stepped up their involvement with the Roma people in Europe, especially those in Carpath-Ukraine. Helping to coordinate this effort is mission co-worker Burkhard Paetzold. One of the PCUSA's partners is the Reformed Church of Carpath-Ukraine, which has established nine village churches for the Roma, some of which have preschools. Presbyterian mission co-worker Nadia Ayoub works in one of the pre-schools where she helps to train teachers.



A Roma village  
in Carpath-Ukraine.

The Office of International Evangelism (OIE) supports a community center established by Gizi Kupas, which has become a venue for Bible study and evangelism in the community.

OIE has also been engaged with the Roma in Russia through the Russia Roma Network, a small group of Russian churches reaching out to the Roma of western Russia. Mission co-worker Al Smith has been one of the leaders in this organization, helping to plan its fall meetings and seek support for its evangelistic efforts. The Network organizes six evangelistic projects every year, reaching out to Roma with the Good News of Jesus Christ through proclamation and music. The annual meetings are a time for worship, mutual support, and strategizing for new efforts.

OIE also works with the Evangelical Presbyterian Church of Chile to support a Roma evangelism outreach program. There are about 10 thousand Roma in Chile, and about ten percent are Christians. The work there includes evangelistic preaching and teaching, and a literacy program.

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To support the evangelistic efforts in Russia and Eastern Europe give to ECO E040061. To support the work in Chile give to the general evangelism ECO E863001, designating your funds for Chile. To support mission personnel, give to their respective accounts: Paetzold D506900 or E200392, Ayoub D506029 or E200473, and Smith D507149 or E200406.

# The Bihar Out-Reach Network (BORN)

Bihar, India

Bihar is a large state in the northeast section of India. It has a population of 100 million and more than 40 thousand villages; and all but a few of its one hundred people groups are unreached with the gospel of Jesus Christ. Though these are a people who have proved highly resistant to the gospel, the Bihar Out-Reach Network (BORN) is beginning to make important inroads for the kingdom.

The vision for BORN came about in June 1992 at the first state-wide mission conference ever held in Bihar, the Bihar State Conference on Church Development. It included representatives from all the Protestant denominations and mission societies in the state. Its organizers included S. D. Ponraj, who had arrived in the state after having served for seventeen years with the Friends Missionary Prayer Band, in South India. Ponraj felt called to Bihar by God, and he believed that God spoke to him through Ezekiel 37, the passage that tells of dry bones coming to life again. Bihar was considered by most to be “the graveyard of missions” because so many had failed there. Ponraj believed that God gave him the assurance that Bihar would no longer be known as a graveyard, for it would be transformed, following Ezekiel 47:1-12, into a beautiful vineyard.

Others at the conference caught the vision, and the idea for BORN was created, a network of churches and mission organizations working in Bihar. It was not until 1995 that the BORN organization was officially formed, and not until 1998 that the organization set up an office in the capital city of Patna and made Ponraj

its director. It was legally registered as a society in February 2002, with thirty-five founding churches and mission organizations. Today there are about sixty active member organizations.

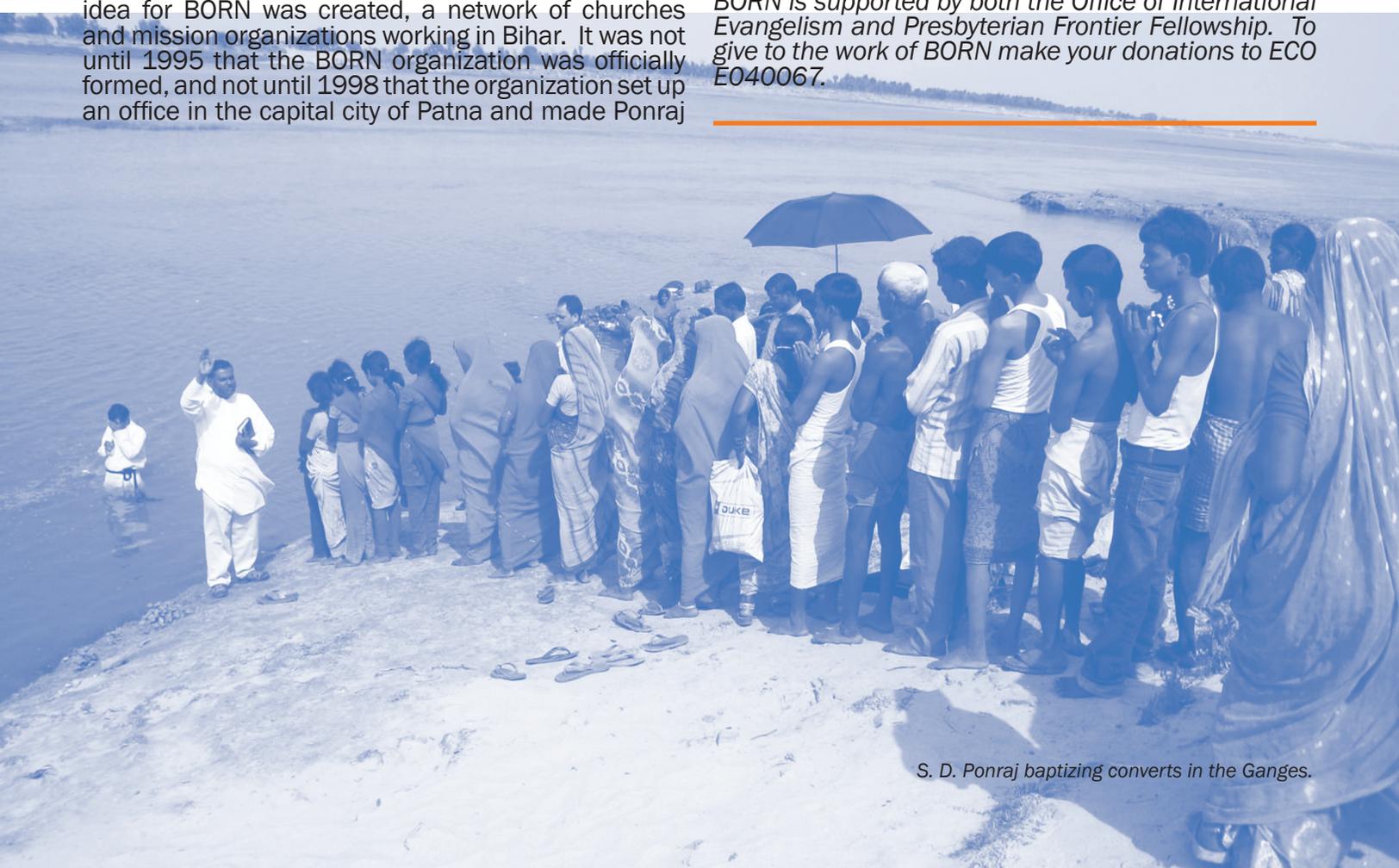
BORN's primary work has been to train church and mission leaders in the work of evangelism and church planting. It uses a variety of techniques, emphasizing orality, development of indigenous leadership, youth and women, the Dalit caste, and targeting of specific people groups. Until recently, it has not emphasized physical infrastructure (institutions or churches) but, rather, the training of leaders. Accurate statistics are hard to come by, but a rough estimate of BORN's success might be that it started with about 50,000 Christians and now has about 100,000 to 120,000.

In order to consolidate its gains for the gospel, BORN is now in the process of creating the Bihar Christian Church, an organization that Ponraj would eventually like to merge with the Church of North India, the PC(USA)'s traditional partner. At the same time, BORN continues to train evangelists and reach out to new peoples and villages with the Good News of Jesus Christ.

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*BORN is supported by both the Office of International Evangelism and Presbyterian Frontier Fellowship. To give to the work of BORN make your donations to ECO E040067.*

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S. D. Ponraj baptizing converts in the Ganges.

## North and South Sudan

Presbyterian interest in Sudan began when the region was conquered by the British in 1898. A few years later the United Presbyterian Church of North America – now incorporated into the PC(USA) – established missions in the North and South that eventually became the Sudan Presbyterian Evangelical Church (SPEC) and the Presbyterian Church of Sudan (PCOS), respectively.

Throughout the colonial period (1898-1955) and two devastating civil wars (1955-1972 and 1983-2005), the PC(USA) has worked to foster the kingdom of God in this region. Today, conservative estimates are that 10 percent of the North and South are Christian, and 25 percent of the South. More sanguine estimates of the South would put the number at 50 to 70 percent.

Though Presbyterian World Mission is heavily involved in the region – as are the presbyteries of Shenango, Redstone and Trinity – the Office of International Evangelism (OIE) is also engaged. While the attention of the world is currently riveted on South Sudan, OIE intends to work in both North and South. Many peoples in the North, a largely Muslim region, continue to remain surprisingly open to the gospel.

Evangelistic efforts in the Nuba Mountains can be supported through ECO E040021, and educational/evangelistic work in Darfur through ECO E040095. General evangelistic projects for both nations can be supported through the general evangelism ECO E863001. Funds given through the latter need to be specifically designated.

## Central Asia

Five southern states plus Afghanistan constitute Central Asia. The Office of International Evangelism is currently involved in three of these “Stan” countries. In Kazakhstan we are promoting an evangelism strategy known as “orality,” presenting the gospel in a way best suited to people in an oral culture. In Tajikistan we support a Christian NGO (non-government organization), which provides a variety of humanitarian services as well as a Christian witness.



And in Uzbekistan we support “Caravan,” a program of the new churches in the country to take the gospel to every town and village where it has never before been heard.

Programs in Uzbekistan are supported by ECO E40028, in Kazakhstan by ECO E040029, and in Tajikistan by ECO E040057. To support general holistic ministries in the region of Central Asia give to ECO E048007.

In varying degrees all of these countries are hostile to Christianity and present security concerns. Therefore do not put this information on any website.

## Ethiopia

The PC(USA) has a long historical relationship with the Ethiopia Evangelical Church Mekane Yesus (EECMY), and especially with its five Bethel Synods.

For many years the Office of International Evangelism has supported the efforts of John and Gwen Haspels as they have done difficult frontier evangelism work among the Surma/Suri people. And this work will soon be expanded to include the Bali – a people completely unreached by the gospel. Their work is supported through ECO E040017.

Other evangelistic work in Ethiopia includes: work among the Afar, ECO E040060; outreach in the Southwest Bethel Synod, ECO E040074; the Arssi Oromos, ECO E40086; the Charles Haspels Bible School, ECO E047902; the EECMY student ministry, ECO E048008; the EECMY evangelism program, ECO E863170; outreach in the Illubabor Bethel Syond and work among the Dawuro, Ameya, and Kaffa peoples, ECO E40019.

## Other Giving Opportunities to Promote Evangelism

Frontier mission work to unreached peoples groups  
E040016, Northern Outreach Program in Ghana  
E040026, Witnessing Ministries of Christ, in India  
E040052, Bengali outreach, Bangladesh  
E040064, Cambodian outreach  
E040072, Antalya Volunteer Ministries, Turkey  
E040077, Outreach in Egypt  
E040082, Mission personnel in frontier evangelism areas  
E040083, Mission Expansion in Turkey  
E040084, Leadership development in Turkey  
E040088, Emerging work with minority peoples, China  
E040093, Aguaruna outreach, Peru  
E040094, Turkish Student ministries,  
E040097, Iraqi Ethnic Outreach  
E040099, Ulya Presbytery projects & expenses, Upper Egypt  
E863001, General Support for frontier mission work

### HOW TO GIVE

Write check to:  
Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.)  
Individual Remittance  
Processing  
P. O. Box 643700  
Pittsburgh, PA 15264-3700

Indicate the ECO number in  
the check memo line

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## Other opportunities

E047918, God's Mission, Cuban evangelism  
E318702, Presbyterian Church of the Congo, department of evangelism  
E361002, Urban Evangelism Rio Grande Do Sul, Brazil  
E404902, Evangelism & Church Growth in Africa  
E581602, IMPROKA, Kasai Literature, the Protestant printing press for the church in the Congo  
E863003, International Evangelism Projects  
E863205, Lamp of Thailand Program  
E863221, Evangelism among Aboriginal people, Taiwan  
E863318, Evangelism program, Church of Christ in Thailand  
E863323, Witnessing Ministries of Christ, Dalit (untouchable) people of India  
E863544, Church Planting on the Northeast coast of Brazil  
E863610, Assistance to developing churches, Egypt  
E051613, China New Church Building

To find out more about these  
opportunities and give on-line  
go to:  
[www.pcusa.org/give/  
international-evangelism](http://www.pcusa.org/give/international-evangelism)  
Check out the OIE website at:  
[gamc.pcusa.org/ministries/  
international-evangelism/](http://gamc.pcusa.org/ministries/international-evangelism/)

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*Anuak Bible translators Marie “Breezy” Lusted and Niles Reimer are in the background. Breezy started this project in 1974 and Niles joined her in 1981. It should be completed before the end of 2012.*

is the Anuak Bible translation in Ethiopia. If you would like to fund a Bible translation project you can give to one of the ECOs listed here:

- General translation fund: E863003
- Unreached people: E863014
- Shekicho people of Ethiopia: E040041
- Anuak people of Ethiopia: E863117
- Mam Old Testament, Guatemala: E863524
- Murle people, Sudan: E040022

## Bible Translation

Bible translation and distribution is one of the most important tools of evangelism and discipleship. The Office of International Evangelism funds a number of translation projects through ECOs as well as endowments. One project that we have been funding since the 1970s should be completed in 2012. This

