



ENCOMPASS

News and Events from the American Anglican Council • July 2007

Global Teams: Missionaries from the Nations to the Nations

BY RALINDA B. GREGOR, EXEC. EDITOR

Picture this: The scene is Jerusalem, 33 A.D. The city is tense after recent rebellion. Peter and the other disciples fear for their lives; 40 days ago they watched their Rabbi slain on a cross. But then something happens: They are empowered to boldly speak the good news of salvation despite the danger to themselves. Now, flash forward 1,974 years later, and you will find a similar scene. At least that's what the Rev. Kevin Higgins and the Global Teams missionaries want to happen.

Global Teams is an American Anglican Council (AAC) affiliate ministry that focuses on long-term missions among people groups where there is little or no exposure to the Gospel. What makes Global Teams unique is its vision for raising up missionaries from many nations to work in multicultural teams; currently 65 percent of its missionaries are not North Americans, according to the Rev. Kevin Higgins, executive director of the U.S.-based missionary agency.

Founded in 1983 under the name Episcopal World Mission, the organization originally sent Episcopalians to work through existing Anglican churches to evangelize, teach, and meet practical needs. A decade later, the vision expanded to include missionaries from other Christian denominations, with a focus on unreached people groups. Most of Global Teams' 100-plus missionaries are part of the worldwide Anglican Communion.

"In essence, Global Teams seeks to reproduce the book of Acts in a new culture," Higgins said.

The missionaries seek to birth new people movements—rapidly reproducing movements of new disciples, small groups, churches and leaders—in areas that are largely Islamic, Buddhist or Hindu, as well as in Western cities with large immigrant populations from those cultures.

"Our vision is to see the heart of Christ in the skin of every culture," Higgins added. "We've been used by God to initiate five people movements—one in Laos and four in a Muslim country, and we have people working with more than a dozen other unreached groups."

As Global Teams reaches new people groups, it is also mobilizing and training new missionaries.

"We believe that by 2020 we'll have 1,200 missionaries involved in church planting movements among 60 unreached people groups," Higgins said of the organization's "Acts-sized" and "Acts-inspired" vision.

Global Teams is also developing Kingdom ventures—businesses in various locations that will generate funds to support missions locally and abroad. Just as the apostle Paul was a tentmaker, Global Teams wants to develop credible businesses that not only generate income, but provide opportunities to build relationships and share the Gospel, Higgins explained. The former Episcopal priest ran a fish farm at one of his missionary posts, and he's leading the effort to develop other kingdom ventures to help support Global Teams' ministry.

Global Teams is primarily funded through contributions from individuals and churches; it receives no denomina-

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Above: Global Teams missionary doctor Katie Rhoads (left) visits a patient in the surgical ward of a Ugandan hospital.

Missionary Doctor Offers Healing to Ugandans, Sudanese

When Katie Rhoads first heard God's call to be a missionary in Africa, she says she resisted. Who could blame her? Why would a young medical student with a bright future want to go to a place where over 24 million people have AIDS? Where rebellions, refugees and resistance are household words? But two decades later, the well educated doctor finds herself serving God in the midst of one of the most severe humanitarian crises of the current day.

Rhoads serves as a medical missionary for Global Teams' Uganda/Sudan Medical Mission, where she shows God's character to the world by bringing healing to bodies and souls. A surgeon who was in private practice for 17 years, Rhoads sold her practice to become a visiting professor of surgery who disciples other health care workers.

"I look for 'Timothy's' among the health care workers I come in contact with," she said, explaining that she looks for those who sense a call to be evangelists and missionaries. Just short of a year into her posting, she says that God has called her to disciple four people from four different villages and to take them on short-term medical missions to minister to others.

Rhoads has come to Uganda at an exciting and strategic time. There is a tremendous need for medical care in the wake of attacks by rebel guerrilla armies

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Are We Forgetting Our Duty?

American Independence Day Reflections by the Rev. Dr. Foley Beach

This month our nation will gather on July 4 to celebrate another anniversary of the Declaration of Independence. While most Americans will celebrate with fireworks, parades, backyard barbecues and picnics, Christians have a huge challenge before us as the Judeo-Christian principles on which our country was founded continue to erode into an unknown past. Who today remembers that our first president, George Washington (an Anglican at the time), said in his inaugural address after being sworn into office with his hand on his Bible: "No people can be bound to acknowledge and adore the Invisible Hand which conducts the affairs of men more than the people of the United States.

Every step by which they have advanced to the character of an independent nation seems to have been distinguished by some token of Providential agency. ... We ought to be no less persuaded that the propitious smiles of Heaven cannot be expected on a nation that disregards the Eternal rules of order and right, which Heaven itself hath ordained."

And who remembers that Noah Webster said: "The religion which has introduced civil liberty is the religion of Christ and His apostles. ... [T]o this we owe our free constitutions and government."

Most have also forgotten what President Calvin Coolidge understood: "The foundations of our society and

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Executive Council Rejects Primates' Requests

BY JENNIFER M. ABEL, EDITOR

The executive leadership council of The Episcopal Church (TEC) rejected in June requests set forth by the primates' 2007 Dar es Salaam Communiqué. The bold move, taken together with a similar rejection by the House of Bishops in March, reiterates the U.S. church's determination to walk apart from the Anglican Communion and from biblical Christianity.

Meeting in Parsippany, N.J., June 11-14, Executive Council refused to stop allowing same-sex blessings and rejected the primates' pastoral plan of relief for orthodox U.S. dioceses and churches. The Council's final statement described the primates' pastoral plan as "ill-advised" and said "to participate in the scheme would violate our Constitution and Canons." The Council furthermore refused to deal with the issues of same-sex blessings and ordinations of homosexuals, saying only the triennial meeting of the church, General Convention (whose next meeting is in 2009), can make such decisions.

The 20-member committee also declared "null and void" diocesan actions distancing themselves from TEC and put four dioceses on notice: Fort Worth, Pittsburgh, Quincy, and San Joaquin. In response, those dioceses' chancellors issued a statement that noted that Executive Council "does not have the right to interfere in internal diocesan constitutional processes" and lacks the authority to make such declarations.

TEC's official response to the

primates' request won't come until the September House of Bishops meeting, but all indications point to the likelihood of full non-compliance.

Meanwhile, waves of renewal are sweeping across other parts of the Anglican Communion. The same week Executive Council met, the archbishop of Kenya announced he will consecrate the Rev. Canon Bill Atwood on Aug. 30, 2007 as suffragan bishop to oversee his province's 25-plus U.S.-based congregations. The move by the Anglican Church of Kenya—a strong supporter of orthodox Anglicanism—is the third such move by an Anglican province since 2000. Rwanda and Nigeria both have missionary bishops in America as well. Together with the new Kenya bishop, the American-based Global South bishops will oversee approximately 250 parishes.

Kenyan Archbishop Benjamin Nzimbi said Atwood's consecration is "a part of a broader and coordinated plan with other provinces" to "provide a safe haven for those who maintain historic Anglican faith and practice, and offer a way to live and work together in the furtherance of the Gospel."

The Kenyan announcement prompted praise from leading orthodox primates and U.S. bishops. †



Above: The Rev. Canon Bill Atwood.

Special Opportunity: 2007 Tax Benefits on Charitable Donations

Recent federal tax legislation enables individuals to transfer IRA funds directly to charity "tax-free"; that is, there are no additional taxes on the donation, and the amount does not count as reportable income. Although the donation is exempt from being counted as an itemized charitable deduction, the transfer does count toward the "minimum annual distribution" required to be made if the IRA plan holder is over 70 1/2 years old.

In order to take advantage of this special opportunity, you must meet these three conditions:

- Be over age 70 1/2
- Be transferring from an IRA fund, regular or Roth (other retirement plans, such as 401Ks and 403Bs, do not qualify)
- Make the donation in 2007

The American Anglican Council (AAC) encourages those who meet the above conditions to seize this opportunity for contributing to the mission and ministry of the AAC while also reaping personal financial benefits. Call the AAC office at 800-914-2000 to find out how to take advantage of this opportunity. †

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on people in northern Uganda, and because of an influx of southern Sudanese refugees who have temporarily settled in Uganda.

Rhoads says many southern Christian Sudanese are reaching out to those from Darfur who once fought against them, offering them forgiveness and a remarkable picture of God's love. Rhoads believes the spiritual transformation among the southern Sudanese that occurred in the mid-1960s is in its preliminary stages in Darfur.

In the midst of the situation, Rhoads has been called to serve as an agent for healing bodies and souls. Not only has she been able to share her surgical skills with the various hospitals and medical centers she has visited, but she has also brought much-needed surgical equipment as gifts.

"I have repeatedly encountered surgical instruments that are the wrong size for the job (usually three times too big), broken, or poorly made," Rhoads said. She talked to a Kansas City firm that wanted to liquidate their stock of surgical instruments, and they agreed to sell her small sets of quality instruments for a significantly reduced price.

A Christian since she was four years old, Rhoads first realized God was calling her into missionary work

in Africa while she was in medical school. However, it wasn't until 1996 that she decided she would go anywhere to take part in what God is doing.

"I thought He'd say drop everything and go," she said, explaining that she spent the next 10 years preparing for this mission of a lifetime. Rhoads made several trips to Uganda and Sudan on short-term ecumenical medical missions, and was involved in intensive discipling of others at her American Anglican Council-affiliated parish, Christ Church Anglican, Overland Park, Kan. She completed a master's in Evangelism and Mission at Trinity School for Ministry and earned a diploma in tropical medicine and hygiene at the renowned Liverpool School of Tropical Medicine.

In August 2006, Rhoads arrived in Uganda to begin work as a full-time medical missionary. The conditions in which she lives are often difficult, but she relies on the Lord to deal with the hardships.

"He's just gradually changed my heart," she said of her upbeat attitude.

While God is her main source of strength and provision, Rhoads also has a support network of about 400 people who pray or contribute financially to the Uganda/Sudan Medical Mission. Nearly two-thirds of this support network is from her Ugan-

dan-affiliated church in Overland Park and from the Kansas City area. Others are people she met through her medical and seminary training and those who heard about her work from others. "It's very humbling when I get a check from someone I've never met," she said.

Rhoads also has the support of her fellow missionaries with the Global Teams East African fellowship group.

"When I met them for the first time and first listened to them tell their stories in all their different accents, I wasn't sure if they were *talking* about the book of Acts or *living* it," she said. "I heard about the amazing work that God is doing in them and through them. Many people are becoming followers of Jesus, some in response to visions and dreams."

Prayer support is an ongoing need for Rhoads and her fellow Global Teams missionaries.

"There's so much need and so much to be done here—I ask people to pray that I will keep my eyes fixed on what God's calling me to do," Rhoads said. "And pray for the unreached people around the world," she added. †

For more information on Rhoads' ministry, go to: www.ugandasudanmedicalmission.org.

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tional funding. The majority of Global Teams-supported missionaries are not listed by name on the Web site because they serve in security-sensitive countries, Higgins said.

Churches have several opportunities to get involved in Global Teams' ministry in addition to providing financial support. They can commit to being prayer partners with Global Teams or a specific missionary. Churches can also "adopt" an unreached people group and pray specifically for each step in the process of evangelizing that group, Higgins said.

"We also want to serve churches, and we're eager to help parishes start missions committees or expand their outreach efforts," Higgins said.

Global Teams offers conferences on evangelism and cross-cultural ministry and can provide training on how to reach out to Muslim, Hindu, Sikh and Buddhist co-workers and neighbors. Last month, Higgins taught a short course at Trinity School for Ministry, "Muslims through the Eyes of Jesus," which is also offered as a weekend conference at individual parishes. Those who are discerning a call to missions may attend the two-week Horizons training course that all Global Teams missionaries take as part of their initial training.



Above: Map showing where Global Teams is active in the world. (Provided by Global Teams)

Higgins emphasizes that missionary work is not the calling of a select few: "In some places God is moving in a powerful way among those who do not know Him, and the whole body of Christ can play a part in making Him known." †

For more information on Global Teams, call (828) 248-1377 or go to www.global-teams.org.



THE AMERICAN ANGLICAN COUNCIL
2296 Henderson Mill Road, NE
Suite 406
Atlanta, GA 30345-2739

(800) 914-2000
(770) 414-1515
info@americananglican.org
www.americananglican.org

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government rest so much on the teachings of the Bible that it would be difficult to support them if faith in these teachings would cease to be practically universal in our country."

As followers of Jesus Christ and those who are called to live out the Great Commission (Matthew 28:19-20), it is our duty to stir the country to remember God and His incredible provision throughout our nation's history. But too many of us are bogged down in sinful and selfish living, in addictions and materialism, in politics and churchianity, to even care about what is really happening in our country. In the name of Jesus, we have bishops and ministers of the Gospel blessing and condoning behavior abhorred by God. Drug use, sexual immorality, addiction to pornography, divorce, child abandonment, ignoring the poor and needy, and a neglect of our homebound seniors are not only ignored by most Christians, but too many Christians practice these behaviors. An apathy has overtaken our ignorance of world history in regard to the religion of Islam, so much so that we now have an Episcopal priest in Seattle who is also a Muslim, and her bishop and congregation see no contradiction! Furthermore, it is too easy for Anglicans to snipe at one another over "non-essentials" of the faith, and to allow the Gospel-mandated love for our neighbor to become iced-over and neglected.

Speaking to his people in 2 Chronicles 7:14, the Lord God says: "If my people, who are called by my name, will humble themselves and pray and seek my face and turn from their wicked ways, then will I hear from heaven and will forgive their sin and will heal their land." This passage instructs God's people (not unbelievers) to repent in order for the land to be healed. We must turn away from

self-centered living and self-gratification, or our country could be washed away in waves of spiritual idolatry and violence of which current generations have never known.

Wake up, Christian brothers and sisters! We have a God-sized job to do. It's our duty—and our joy. And if not you, then who?

Let's not forget the words of President Abraham Lincoln: "It is the duty of nations, as well as of men, to own their dependence upon the overruling Power of God and to recognize the sublime truth announced in the Holy Scriptures and proven by all history, that those nations only are blessed whose God is the Lord." †

The Rev. Dr. Foley Beach serves on the Board of Trustees of the American Anglican Council (AAC) and is rector and pastor of Holy Cross Anglican Church in Loganville, Ga. He is also a Bible teacher on A Word from the Lord radio and Internet broadcasts (www.awordfromthelord.org).

The American Anglican Council is a network of individuals (laity, deacons, priests and bishops), parishes and specialized ministries who affirm biblical authority and Christian orthodoxy within the Anglican Communion. In response to the Lord's calling and by His grace, we commit ourselves to proclaim the Good News to every person and to reform and renew the Church of Jesus Christ. We are uniting in order to fulfill our apostolic mission and ministry, working to build a faithful Anglican witness in the Americas.

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