

SIM now

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(WhatsApp edition)



Our new International Director

Ten years of God's faithfulness

SIMers begin creating a ministry centre

Serving in the role God gives us

Mobilising African churches as senders

Why Missions? To lovingly invite and equip the church

Contents



From the Director..... 3

Christ-centred ministry spreads His light 5

Preparing the land: SIMers begin creating a local ministry centre..... 6

Cover Story: Passing the torch: SIM International has a new director 8

 Ten years of God’s faithfulness: A farewell message from SIM’s outgoing international director... 10

 Introducing Phil Bauman, SIM’s new international director.....12

Greetings from SIM South Africa! Team photo from 2023 Spiritual Life Conference.....16

Mobilising African churches as *senders* of missionaries 18

Serving God in the ministry He gives us, not the one we dreamt of 20

Features:

 Opportunities: Serve the Lord with SIM South Africa 24

 Books: Why I wrote *Soul Brothers: Two Men. Two Worlds. One Purpose*..... 26

 Stewardship: Thanks to our donors, known & unknown 29

 “Why Missions?”: To lovingly invite and equip the church.....31

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From the Director

Dear friends of SIM Southern Africa,

“Let the peoples praise You, O God; Let all the peoples praise You.” (Psalm 67:5) “After this I looked and saw a multitude too large to count, from every nation and tribe and people and tongue, standing before the throne and before the Lamb. They were wearing white robes and holding palm branches in their hands. And they cried out in a loud voice: “Salvation to our God, who sits on the throne, and to the Lamb!”” (Revelation 7:9)

I can't wait! When at last my eyes behold the Lion-Lamb whose love knows every nation, tribe and people and tongue, and His salvation reaches those who repent, regardless of where they were born, who they were or what they have done.

The story of Young Legends will remind you that there is nobody who cannot be reached by Jesus, even if they are living in the dark shadow of crime, violence, pain, brokenness and injustice.

There is a farm on the south coast of KwaZulu Natal that's not affected by drought and too much rain can't spoil its crops. It will produce much fruit because God is faithful. Its fruit are the poor, children and youth.

Join me as we acknowledge the faithfulness of God in the lives of Joshua and Joanna Bogunjoko, as Joshua's ministry as SIM International Director came to an end, and let us introduce to you another era of God's goodness as we meet Phil and Andrea Bauman, as Phil recently took on the ministry of SIM International Director.

By 2050, four out of every ten Christians in the world will live here in sub-Saharan Africa. Read about how we're working to understand what that means for our global evangelistic effort and the role of Africa in God's redemptive plan for the world.

God calls doctors and engineers! “We dream, but God decides” could be a refrain sung by many Christian ministry workers from all over the world. Discover the power of difference in God's kingdom.

To the ends of the earth, we praise God that he has given SIM ministry in over 70 countries, having called us to make disciples of Jesus where He is least known. Discover opportunities for ministry and how SIM SA could help you realise God's will for your life, as you respond to Him

by faith to those who live and die without hearing the Good News of Jesus.

Sports brings people together and for a moment, they feel part of something bigger than themselves. Read about Tripp and Berhanu, two men from two different worlds having one purpose and how God has used them to use sport as evangelistic transformational ministry.

We also take the opportunity to say, thank you! To all of you who support our missionaries and the ministry of SIM SA. Who pray for all of us, as often as you remember us. With more than half the world's people groups and almost half the world's population considered unreached, the task remains UNFINISHED!

SIM SA acknowledges the consecration of the former Director of SIM SA, Regional Director of SIM Southern Africa, Rev. Dr. Siegfried Ngubane as the Presiding Bishop of REACH SA. Our prayers and blessings are with him and REACH SA as we work together to make disciples of all nations.

You will read that the Church and Mission agencies have an incredibly important part to play together.

“The blood that Jesus shed for me, Way back on Calvary, The blood that gives me strength from day to day, It will never lose its power”.

“It reaches to the highest mountain, It flows to the lowest valley, The blood that gives me strength from day to day, It will never lose its power”.

May we by our witness ensure that the efficacy of the blood of Christ reaches those who live and die without knowing Jesus.

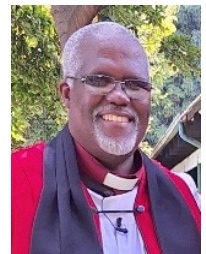
For Christ alone,

Benjamin Pillay

Rev. Benjamin Pillay,
SIM Southern Africa Director



Photo by Brian Heffron



Submitted photo

Pray

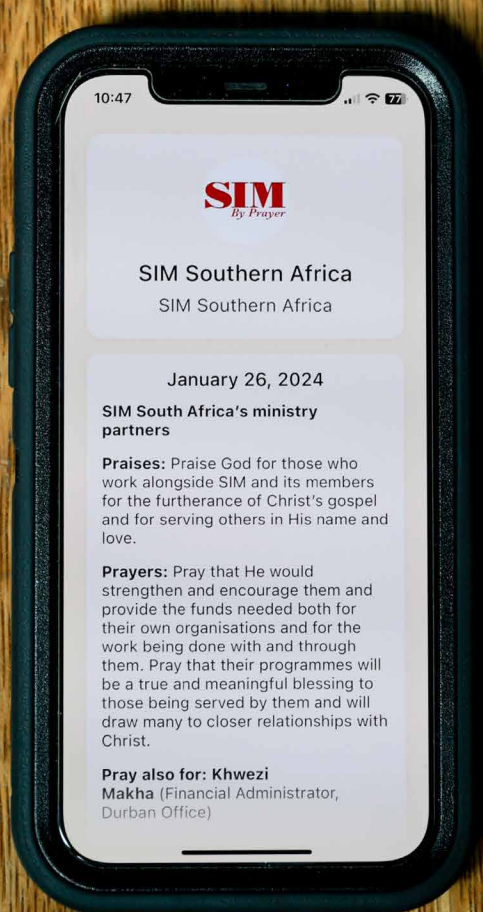


Photo by Brian Heffron

...daily—subscribe to our feed on *PrayerMate*

“Rejoice in hope, be patient in tribulation, be constant in prayer.” — Romans 12:12 (ESV)

SIM’s work and workers rely daily on prayer—and you can participate in this vital work.

Scan the QR code at the right to get daily reminders in the *PrayerMate* app, or request our monthly edition, “Pray Today,” by emailing sim.sa@sim.org and consider joining or forming a local prayer group. As always, thank you for your prayers.



Christ-centred ministry spreads His light

By Lee Forland, SIM Southern Africa Communications Coordinator

Notoriously the most dangerous prison in South Africa, Pollsmoor casts a dark shadow over Westlake, the Cape Town community beyond its walls.

School delinquency, drugs, gangs and teenage pregnancies ensnare local youth, creating and perpetuating a cycle of darkness and lack of hope.

Wanting to share the hope offered through the good news of Jesus Christ, SIM South Africa worker Freeman Ndlovu (then

deputy treasurer, now financial services manager) and two of his Westlake neighbours—Vusumzi Gxumisa and Sinethemba Mandita—put the word out that they were starting a free football program for boys and young men—the only requirement for participation was showing up.

To everyone's astonishment, 28 young men came to play. There was just one problem—Freeman did not own a football! Thinking quickly, he got them jogging laps around the sports field, then managed to buy two balls for the following night.

Young Legends was born.

The ministry continues to see wonderful growth. The city of Cape Town provided Young Legends with the use of land and accepted them into the South Peninsula Football Association League. Young Legends has also spread to Johannesburg and Durban.

Why such success? Because Young Legends is about much more than just playing sports and doing activities.

During the COVID pandemic, they prepared and distributed food to many needy families, shared the Word of God, and offered prayer, encouragement, and words of wisdom to people.

Discipleship, in partnership with local churches, is also very important. Each Young Legends leader is assigned two members to mentor. As a result, there continues to be a



growing spiritual awareness and sense of purpose in the children and young people.

Their testimonies speak volumes. One young man says, “Being around the Young Legends family and living with one of the members, I’m taught about the Word of God, and I started attending church.” Another says, “Young Legends is a blessing from God, and I am proud and happy to be part of it.”

Beautifully summing up the ministry, Xolisa Mdamoyi, a Young Legends football player, puts it like this: “The vision is not about playing soccer and winning tournaments and leagues so that we can make money, but it was something totally different. Basically, what the Young Legends family wants to do is to change lives.”

Thanks to the initiative of Freeman and his friends, in partnership with churches and organisations like SIM, that vision is becoming a bigger and brighter reality.

This article is adapted from SIM International’s website, www.sim.org. Later in this issue, our Books feature explores the founding and growth of another SIM youth sports ministry, Sports Friends. Please join us in praying that Young Legends will likewise continue to grow and bless its young people and their communities throughout South Africa.

Preparing the land: SIMers begin creating a local ministry centre

Text and photos by Brian Heffron, SIM South Africa Communications Manager



SIM South Africa missionary Johan Robbertze describes their plans for the ministry centre.

SIM South Africa missionaries Johan and Trudie Robbertze are hoping a farm they bought last year will produce much fruit for God's harvest.

"We want to develop a retreat centre for youth, where we want to have youth programmes running and also church programmes, giving people a place to really settle and become quiet but also have the opportunity to use the centre for more challenging and leadership training," Trudie said.

"A safe place for them to hear the gospel, ... where people can come and hear the voice of God and where we can serve the Lord," agreed Johan.

Johan and Trudie have been with SIM for many years. They formerly served in Tanzania, where Trudie was the country director. Her most recent assignment was as receiving personnel

coordinator for South Africa, but she found that position required more time than she could spare from her and Johan's work repairing and developing the farm.

The 14-hectare smallholding is located near Ifafa, about 90 kilometres south-west of Durban. It includes hills and forests, as well as several different crop areas. A portion overlooks the Indian Ocean.

"The little walkways, especially at night, when you have the LED string lights there—it is so beautiful, and the birdlife is incredible here It's quiet, very quiet," Johan said.

Much of the farm had become overgrown, so they have been working to clear some of the fields and orchards. They are grateful for those who have already come alongside them, and they pray

for additional funds and helpers.

“We know that we cannot do this task alone and therefore we need a team of people with us. People in different areas We would need maybe short-termers who have a vision to come and work for the Lord—literally work for the Lord. Maybe help us to build things, help us to clear the ground, but we also need people with skills for after the setup is there,” Trudie said.

Their plans for the property include multiple uses. There will be a “kingdom area” built as a Zulu kraal or isibaya with a two-meter-high wall surrounding a circle of huts, available for accommodation and a wedding venue. In other areas of the property, there will be self-catering facilities, isolated huts for those who seek quiet and solitude, and a zip line and obstacle course they hope to rent out to a business.

All of those (as well as crops) could help provide income that would help support the Robbertzes and help them make the property available to churches and ministries.

“There’s a lot of poverty in the area. There’s a lot of work that’s needed,” Trudie said, adding that they would like to work with local churches to develop programmes for children and youth. “We are looking forward to starting into what the

Lord has been doing in this area. Many times, we think, ‘Oh, I want to start this and this and this,’ but we need prayer to know what the Lord has been doing so that we can get into what he wants us to be involved with.”

They have also been working to learn Zulu.

“Zulu is a nice language—it’s a beautiful language—but you need to learn it nicely,” Johan said.

“We need to talk to the people,” agreed Trudie. “We cannot make ourselves understandable if we cannot speak to the people. We are privileged enough to be here, but it’s rural, so there’s no falling back to English.”

“I’d love it to be the same as how we could speak Swahili [in Tanzania]. It was nice to hear the people in the street,” Johan added.

As much as Johan and Trudie need physical helpers and financial supporters, they said the thing they can’t live without is prayer support.

“We need you to pray for this, because if the Lord is not in it, then I don’t want to be in it,” Trudie said. “So, let’s pray together that the Lord will send the right people on this team that needs to develop this ground. We need people with vision who can tell us, ‘Listen, your idea is not good, maybe include this. What about this?’”



Johan and Trudie Robbertze show the scenery their isolation huts will overlook to the Indian Ocean.

Passing the torch

SIM International has a new director



Photo by Brian Heffron

Phil Bauman became SIM's new international director on 1 March, succeeding Joshua (Joanna) Bogunjoko, who led the mission for the previous ten years (pictured here in Kenya last year).

Ten years of God's faithfulness

A farewell message from SIM's outgoing international director, Dr. Joshua Bogunjoko



When asked to write about what I'm thankful for during the past ten years, my mind is flooded with things for which to praise the one who's brought us thus far.

The Lord has been faithful to us and here, I'll attempt to name just a few 'big picture' things.

From the earliest months, I'm thankful for the smooth leadership transition from my predecessor, Malcolm McGregor. What a privilege to receive the baton from him and carry forward many initiatives that he'd begun with excellence.

Secondly, I'm thankful for the International Board of Governors. What an honour to work with them. Among other things, they supported the strategic decision to overhaul the global governance structure of SIM. This resulted in greater capacity and flexibility, allowing SIM to grow as a 21st Century mission.

I'm amazed at how the Lord has blessed our diverse organisation with men and women, who are skilled in leadership and sensitive to the Lord's voice. I'm referring to members of the executive team, International leadership team; regional and country leaders; ministry leaders and members of all boards.

Today, we have more board members worldwide than in 2013, reflecting the blessing

of 48 signatories to the SIM Mission Agreement.

The new governance structure gave rise to a new type of event: the SIM Global Assembly (GA) and the first three took place in Thailand (2015), South Africa (2018), and Kenya (2023). These serve not only a governance function but also provide a time for learning through workshops and a space for interaction among workers who'd not otherwise meet.

I believe one reason for the high quality of our leaders is our intentional investment in leader development. So far, 181 pairs of mentors and mentees have walked together for intentional mentoring in leadership.

I've seen an increase in local workers who are leading SIM ministries, who are sharing the practice of leadership and in the number of women in leadership roles.

Very early on, I knew we had leaders who exemplified our core value of 'responsive to our times'.

The Malaysia Gathering in 2014 drew such leaders from across SIM and helped to clarify the why of our existence, with the priority on where Christ is least known, which soon led to renewed purpose and mission statements.

Two historic pandemics happened in the past decade: Ebola and Covid. I thank the Lord for His protection of our workers and that no active mission worker died.

An end to Ebola came in answer to many prayers, including a concentrated week of prayer worldwide in October 2014.

Surely the Lord had gone before us with the timely decision to build a new leadership structure, that infused the mission with more leadership capacity at all levels when the pandemics arrived? For many months, we were able to assist our entities to navigate safely the many aspects of these pandemics.

I'm also grateful for our global workers, who live out our purpose and mission in many difficult places. The Lord is continuing to call courageous workers into SIM, for His glory.

A region that some may consider a 'hard place'



Here and below right, Joshua gives the keynote address at SIM Southern Africa's 2023 Spiritual Life Conference in KwaZulu Natal.

Photo by Brian Heffron

is the Middle East, North Africa, and Central Asia (MENACA). Since our merger with MECO in 2016, we've more than doubled the number of workers in this region, including many young people and families. The Holy Spirit is moving in the MENACA to draw many more people to Himself. What a privilege for SIM to take part in this.

As the International Director and as a father, I thank the Lord for our hundreds of mission kids. How precious they are to our mission family! The Lord is watching over them as they are raised in many unusual environments and situations.

We're grateful for God's protection that we know about and all the protection that we'll never know about. Yet we also grieve the loss of a couple of our MKs; may the indescribable grief of parents be met by the indescribable peace that flows only from the Holy Spirit.

Jesus identified his purpose on earth in Luke 19:10: "For the Son of Man has come to seek and save the lost."

Although we cannot save the lost, we can seek them and introduce them to the one who saves. At the core of each experience, I'm thankful for the way it equips us to seek the lost more effectively.

Amidst adversity, pandemics, political upheaval, persecution, limited resources, and

many discomforts, we are a people who spend our days seeking the lost. My most profound gratitude over the past ten years is for the salvation of many through the presence of SIM workers and ministries, each salvation story its own miracle.

To our God be the glory! Amen.



Photo by Brian Heffron

Introducing Phil Bauman, SIM's new International Director

By SIM Int'l Communications Team & Brian Heffron, SIM SA Communications Manager

Phil and Andrea Bauman



SIM International's new International Director, Phil Bauman, is praying that he can help SIM continue to grow in the direction set by his predecessor, Joshua Bogunjoko.

"I am honoured and humbled to have been confirmed in this role by a vote of SIM members and by the Board of Governors," Phil said when appointed last September.

"Phil was the unanimous choice of the search committee and of the board," said SIM International Board of Governors chair Gillian Phillips. "We are delighted he has agreed to take on this challenging role and can clearly see God's hand in this. We pray for God's blessing on his leadership and look forward to seeing the mission thrive under him."

She said the Board of Governors confirmed him in September "after much prayer, a careful selection process, votes of approval by the Board,

Global Assembly and mission members, and formal ratification by the Board."

"I have worked closely with Phil for many years and firmly believe he is answering God's call by taking on this role. I am excited to see his appointment and can clearly see the way God has led the search committee, the board and the whole mission in the process of selecting him," Joshua said.

"Phil is a gifted leader and will, I am sure, lead this wonderful organisation with courage, wisdom and distinction. My prayer is that God will lead, strengthen and encourage both Phil and Andrea as they prepare for this significant step in their lives and as they face the challenges that will certainly lie ahead."

Phil, 52, spoke to us during his sabbatical last October as he prepared for his new role. He started his five-year term on 1 March.

Like the search committee, Phil said he relied on prayer, the counsel of close friends and mentors, and trusting that the search team were faithfully following God's will and direction.

"The phrase I use is 'we trusted the process,' and we trust that all of those involved were seeking God's will and direction in it. When I was first asked to consider being part of the process, it was sort of 'that's too scary to contemplate, but I don't really have a good reason to say no,'" he said.

He and his wife, Andrea, joined SIM in 2000 and served for years among the Sisaali people in northern Ghana. They have three grown children (including one finishing university) and live near Toronto, Canada.

Phil has an engineering degree and an MA in Mission and Theology. Andrea is a nurse by profession but has served in personnel since 2008; she is currently the International Personnel Coordinator.

Phil has served with SIM in senior leadership roles for more than 15 years, including as Ghana Director. He became a member of the International Leadership Team (ILT) in 2018 and the Executive Team in 2020, when he became the Global Director of Strategic Development.

Missionary service has been at the centre of Phil and Andrea's life together from the beginning. They met at Mukinge Hospital in Zambia, where Phil, Canadian, visited for a practical work placement for his university studies in civil engineering and Andrea, British, was a nurse.

"When you're there and being asked to design a new paediatrics ward, you must consult the nurses on the paediatrics ward We both just felt that for a Canadian and a Brit to meet there, maybe God has some ideas of what He would have for us," Phil said, adding that they committed together that if their relationship continued, they would be open to Him calling them to serve in missions.

Making such a commitment was natural for Andrea (who had already served at a mission hospital) and for Phil, who was raised in a Christian home and a Bible-teaching, missions-minded church. He came to faith at age 7 but made it his own during high school and university.

They married, settled in Canada so Andrea could obtain Canadian citizenship, and worked a few years in their professions before pursuing vocational missionary service.

After wavering between joining SIM or AEF,

they settled on AEF for the possibility of returning to Mukinge Hospital.

"Six weeks later, we were told, 'AEF might be merging with SIM; how do you feel about that?' We laughed," he recalled.

After prayerfully considering assignment possibilities, they moved to northern Ghana, where they were involved in church planting, rural church development, health education, and water development. Phil said their service in Ghana provided many lessons from God.

"A big one for me was coming out of engineering, realizing that ministry of value is about relationships. You can engineer a solution to just about anything, but it doesn't mean that it's a solution that people actually want to use. When we come to gospel ministry, we can have all sorts of ideas and strategies, but it boils down to relationships," he said.

Another big lesson, he said, was "the reality that God is already present in the places we go even if He is not named, and so it's not that I bring the Gospel or that I bring Jesus, but rather it's about helping people to see Him because He's already there. As one of my professors in Ghana said, 'The footprints of Jesus are all over the place; it's our role as God's people to help people discover His footprints in their culture.' So, recognizing how God is at work, [and how] God is present even though He is not named. Our role as kingdom witnesses is to help people to see that God is already present in their midst."

Likewise, evaluating our ministries should include considering how they align with SIM's

*"...God is already present
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already there."*

purpose and mission statement (printed below), the people and communities with whom we are engaging, and the change desired for them.

Phil believes SIM has many strengths, from our dependence on God (as expressed in our core values, printed on the facing page) to our broad representation of the body of Christ globally, denominationally, and ministerially.

“God has given us great people from all around the world, and part of that strength is, I believe, our growing diversity, where we have diverse teams of people ministering together in many, many contexts,” he said. “We still have a lot of western influence, but our global governance is not anchored in one particular context, or at least doesn’t need to be.”

Asked about his goals and priorities as he prepared for his new role, Phil said, “My caveat to this is [that] part of the role of sabbatical is to gain further clarity, so I wouldn’t say this is definitive, but at this stage, I would say that a goal and a challenge is that SIM would continue to become a diverse and global organization that facilitates the participation of God’s people from around the world to share the goodness of Jesus in communities where He’s least known, and so that piece of what does it mean to be global and diverse—we already are, but I think there’s a lot more that could be done.

“Part of that though is discerning where is that responsibility for SIM and where is God saying that is not SIM’s responsibility; that is for somebody else. I firmly believe that we have more to do; we can better serve or we can be more diverse and help people be engaged in what God is doing, but that doesn’t mean that our responsibility is to do it for everyone. So it’s to be a diverse organization but to recognize our

own limitations and maybe limitations that God is giving to us.

“So, that would be one area, and I think you’re right: the opportunities and challenges are very much intertwined, because within that diversity piece, there are opportunities and challenges,” Phil said.

“Within that diversity piece, one of the challenges we face is, ‘How do we become a welcoming community where diverse people feel like they belong?’

“Another opportunity and challenge is continuing to focus on the purpose and mission that God has for us. I’m a hundred percent on board and behind our current Purpose and Mission statements. I see no reason to change those because I think we have lots to do to continue to pursue those and live them out. I think to do that well will require continued focus for us as an organization, and understanding what does that focus look like? How do we prioritize the places where we minister, the resources that we have to allocate, in light of our purpose and mission?

“Part of that I think comes back to this assessment of how do we understand that the ministries that we are undertaking do intentionally pursue the purpose and mission that God has given to us, and as an organization, that we desire to continue to assess our ministries to ensure that we are as focused on our purpose and mission as we could be.”

Please join us in praying for Phil and Andrea as they adjust to this new role and for him to lead according to the Lord’s will for His Kingdom.

This article includes reporting by the SIM International Communications Team.

SIM’s Purpose and Mission

Convinced that no one should live and die without hearing God’s good news, we believe that He has called us to make disciples of the Lord Jesus Christ in communities where He is least known. Therefore, compelled by God’s great love and empowered by the Holy Spirit:

- We cross barriers to proclaim the crucified and risen Christ, expressing His love and compassion among those who live and die without Him.
- We make disciples who will trust and obey Jesus, and become part of Christ-centred churches.
- We work together with churches to fulfil God’s mission across cultures locally and globally.
- We facilitate that participation in cross-cultural ministry of those whom God is calling.

SIM's Core Values

SIM International is committed to propelling the good news of Jesus Christ's life, death and resurrection to the nations. As an organization, our core values bind us together and give us a clear trajectory to impact lives with the gospel. Founded in scripture, these values represent our collective priorities.

Read the following to gain a greater understanding of our commitments.

1. Committed to biblical truth

We are committed to biblical truth and joyfully affirm historic, evangelical Christianity. With courage, we declare to the nations the good news of new life in Jesus Christ.

2. Dependent on God

"By Prayer" and in faith we depend on God for the provision of all our needs. We will demonstrate diligence, integrity, sharing and accountability in cultivating and using the resources God provides.

3. A people of prayer

Prayer is foundational in our life and ministry. "By Prayer" we praise God, seek his direction, request resources and call upon the Holy Spirit to empower our ministries.

4. Mission focused

We are committed to the urgent and unfinished task of making disciples of Jesus Christ in all nations. In doing this we desire to work in loving, trusting, interdependent relationships with churches and other partners who share our vision.

5. Church centred

We are committed to being a mission organisation that begins, nurtures and equips churches to be the expression of Christ in their communities and to reach out with cross-cultural missionary vision and action.

6. Concerned about human needs

We humbly acknowledge that the ultimate human need is to know God. We also believe that he has called us to compassionate, holistic service in this broken world by alleviating suffering, fostering development and effecting change in society.

7. A Christ-like community

We desire to be a transforming community dedicated to becoming like Christ in love, servanthood, holiness and obedience to the Father. We believe that following Christ's example means sacrifice, sometimes hardship and perhaps even death.

8. A learning, growing community

We believe in the worth and giftedness of each person in SIM and of those we seek to serve. We practise the giving and receiving of discipleship, life-long learning, consultative leadership, mutual development and training as enduring disciplines.

9. Strengthened through diversity

We are intentionally interdenominational, international and multiethnic. We believe this expresses the unity of the body of Christ in the world. We believe we will be more effective in ministry as we incorporate the richness of cultural diversity in SIM and celebrate our oneness in Christ.

10. Responsive to our times

We will respond with creativity and courage to evolving needs and opportunities under the guidance of the Holy Spirit. To be effective and relevant, our ministries, priorities and structures are subject to ongoing evaluation and adaptation.

Greetings from SIM South Africa!

2023 Spiritual Life Conference attendees



Photo by Brian Heffron

Mobilising African churches as *senders* of missionaries

By *AfriGO* Magazine Team

A consultation on African missions mobilization took place in June 2023 in Cape Town, South Africa, hosted by SIM.

For six days, more than 50 attendees from 14 countries met to discuss strategies for releasing African workers and African resources for the work to which God has called them.

Representatives came from mission agencies such as African-founded Global Link Afrika, SIM, The Kingdom Projects, and AIM (Africa Inland Mission), as well as business leaders and representatives from large African churches.

The increase in African missionaries requires both better financial strategies and providing member care for those serving. Discussions therefore included how to work more effectively with churches and how to see what some consider weaknesses as strengths instead.

Of particular interest were discussions about local methods of fundraising, such as the use of monthly savings clubs, group fundraising, and churches banding together to take turns supporting missionaries.

Dr. Joshua Bogunjoko, SIM international director, reminded the group, “God never commands what His people cannot deliver by His Spirit, His power, His provision, and His wisdom.”

SIM Southern Africa Director Dr. Benjamin Pillay and Regional Director Dr. Siegfried Ngubane also participated in the consultation.

“[This] was the start of a conversation that would act as a catalyst for ongoing deliberations and action around the role of Africa and Africans in the arena of global missions. Africa is pivotal to the next wave of global mission endeavour,” Benjamin said.



Photo by Brian Heffron

The attendees also spent time in prayer and group discussions to consider better ways of collaborating locally and across the continent.

This article is adapted from AfriGO magazine (<http://AfriGO.org>), a partnership of SIM and AIM since 2019.

AFRIGO
Encouraging the African Church in world mission



Photo by Brian Heffron



Photo by Brian Heffron

Serving God in the ministry He gives us, not the one we dreamt of

By Dr. Rebekah Cooper, SIM South Africa Missionary



Dr. Rebekah Cooper consults with patients at her practice, which both is a ministry and helps support their other ministries.

Submitted photo

As a child, I dreamed of becoming a medical missionary. My picture was of rural hospitals, disadvantaged communities, poor resources and serving with a team of like-minded people—the traditional picture that often comes to mind.

My reality is far different. I live in a town, work in a private medical practice and employ people. I am a business owner. There are times when it is difficult to accept that my reality is not what I thought it would be, that God is choosing to use me in a way that I did not foresee, times when it even causes me to question whether I am doing the right thing or not—because it does not look how I thought it would.

However, my dad always taught me of the

missionaries of years gone by—John G Paton, Rowland Bingham, Eric Liddel and Jim Elliot—and something that they all had in common was that they did what God asked them to do—no more and no less.

In 2019, Colin and I felt the call to ministry more firmly than we had ever before. We knew of SIM and my sister, Naomi Charlton, was already a member. We knew we were called to full-time missionary work, we knew we wanted to go with a mission organisation, and we knew we wanted it to be SIM—but we didn't know where we were going. We thought maybe Ethiopia and investigated options there, but we did not have peace.

The more and more we prayed about it, the more

we felt called back to Empangeni, the town in KwaZulu Natal where we had both grown up. At that stage, Colin was going to work for an NGO called MusaweNkosi Ministries. *MusaweNkosi* means “God’s Grace” in isiZulu, and it was started in 2001 by my parents. From a children’s home, it had grown to community work, skills training, an education centre, and a feeding scheme, so they were desperate for help. Colin was going to be full-time in ministry; I was going to work part-time as a doctor in a private practice and then do admin for MusaweNkosi. It was necessary for me to do some medical work to help towards the finances, as support-raising was getting increasingly more difficult—but medicine was not going to be my ministry.

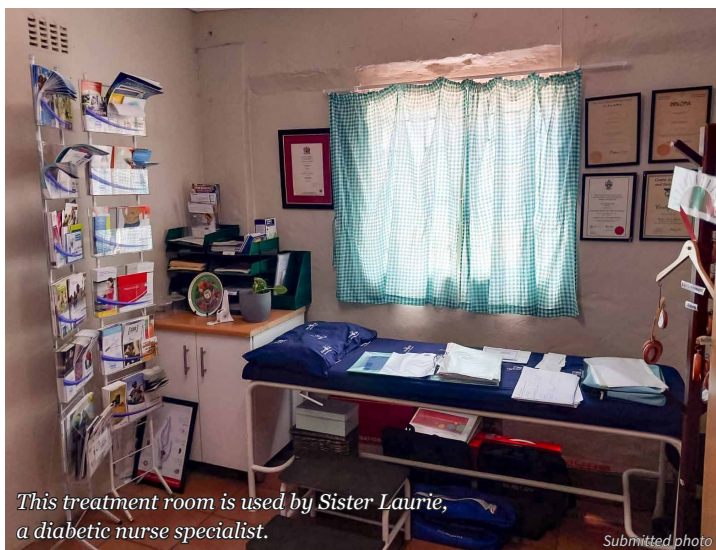
Over the course of the last few years, circumstances have slowly changed, and I ended up opening my own practice. It was a big decision—one I did not enter into lightly. Starting a practice of my own would require all my time, it would carry a new set of responsibilities and skills and it just didn’t feel like ministry, which after all, was why I was in Empangeni. I consoled myself with the idea that Colin was still doing ministry and I was supporting the family—a different picture from what we had originally thought but not a total sell-out because one of us was still in ‘real’ ministry, being a ‘real missionary’.

The start of Chris Tomlin’s song ‘Is He Worthy’ asks, ‘Do you feel the world is broken? Do you feel the shadows deepen? But do you know that all the dark won’t stop the light from getting through? Do you wish that you



Colin Cooper preaching at their home church.

Submitted photo



This treatment room is used by Sister Laurie, a diabetic nurse specialist.

Submitted photo

Colin Cooper oversees a crew of volunteers at MusaveNkosi.



whom I see have some form of emotional or mental problem, and many don't even know that is the underlying problem. They come in with physical complaints and want a pill to solve the problem, but a tablet is not what they need. They need a place to talk, a place to be honest, a place to cry. Private psychologists are few and are expensive, the government system is overwhelmed, and most pastors do not have the expertise to counsel mental health problems, so people go to their general practitioner or family doctor. Christian, non-Christian, Hindu, traditional African religion, and Muslim—people from all walks of life, all religions and socio-economic statuses go to the doctor. Everyone gets physically ill and needs medicine at some point. Many come with a physical symptom and end up having a cry; talking about their anxiety or depression; sharing trauma from



Dr. Rebekah and Colin Cooper and their sons

Submitted photo

could see it all made new?"

Working in general practice, the answer to those questions is an unequivocal yes! The world is a broken place and people are hurting. Hurting and hiding it. Hurting and hurting others in return. Hurting and unsure where to turn.

Rather than only providing financially for our family, the practice has become another place of ministry. Over fifty percent of the patients

their past.

The practice is intentionally structured to be different, but different is hard. It's different to a conventional doctor's practice; it is also different to a conventional ministry—and there are times when it feels like we are justifying it on all sides. Why does it not look like a good business with lots of profit? Why is it not a free service and pure ministry? Why am I working and not home with

my children? Why am I not open on a Saturday and late hours?

The ministry I have is not the ministry I dreamed of when I was small. There are parts of it that I don't enjoy, that I find really difficult. There are parts of it that I love, that I know make a difference. Some days I see patients with end-of-life illnesses; I talk to them and their families, pray with them and ease their pain and suffering. Some days I see lots of respiratory tract infections, write scripts for pain pills, and sort out accounts. Some days I know I'm making a difference and some days I'm wracked with worry over finances, over my skill, over my family.

Different is difficult no matter how you cut it. Different to the world, different to the norm, different to how you thought it would be, different to how you wanted it to be, different to what you thought God wanted you to do. But God did not call us to be the same. He called some to be pastors, some to be evangelists, some to be children's workers, some to be teachers, some to be doctors. He has called some to go and some to stay. He has called some to give and some to pray. He has called each of us to something different.

He has not asked me to go to a rural hospital with poor resources. If I went without Him sending me, it would not be God-honouring or obedient. He has asked me to work in a private medical practice in a small town in KwaZulu Natal—to do what I can, where I am, with what I have. He has asked me to trust Him even though it is difficult. Each of us has a different calling and a different story. If yours isn't quite what you thought it would be, if you wonder what it is He wants of you, if you don't know what to do—just ask. Ask God for wisdom and He will give it to you. Ask Him to show you His will for your life, and He will steer you. He may not show you the big picture, but He will guide your footsteps. Be guided by the Spirit, be guided by the Word, and take comfort in the knowledge that He knows the plan—even if you do not.

If you want to read more about MusaweNkosi, you can find their website at www.musawenkosi.org.za.

If you would like to know more about our ministry in Empangeni—the medical ministry or Colin's work—we would love to hear from you. You can email us at colin.cooper@sim.org or rebekah.cooper@sim.org.

From the Coopers' Facebook group:



Cooper Catchup

Oct 13, 2023 · 6

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What does a missionary look like?

We live in the town we grew up in; I work in a private practice and Colin spends lots of time doing admin and maintenance. Yet we call ourselves missionaries. We don't live in darkest Africa, we don't do tent missions or work with starving children – yet we call ourselves missionaries. Before we moved back to Empangeni we explained to a pastor what we were planning to do and he asked us how we were different from any other Christians moving to live and work anywhere and we have also been called "missionaries" before. So, what does a missionary look like?

Missionary means sent one. Every Christian is called to be a witness where they are – to live differently and be a light in the area in which they live. But not every Christian is a missionary. What a sent one looks like has changed over the years. In the New Testament, missionaries like Paul and Barnabas were sent from a local church on a number of journeys to various people and churches to work out the great commission.

The traditional view of missionaries are the Jim Elliots, Hudson Taylors and Roland Bingham – those who leave everything behind – travel to a far off place and live and minister cross culturally until they die. Today there are still missionaries like that and they are needed. But needed too are the missionaries who teach missionary kids; who manage the finances of missionaries; those who run the business side of NGOs and those who work in medicine. Western countries are post-Christian and traditionally receiving countries are now the senders. Visas are difficult to come by which limits who can leave their country to enter another. Support is very difficult to raise and more and more people are tent maker missionaries – working secular jobs in addition to their ministry or even as their ministry.

I love the movie Chariots of Fire and encourage you all to watch it or to read the story of Eric Liddell. He was a missionary kid and had planned to go into missions in China. He was also a 100m runner. He ran for England in the 1924 Olympics and became famous after he refused to run on a Sunday. He ran in the 400m instead and won gold. Then he went to China as a missionary and did amazing things. His sister, Jenny, was not happy that he delayed going to China in order to run. She said that God had gifted him to be an evangelist. He told her – "he also made me fast. And when I run, I can feel his pleasure." Although he did great things in China he is most well known for the stand he made as a sportsman – doing what God had called him to do at that time.

The goal of missions has always been to make disciples of Jesus. The method of missions varies and today missions and missionaries look vastly different to 100 or even 50 years ago. And they even look different to each other. What does a missionary look like? How long is a piece of string?

Serve the Lord with SIM South Africa

By Stephan Walters & Brian Heffron, SIM SA Sending Coordinator & Communications Manager

Is the Lord calling you to serve in missions? Do you yearn to offer your time and talents to Him in the Great Commission?

If so, then SIM South Africa may be able to help connect you with your calling.

SIM is a worldwide mission, with over 4000 workers serving in over 70 countries. We are a diverse reflection of Christ's creation, coming from multiple Protestant denominations, about 70 nationalities, and many professional and vocational backgrounds. We celebrate and faithfully follow Christ's prayer in John 17:20-23:

"My prayer is not for them alone. I pray also for those who will believe in me through their message, that all of them may be one, Father, just as you are in me and I am in you. May they also be in us so that the world may believe that you have sent me. I have given them the glory that you gave me, that they may be one as we are one—I in them and you in me—so that they may be brought to complete unity. Then the world will know that you sent me and have loved them even as you have loved me." (NIV)

These are just a few of the thousands of opportunities in these and other countries, all waiting for believers to bless others in Christ's name. Each represents a ministry need being prayed for someone to fill—perhaps you.

Please note that each SIM worker is responsible for raising their own funds, gathering a team of individuals and churches that will support them financially and in prayer and encouragement.

Africa

Ethiopia

In Addis Ababa, you can make a difference for eternity in the lives of children at an international Christian school. Bingham Academy is looking for teachers to serve at least two years in such subjects as English, Economics, French, Geography, IT, and Mathematics.

Nigeria

Be part of SIM's team in the country where our ministries began in 1893!

SIM Nigeria needs a personnel coordinator. Help advance the gospel through coordinating human resource efforts on behalf of approximately 80 missionaries and guide staff working in areas of immigration, medical care, people care, child safety, and communications in Nigeria.

Niger Creek Ministry Centre (a small guest house serving SIM and the Christian community) is seeking a hospitality manager. Support the advancement of the gospel through your skills in organisation, your encouraging spirit, your ability to guide others, and your servant's heart.

Hillcrest School in Jos is seeking teachers in pre-school, primary and secondary levels. Use your love for teaching and passion to serve Christ in an international Christian school serving both Nigerian and missionary families.

A well-established SIM partner ministry is seeking a Publishing Editor and Manager. Edit and publish theological books to serve the African church and seminaries. Manage warehouse sourcing and distributing books nationwide.

South Africa

Here in South Africa, we have many opportunities, including in personnel and communications. Help bring more ministry workers to South Africa's communities and help tell stories of God's work through them!

Zimbabwe

Two theological education institutions partnering with SIM Zimbabwe need missionary lecturers in Old Testament, New Testament, Systematic Theology, Biblical Languages (Greek and Hebrew), Practical/Applied Theology, and World Religions and Cults. Rusitu Bible College is in a serene rural valley with lush vegetation but connected to major urban centres by a tarred road. It offers certificate and diploma courses, each running for three years. Theological College of Zimbabwe is in an urban setting, offering undergraduate and postgraduate degrees.

SIM Zimbabwe also needs two ministry workers to evangelise and disciple children and youths, who make the majority of Zimbabwe's



Photo by Brian Heffron

Students in the library of Hillcrest School in Jos, Nigeria.

population but who have very few Christian workers. The ministry opportunity can be in various forms, such as sports, martial arts, fine arts, or after school activities.

Asia

Thailand

The Centre needs English teachers as part of its outreach to university students in Northern Thailand. Situated between two major universities that together have more than 50 000 students, The Centre offers them English classes and a place to hang out with other students, find community and experience Christians from around the world. Thailand is only about 1% Christian, which means that most of the students who come to The Centre have never heard the gospel. There are so many students to reach; please, would you consider joining our team?

South America

Peru

Remote Quechua villages in the Cusco and Andes mountains need dentists to serve with a mobile dental clinic ministry. Short-term associates would live in Cusco and participate in mobile clinic outreaches to surrounding villages,

located within seven hours of Cusco. While Cusco is a large, multi-ethnic city, our primary focus for dental clinics is with Quechua people.

How to begin the enquiry process:

Is the Lord calling you to any of these ministries—or perhaps others? Would you like more information? If so, then please email southafrica.sending@sim.org, and you will be sent a Connect form to fill out. This is not an application but simply a form that solicits more information to help us better understand what your interest in missions may be and how SIM could potentially be a good fit. When the filled-out Connect form is returned and it is clear that an enquirer genuinely wants to serve God cross-culturally, an application form is sent to the enquirer to begin the application process.

SIM missionaries serve both overseas and within South Africa's boundaries. It is important to note that a missionary does not serve in isolation and is essentially an extension of his or her sending church, serving under the umbrella of SIM. As stated earlier, SIM missionaries are not salaried; they are self-funded and need to do their own support raising. It is a way of both growing in our faith and relying on God's providence.

Why I wrote *Soul Brothers: Two Men. Two Worlds. One Purpose.*

By Tripp Johnston, Sports Friends Co-Founder and Ambassador

Soul Brothers tells the true-life story of God's amazing work through two ordinary men (my dear Ethiopian friend, Berhanu, and me) whom God brought together to help launch Sports Friends, a SIM ministry now impacting the lives of hundreds of thousands of young people around the world.

I met Berhanu on a short-term mission trip to Ethiopia in 2001. While Berhanu and I were the same age (both born in 1961) and were each married with three children, the similarities seemed to stop there. In fact, on the surface, you could hardly imagine two people with more different backgrounds.

Berhanu lived in Ethiopia, a country scarred in recent decades by ethnic conflicts, repression, regional wars, famines, poverty, and the HIV/AIDS pandemic. Berhanu endured much hardship and suffering as a result of such crises.

I, on the other hand, was born and raised in America. I was a Harvard MBA and former investment banking executive. My prior world of corporate boardrooms, luxury homes, and children's private schools seemed another planet away from his world.

When I first met Berhanu, I was at an inflexion point in my life. I had spent years chasing the American dream—getting a good education, securing a good job, making money, making a name for myself, being successful, etc. I had been living a life overly focused on my selfish ambitions. While I was a Christian, God was just getting the leftovers in my life. God had recently taken me through a season of great transformation, convicting me of my selfish pursuits and giving me the desire to give Him the first fruits of my life. I had recently resigned from my job as a senior



Submitted photo

executive at a large U.S. financial services company and was waiting on the Lord to show me what was next, feeling strongly that He was leading me into some type of full-time vocational ministry. I envisioned this short-term trip to Ethiopia to be an enriching experience but not much more than that. Moving my family of five to Ethiopia to serve as missionaries was nowhere on my radar screen.

As I had an opportunity to talk with Berhanu on that first short-term trip to Ethiopia, he shared with me parts of his story: Jesus appearing in his bedroom at age 12 and calling him out of an animistic home; fleeing from a father who then tried to kill him; living on the streets, finding refuge in the church; being tortured in prison for his Christian faith; God working through him and his Christian friends in miraculous ways to bring many to faith in Jesus; and traveling to Los Angeles where he met Shaquille O'Neal and Kobe Bryant in the LA Lakers locker room. Story after amazing story!

I could scarcely process all that he shared. His stories seemed otherworldly! As he shared about his journey of walking with God, he exuded a great sense of joy and peace. His personality was contagious, leaving me with a desire to spend more time with him, and a desire to hear more about his experiences with God.

So began a 20+ year friendship and season of serving God together to reach many young people and their families with the gospel of Jesus through SIM's Sports Friends ministry.

Sports Friends' vision was to train and equip local Ethiopian churches and church planters to reach out into their communities to make disciples of Jesus Christ among youth and their families through relationships first built on the sports

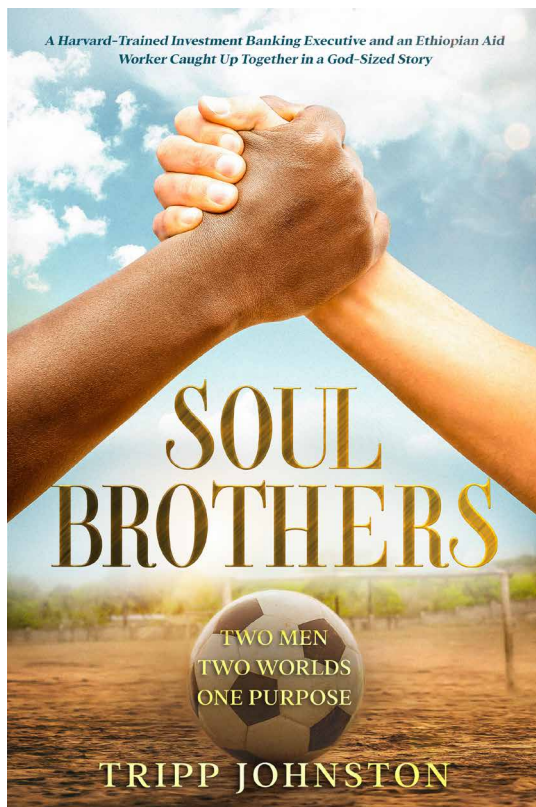
field. Coaches (sports ministers) were trained to be much more than a sports coach—they were trained to be a life coach, introducing young people to Jesus and helping them grow as His disciples.

God has moved powerfully through the ministry of Sports Friends-trained coaches. Hundreds of new churches have been established in communities where there was no Christian witness, and many thousands of young people have come to faith in Jesus in Ethiopia and other countries where Sports Friends eventually expanded [*SIM South Africa missionary Jonathan Thomas heads Sports Friends in Thailand*].

I wrote *Soul Brothers* quite simply to testify of God's amazing work of redemption, to introduce readers to my dear friend Berhanu (whose walk with God will hopefully inspire you as much as it has me), and to share the power of church-centred sports ministry as a tool God uses to transform lives and communities. I desire that readers will see a bigger picture of God and His work in the world today that will lead them to renewed worship and service.

One of the great joys in writing this book was the process of systematically reviewing my life's history and seeing God's hand of faithfulness and goodness over many years and decades. At the time of writing, I told my wife, Alison, that even if nobody else ever read this book, just the process and practice of remembering God's work in my life (and the life of my family) would be so worth it.

Writing a book was a challenging exercise at times. Finding time during the busy years of leading the global expansion of Sports Friends and trying to integrate Berhanu's and my stories seamlessly were the biggest challenges.



God, however, was faithful to lead and sustain throughout the process. He gave me a great gift a few years ago that kept me going and motivated. An Ethiopian pastor who had a gift of prophecy spoke to me in Ethiopia when I was visiting Berhanu and working on the book draft (he had no prior knowledge of my book project). At the time, I was also asking God to give me wisdom on the title of the book.

Fikadu, the Ethiopian pastor, said to me, “You are working on a big project, a book project. The Lord will guide you in this project. He will provide

and lead you in this project.”

He then recounted the story of Ezekiel 37, when the Lord gathered up all the dry bones strewn across the valley. He said, “There are many pieces to your project, and they may look like they are scattered across the valley like these dry bones with no hope for bringing them together and to life. It was only God who could gather the scattered dry bones in Ezekiel’s time. And God will gather the scattered bones of this book project and bring them to life. He will guide you. He will do it. Follow Him.”

Then Fikadu spoke to Berhanu and me together and said these words were from the Lord.

“You are brothers. You love and trust each other like no other. You are family. This is a very special relationship. This is because it is the Lord who has brought you together for His purposes and given you this relationship. Continue as brothers. You are soul brothers.”

Soul Brothers: Two Men. Two Worlds. One Purpose. is available from [Amazon.com](https://a.co/d/8EDNf1B) in paperback and Kindle editions; short link <https://a.co/d/8EDNf1B>

Give



...help work toward the Lord's harvest

From preparing the ground to planting and watering seeds to rejoicing in the harvest, the Lord has entrusted many aspects of His great work to His church, including SIM Southern Africa's workers and ministries throughout South Africa and around the world.

Your faithful prayer and financial support play just as vital a role as our labour, and each is a sacrifice unto the Lord. Contributions help provide equipment, supplies, locations and workers for food programmes, church planting, evangelism, medical care, education, Bible translation, sports and youth programmes, and many other ministries and programmes in partnership with local churches and believers.

If you are able to support this work financially, then gifts can be given online at sim.org.za/give-to-sim-southern-africa or through the following bank details:

SIM Southern Africa
Standard Bank, Blue Route
Branch Code: 025609
Account Number: 072877014

Please Reference: your name and "SIM SA Partnership" and send proof of payment to za.finance@sim.org.

Thanks to our donors, known & unknown

By John Berry, SIM South Africa Stewardship Officer

December 1893 was a time of great challenge in the life of “the Soudan Interior Mission”.

Three young men—Walter Gowans, Thomas Kent and Rowland Bingham—had landed by ship at Lagos, Nigeria. Their goal was to reach the 60 million people living in the area known as the “Soudan” with the Gospel. Yet among the three of them, they had only \$150 with which to journey from Lagos into the great interior of the central Sudan.

Realising that their resources were inadequate for the long journey, they decided to spend a week in prayer. Afterwards, they all felt God calling them to sell any belongings that were not essential to their work, pool their funds, and cut their food budget. Still, they were far short of the funds they would need, so they continued praying for God’s provision.

The next mail brought them £500! This included some small gifts and a large gift of £300 from a servant known as Mary Jones. Mary served as a housekeeper most of her life, and Gowans, Kent and Bingham had spoken with her about their work while staying with the family she served in England. When she received a legacy of £300, she decided to give the whole amount to this Sudan enterprise. Her generosity moved her employer, who added £100 herself, and others added until the total became £500.

“The gift of this servant girl came just at the moment of our greatest need and made possible that first journey up into the Sudan,” Bingham wrote. “Out of that gift in a very real sense has come the great harvest which we are seeing today.”

Mary was an unknown in the world’s eyes, but her gift—and those inspired by it—made a huge impact in the ultimate advancement of the Gospel into Sudan. This first trip ended sadly with the deaths of Gowans and Kent from illness, but seven years later in 1901, four men reached Patigi, 500 miles up the Niger River, and the first mission station was established.

Today, SIM serves in over 70 countries with over 4 000 people representing 70 nationalities. We still rely on the generous and inspired gifts of people like Mary, her employer, and the others

who joined them. Indeed, we have been blessed by so many similar stories of people giving at divinely critical moments.

I am grateful that I get to serve the Lord by helping SIM be faithful stewards of these gifts. One of the funds that I manage is our SIM “Partnership Fund” that is used to meet the needs of the mission to reach people who are living and dying without Christ.

This past twelve months, SIM Partnership received gifts totalling R285 615 from 60 known donors and gifts totalling R56 585 from donors unknown to us. Some of these anonymous donors purposely chose to stay anonymous, whereas others simply did not give us enough information to identify them.

We normally write to all our known donors to thank them for their gifts, but for our unknown donors, we can only say a big general thank you and that we are extremely grateful for your gifts, no matter how big or small.

Just like the gift of £300 from the relatively unknown servant girl, Mary Jones, every gift to SIM is a blessing to us. These gifts help us to meet our goal of reaching people who live and die without Christ. Jesus sees our giving (whether anonymous or not), and just like the poor widow who gave sacrificially out of her poverty everything she had to live on, He commends us when we give from a pure heart to please Him and to advance His kingdom.

If you would like to help us reach this goal, please complete the Partnership Form on the next page and return it to us by email. You can give as a once-off gift or as a regular monthly gift through a SIM debit order or a stop order on your own account. If you would like to remain anonymous, please note this on the form and we will treat it accordingly. Thank you, and God bless you.



Photo by Brian Heffron

SIM South Africa Partnership Form

☐ **YES, I want to help SIM to share God's love with a needy world through Partnership giving!**

TITLE (Dr/Mr/Mrs/Ms) _____ FIRST NAME _____ SURNAME _____

ADDRESS: _____

CODE: _____

TEL: Home (____) _____ Work: (____) _____ Mobile: (____) _____

EMAIL: _____

CHURCH: _____

Please mark the appropriate options below:

☐ I want to make a gift of ☐ R100, ☐ R200, ☐ R500, ☐ Other R _____.

☐ I have made a Direct Deposit into your bank account by EFT of R _____.

☐ I want to give by a monthly stop order on my account of R _____.

☐ I want to give on a regular basis by SIM Debit Order by the amount of R _____ from (month) _____ 2024, and each month thereafter, until cancelled by me.

Our banking details:

Bank: Standard Bank, Blue Route

Branch Code: 025609

Account Name: SIM Southern Africa

Account No: 072877014

Please clearly state your name and "SIM SA Partnership" on the deposit slip and send a proof of payment to za.finance@sim.org so we can acknowledge your gift.

Please complete for a SIM debit order:

Bank: _____ - _____

Branch Name: _____ **Branch Code:** _____

Account Name: _____ **Account No:** _____

Signature: _____ **Date:** _____

Please email this completed form (scan or photo) to za.finance@sim.org. If you have any questions or difficulties, please contact Stewardship Officer John Berry by email or mobile 081 704 6211. You can also give online at sim.org.za/give-to-sim-southern-africa.

As always, thank you very much for partnering with us!

To lovingly invite and equip the church

By Mark Hugo, SIM South Africa Missionary

Why are there still missionaries in some countries when the church has been established for quite some time? This is a very good question to ask, both for churches and mission organisations.

In our experience, we have noticed two possible answers. One is that the church is still ill-equipped for missionary work and requires a partnership with those able to cross the divides and difficulties in taking the gospel into hard-to-reach places.

The other reason is the church's unwillingness to cross over into hard-to-reach places. I think historically back to North Africa: for the first 350 years after our Lord's ascension, it was the seat of Christian learning, direction and instruction. However, an inability to move the gospel to a more rural and nomadic people left them exposed, and once opposing forces came from the East, the church fled across the Mediterranean, leaving the local believers nothing of much use and substance in holding out against an advancing religion.

Specifically in Southern Africa, we have had a disconnect between church and missions that can be traced back almost to the first Europeans who brought the gospel to our region. Born out of the Reformation and under serious spiritual persecution from Rome, many came seeking an escape and new way of life. Their religion and faith were to be forged together for the protection and establishment of their newfound (God-given) place—not to spread the gospel but to have the gospel work within for the benefit of those 'encircled by the wagons'. When missionaries did start arriving—wanting to move out with the gospel—they were met with strong opposition because of how it might destabilise this fragile new community, so early missionaries had to basically sign out, making sure their work would not threaten this new enclave in any way. It's with these old practices and beliefs that we have basically continued forward till today, and we can still find ourselves on very different sides of what is deemed acceptable practices of evangelism.

Many churches still regard 'missions' as their obligation to church planting or denominational growth rather than as an active involvement in the larger body of Kingdom building to which most

missions ascribe. It's not an uncommon view amongst churches that those outside and lost must come in—sometimes in a very prescribed way—rather than hold the view of going out, seeking to establish something new, different and indigenous amongst

those who are lost and still seek the Good News.

The problem with years of churches and missions working apart is that it begins to cement practices. As much as churches might be stuck *inside*, missions have often created mission churches and mission denominations *outside*. A form of paternalism now permeates that is hard to break down, so we are both holding out, or holding onto what we perceive to be established and acceptable forms of outreach.

Fortunately, God is above the affairs of mankind, and today we are beginning to see a move from within the Church and the Mission, recognising our common call to "go to the ends of the earth", and slowly God is changing the way things have always been done. New church and denominational leaders are being elected who have missionary backgrounds, missionaries are being called to pastor churches, so hopefully—with less finger-pointing and more grace and humility—we are moving closer together to expose our blind spots and strengthen what has always been God's ordained work, the building of His Body. Why missions today? Well, to lovingly invite, include and equip the Church into moving beyond its walls into the greater work of God's Kingdom come, because ultimately Jesus is coming back for the Church, a bride still very much in need of preparation for His imminent arrival.

"Then He said to his disciples, "The harvest is plentiful but the workers are few. Ask the Lord of the Harvest, therefore, to send out workers into the harvest field." Matthew 9:37-38 (NIV)





Go

“How beautiful are the feet of those who bring good news!”

“How, then, can they call on the one they have not believed in? And how can they believe in the one of whom they have not heard? And how can they hear without someone preaching to them? And how can anyone preach unless they are sent? As it is written: ‘How beautiful are the feet of those who bring good news!’” — Romans 10:14-15 (NIV)

Is God calling you to be His feet, hands or voice with SIM? We have many ministry opportunities awaiting believers willing to use the talents God has entrusted to them in His service.

Explore the many opportunities to serve the Lord in global missions in South Africa and around the world. Call +27 (0) 21-715-3200 or email southafrica.sending@sim.org to begin a conversation with us.

Tsitsikamma National Park; Photo by Brian Heffron

MAGMAIL

SIM South Africa

PO Box 30027

TOKAI, 7966

South Africa



Read this issue online at www.sim.org.za

