

SIM **now**



Helping children “4THE1” Who loves them eternally

Welcome Home: A refugee shares the Gospel's invitation

For Freedom: SIM's project against human trafficking

T4T: Keeping kids safe and well in Southern Africa

Bearing Faithful Witness for Christ

Why Missions? Because God

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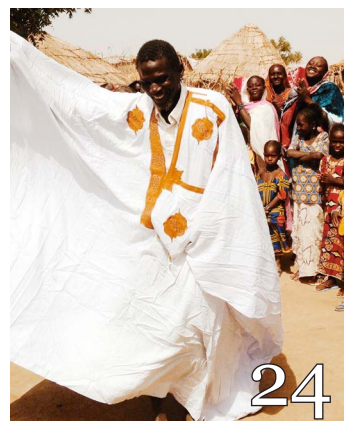
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From the Director

Dear friends of SIM Southern Africa,

What a year it has been! 64 countries in the world hold elections this year, representing about 49 percent of the world’s population. The world is reeling from a plethora of natural disasters around the globe. Conflict continues to ravage many societies, with numerous people left struggling to survive trauma, tragedy, and troubling times.

However, you will read in this edition of *SIMnow* about hope, freedom, and family, as well as that the Gospel continues to be the power of God unto salvation for all who believe. As always, it continues to echo, “Welcome, ...! You are forgiven, and your new life has just begun”.

Freedom is the call in the streets to the hallowed halls of governmental and non-governmental establishments, as we acknowledge that there are now more people in modern-day slavery than there ever was in history. *For Freedom* is SIM’s global anti-trafficking ministry. As you read of the opportunities for you to be engaged, reach out to us if you would like to continue the conversation.

Children remain a top priority for us. *Today for Tomorrow* is a strategic ministry across the nations of Southern Africa, where often more than 40 percent of the population is under the age of 15. Whether continental or in a small town in South Africa, SIM is focused on our children. The *4THE1* team continues to proclaim the gospel of Jesus Christ in word and deed as they teach, serve and love the children and their families of Sir Lowry’s Pass.

We could call them pioneers. Who am I writing about? SIM’s *Faithful Witness* teams, who “share the gospel with people who have never heard of Jesus Christ.” These are not communities forgotten, but those to whom God is calling men, women, and families of different ethnicities and skills to work together to bring the Gospel of the Kingdom of God to those who live and die without hearing the good news of Jesus.

A young medical doctor said, “Lord, send me.” I encourage you to read Dr Victor Fredlund’s book, *Ngithume Nkosi*. In it, he shares personal experiences, insights, and biblical teachings,



Photo by Brian Heffron

hoping it will help inspire readers to embrace their own spiritual journeys and missions.

We have many unique ministries, and one of these is “The Mission House” in Tokai. A retreat for the weary Christian worker, a place to recover after medical treatment, or a place to anchor down when you commute to meetings in the area. It may provide an opportunity for you.

This year saw the Fourth Lausanne Congress take place in Seoul. Over 5000 of us enjoyed the love and hospitality of the Korean church, whilst we collaborated on the issues that present themselves in the world and in the church as we desire to declare and display Christ.

There are so many still to hear and there is so much work still to do, that it almost feels unthinkable to ask, “Why missions?” Yet, we do. Read “Because God,” by Phil Bauman, SIM International Director, as he answers that very question.

For Christ alone,

Benjamin Pillay

Rev. Benjamin Pillay,
SIM Southern Africa Director

Pray

...on all occasions

“And pray in the Spirit on all occasions with all kinds of prayers and requests. With this in mind, be alert and always keep on praying for all the Lord’s people.” — Ephesians 6:18 (NIV)

“By prayer” is our motto worldwide, and SIM’s ministries, workers and partners rely on the prayer support of believers and churches. Joining us in prayer is a vital way to be part of the Great Commission.



You can pray alongside our workers daily! Request our “Pray Today” monthly newsletter by emailing sim.sa@sim.org or scan the QR code at left to get daily reminders in the *PrayerMate* app. You can also gather with others to pray together by joining or forming a local prayer group.

As always, thank you for your prayers.

Welcome home: A refugee shares the Gospel's invitation to hope, freedom and family

By Mouyassar al-Sharif, SIM refugee ministry worker

Before I met Jesus, I was a foreigner in every country. I never felt safe.

For many years, I wandered across Asia and Europe, looking for a home and a family. God, in His relentless love, was chasing after me, seeking my attention and calling me into His family. I didn't know it then, but every moment of my life—even through my pain and struggles—was marked by His grace and mercy.

However, it wasn't until I reached Germany that I finally discovered what true belonging and identity looked like and that I came to know my place in His family.

I am no stranger to rejection. From the beginning, my life has been tough. I was born Mouyassar al-Sharif to a Druze family in Syria. But my parents divorced, and I was not allowed to be with my mother. Instead, I was given to my grandparents 40 days after I was born. Though my grandparents raised and loved me, they passed away when I was 16. At that time, I was no longer welcomed back into my father's house because he had a new wife.

With few job opportunities in Syria, I started a very long journey at 17 years old that took me

through many different Muslim countries. I married in 1993 and had my daughter Sham in 1998. I eventually found a good job in a restaurant in Libya, where I worked for 13 years. Even then I felt unsettled, unwelcome. The whole time, one big question was always running through my mind: "Who is right: My grandfather's positive perspective of life or the hard reality of my own experience of life?"

In 2004, I returned to Syria with my family. It was hard to find work, so I took a job offer to open a restaurant in Malaysia. This took a toll on my marriage, and after only five years, my marriage ended in a very painful divorce. The Syrian war made a return to Syria impossible, but my request for refugee status in Malaysia was rejected. I saw my only perspective in making it to Europe.

On my way, I was caught with my fake passport by an intelligence general in Cambodia. Though this man had every reason to arrest me and send me to jail, he showed me mercy. He gave me a place to stay, fed me, and allowed me a call on his cell phone. On the back was a cross. I didn't think much of it then, but I later understood the meaning of this gesture. Not long after, I got my

Syrian passport back and continued my search for a home.

I travelled through Lebanon and Turkey with no success in finding a job or place to live. While in Turkey, I had nothing, but a Syrian Christian gave me the money to move on. Again, Jesus was speaking to me, but I didn't understand. This money allowed me to travel by boat across the Aegean Sea to Chios and then on to Athens, Macedonia, and finally Serbia.

In Serbia, my wallet and identification were all stolen. I didn't know what to do and called a friend who lived in Germany, who advised me to go to a church for help. Again, Jesus spoke to me on the way through a Christian taxi driver! After sharing with him what I was trying to do, he gave me his business card and 1,000 dinars for food. However, I ended up at a mosque to speak with a Mufti instead, who I hoped would be able to help me as a refugee. But he did not help me or even welcome me. The Christian taxi driver who I didn't even know loved me more than this Mufti who was supposed to help me as a Muslim.

Finally, a Syrian friend sent me money to go to Germany, and I arrived in Hamburg in August 2015. On my first day in Hamburg, a Syrian believer shared the Gospel with me at my refugee camp! He told me that the right way to live is to follow Jesus. Shortly after, I was moved to many different camps across Hamburg over the next months. One day, I met an American missionary. He was so kind to pray for my foot, which I had injured earlier. I cried, because I was so thankful! This gesture of humility opened my heart and renewed my longing to find my true family: the body of Christ! I gave my life to Jesus and was later welcomed into a missionary team. But most importantly, I felt the loving arms of the Lord around me—and He whispered into my ears: "Welcome, my son! You are forgiven, and your new life has just begun."

How great is Jesus washing the feet of his disciples! Jesus welcomed me, even when I did wrong. My life before Jesus was bad, and now I feel shame if I want to do something from my old life. Not because I'm scared, but because I love

Jesus so much. I can't do these things to him anymore. For me, the difference between the Christian and Druze and Muslim communities is hope and freedom. In the Druze community, I had protection only if I followed their rules—I could not say what I felt or thought—and I was not accepted by any Muslims. I never felt safe. I was always worried about the future. But following Jesus gives me the safety and hope I had always been searching for.

Although I have found a home in Jesus Christ, refugees like me have lost their homes, property, and even family members to persecution. In turn, they lose their self-value and identity. Many feel a deep sense of shame at the inability to provide for their families in the way they are accustomed to. We experience a serious shake in our worldview after going from a conservative Muslim country to a postmodern, post-Christian country like Germany. Language learning and cultural integration become a full-time job. Community, family structures, and friends are stripped away, making it hard to process all the other extreme changes. Believers who want to reach out to refugees need to understand and even feel this.

Many people wonder, how can I be effective at welcoming? The answer is simple. You don't need seminary experience, convincing arguments, or ramped-up apologetics, for actions speak louder than words. Just like my story, it is the experience of loving believers that starts curiosity and longing. The personal testimonies of believers go much further than most debates. Those who are seeking only need to feel the Holy Spirit welcoming them through you.

Most importantly, believers sharing Christ with Muslims can rely on this work of the Holy Spirit. Sharing Jesus' stories, handing out Bibles, bold prayers, and selfless actions are very helpful, but they only have amazing fruit among Muslims because God is already working on their hearts. Many refugees have realized that God himself put a longing into their hearts to find the peace and hope that only Jesus could give. The story of the lost son has become our story—to find the Father who stands ready to welcome us all.



For Freedom

SIM's project against human trafficking

By SIM's For Freedom Team

"It is for freedom that Christ has set us free", declares Galatians 5:1a (NIV).

For Freedom is SIM's global anti-trafficking ministry and is co-led by Karine Woldhuis (SIM Australia) and Sarah Scott Webb (SIM New Zealand).

Karine and Sarah love being able to serve SIM in a ministry that they see as integral to Christ's mission in Luke 4:18 (NIV): "... to proclaim good news to the poor...to proclaim freedom for the prisoners ... to set the oppressed free."

Karine explains, "Sometimes people are surprised that our mission organisation has an anti-trafficking ministry, but in many places in our world, human trafficking is a significant barrier preventing people from hearing God's good news. Our ministry at For Freedom helps SIM to cross this barrier, so the gospel can be shared with those in need. It's also a strong and practical way we can express Christ's love and compassion to others."

Launched at SIM's Global Assembly in Johannesburg in 2018, For Freedom focuses on preventing human trafficking and protecting those who are most vulnerable in the communities where SIM serves. "Human trafficking is happening in every region in the world," says Sarah, "so it is really important our SIM workers know how to protect those at risk." For Freedom provides online and in-person training to equip SIM's mission workers with knowledge about human trafficking and advice on how to respond and care for those impacted.

Raising awareness and providing training like this is an important part of For Freedom's ministry within SIM. However, prevention

involves more than just raising awareness. Their "Building Blocks" prevention framework highlights six ways SIM workers, teams and local churches can include prevention strategies into the ministries they already do. By intentionally building awareness, protection, relationships, integrity, resilience and transformation, vulnerable communities are strengthened and better protected.

"When our workers and teams intentionally include these six areas into their existing ministries, they become powerful protection tools." Karine says, "And those who are vulnerable in our communities are protected and kept safe from human trafficking and exploitation."

The For Freedom team enjoy helping SIM teams and local churches explore how they can integrate the building blocks into their ministries.

"The Today for Tomorrow ministry is a great example of a ministry that has integrated the building blocks into what they do," Sarah says.

"They have a strong Bible-based programme reaching thousands of vulnerable children in the Southern African region and wanted to include trafficking prevention into their ministry. By including a short training module on 'Keeping Kids Safe' into what they are already doing, their ministry has been able to teach several thousand vulnerable children how to keep safe from



Photo by Loren Joseph on Unsplash

*"It is for freedom
that Christ
has set us free."
—Galatians 5:1a (NIV)*

traffickers.”

For Freedom also has a network within SIM providing support and community for mission workers who are serving in anti-trafficking ministries or ministries with vulnerable communities. Workers from North America, Latin America, Europe, West Africa, Southern Africa, Asia and Australasia meet monthly for prayer and encouragement.

Henry Jooste, SIM South Africa’s head of mobilisation and church relations, is based in Cape Town and is part of the For Freedom network. Churches have a crucial role in preventing human trafficking and protecting the vulnerable, and For Freedom values the opportunity to support Henry in his role.

“One thing victims of human trafficking have in common is that they lack a protective, supportive network,” Henry says.

“By intentionally building relationships with those who are vulnerable in their local communities, churches can become the protective network that keeps those at risk safe.”

For more information, please email Henry Jooste at henry.jooste@sim.org.

Below: For Freedom partners with many workers, ministries, and local churches to help meet needs around the world.



Above: SIM members Sarah Scott Webb (SIM New Zealand, left) and Karine Woldhuis (SIM Australia, right) at Global Assembly 2023 in Kenya. The For Freedom ministry was launched at Global Assembly 2018 near Johannesburg.



For Freedom Mission Opportunities

By Sarah Scott Webb, SIM For Freedom Co-Leader

Truly, any ministry has the potential to impact and prevent human trafficking and exploitation, whether working in community development, church planting, Bible college teaching, children’s outreach, or in a Faithful Witness team.

These current mobilisation needs, however, are especially connected to such work. Please join us in praying for God to call people to these urgently needed roles, and please also consider whether He is calling *you* to serve this way.

Nigeria **Mobilising the Church for Trafficking Prevention**

Project Manager/Prevention Awareness Trainer for *For Freedom* in Nigeria

A prevention ministry implemented in partnership with the large partner church, ECWA (Evangelical Church of West Africa).

Peru **Dorcas Ministry**

Working with women and children in Arequipa Supporting single mothers with practical help (baby clothes, strollers, social support, Bible teaching, and parenting skills) and families in precarious circumstances helps build resilience against exploitation and prevents trafficking.

Prison Visiting Ministry

Mature Christian men to join the team to visit the men’s prison in Lima

Connecting particularly with foreign nationals recruited by drug cartels (often victims of trafficking or exploitation) to carry drugs into Peru. The ministry provides for basic needs, i.e. sharing the gospel, addressing addictions, giving emotional support, and friendship.

Southeast Asia **Project Manager, those with business skills, vocational trainers, etc.**

Providing life skills, supporting small business projects and slum schools as ways of providing ‘layers of protection’ for vulnerable women & children at risk of trafficking.

South Africa **Working with Vulnerable Men, Women & Children**

Administrator, childcare professionals, and teachers for 4THE1, Cape Town

Using education as a vehicle to reach the vulnerable community in Sir Lowry’s Pass Village. Through interacting and caring for the children, relationships are built with families and the wider community which serves to reduce the risks of trafficking. (See the cover story about 4THE1 on page 14 of this issue)

Working With Vulnerable People ‘On the Streets’

Outreach & Discipleship Leader for Word on the Street, a church-based ministry in Cape Town

Word on the Street (WOTS) focuses on helping women involved in prostitution find a way out, a hope-filled journey from prostitution to a new life in Christ, free from exploitation. The love of Christ compels us to pray, speak God’s truth, offer belonging and family, and empower women trapped in sex work with commitment through the struggle as they partner with others to freedom. We are a small team of volunteers and would love to have people join us in this ministry; we are especially keen to have people join in helping to head up the outreach on the street or in co-leading the follow-up ministry.

We are also eager to pursue advocacy as we partner with other organisations in South Africa, but at the moment do not have the capacity, so someone coming with a desire to develop that would be very welcome, too.

 Awareness	 Relationships
 Protection	 Resilience
 Integrity	 Transformation

Today for Tomorrow: Keeping kids safe and well in Southern Africa

By Jacky Hammond, SIM For Freedom Ministry Coordinator for Southern/Eastern Africa and Australia



Submitted photo

Of the estimated 50 million people in slavery today, one in four are children.

All children need the support and protection of caring adults and are, by nature, vulnerable to some extent. This includes vulnerability to being trafficked. Children who are orphans, have disabilities or have suffered abuse or trauma face much higher risks of being trafficked.

This growing risk to our children has not escaped the attention of SIM South Africa worker Chris Maphosa, who heads up the *Today for Tomorrow* (T4T) children's discipleship and HIV

prevention ministry. T4T is a strategic ministry across the nations of Southern Africa, where often more than 40 percent of the population is under the age of 15.

After hearing about *For Freedom's* focus on the prevention of trafficking, Chris knew he needed to include this focus as part of the T4T program. Because the problems of human trafficking and HIV are intertwined, tackling both issues in the discipleship of kids is key to supporting kids who are both free from slavery and from HIV. Working with the For Freedom team, a biblically based training module was developed to help teachers and volunteers understand how traffickers work and what tools can help keep kids safe from them. 'Keeping Kids Safe' has been used in recent months by Chris and his team in Kenya, Botswana, South Africa and Madagascar, with hundreds of teachers trained and thousands of kids being taught how to keep safe.

Participants at the recent training sessions in Botswana shared stories of trafficking in their

communities, with children being trafficked into forced labour and, tragically, also for organ trafficking. They valued the training to get better equipped at learning to spot the red flags and know how to protect the children.

One participant in the training commented, "It is not easy to identify them (traffickers)—some are old, some are young, some are relatives, and it's not easy to suspect them because they are deceptive and can put in tricks and can even put in fear. Someone can come with a nice car and entice them, offering a nice ride or offering to go and buy some ice cream. Older people can offer jobs abroad or even scholarships."

Another participant reflected, "We have to teach children that human trafficking is bad, and that they shouldn't just befriend people they don't know. If I'm a parent, and I see children who don't have a parent, I should report it to a social worker. You should take responsibility as a parent

for when your child goes out, with whom they are going, and by when they will be home."

During his most recent training sessions in Madagascar during September, the 'Keeping Kids Safe' materials were used to train over 200 children's ministry teachers, who will be teaching 2000 children across different churches and communities. Chris knew he needed to get this training into more languages for upcoming trainings across the region, and we at For Freedom were glad we could provide some funding for a Malagasy translation among other Southern African languages for even greater reach.

The Today for Tomorrow ministry is now helping keep thousands of children safe from being trafficked, a practical expression of God's deep love for each one of them.

Email Intl.ForFreedom@sim.org if you'd like the 'Keeping Kids Safe' training or to find out how you can prevent trafficking in your context.



Submitted photo

Of the estimated 50 million people in slavery today, one in four are children.

Helping children “4THE1” Who loves them eternally

By Neil Parmenter, SIM South Africa Projects Manager



SIM South Africa workers Katie Eto (left) and Tracy Elliott (pointing) teach children an Afrikaans praise song. Submitted photo.

When asked if there was anything she wanted people to know about 4THE1, Rebekah* replied, "People must know that we learn about God's Word and the aunties help us a lot. They pray for us, help us to say good things to other people, and help others."

Visitors to Cape Town may be familiar with the breathtaking scenery of Sir Lowry's Pass, with views of mountains and sea, but tucked away just off the main N2 highway is Sir Lowry's Pass Village. Although flanked by up-market residential estates and various wine farms, the village is a socially and economically disadvantaged community of approximately 8,500 people, predominantly Coloured. According to the 2011 census, 41 percent of the community lived in informal housing and the unemployment rate was 22 percent, though these figures are now likely to be different. Life in the village is unrelentingly hard. It is a community where addiction, abuse, neglect and unemployment are just some of the many challenges they face. Life is more about surviving than about thriving.

How 4THE1 began

Five years ago, a group of people began a work in Sir Lowry's Pass Village to love and serve the children, families and community in a holistic and compassionate way. "Books and Biscuits" tapped into the children's love of reading and home-baking.

As the work grew, the group decided to found 4THE1 officially. Their goal was to bring hope to this community by building an interconnected network of relationships starting with the children, so lives might be restored by the gospel as healing and restoration take place.

Although the primary focus remains on children, that goal naturally extends to reaching into the families and the wider community that the children are part of. 4THE1 does this by using the vehicles of education and a safe place to play as the starting point for making connections. The ministry philosophy is to expose children to the truth as found in God's Word, through evangelism, discipleship, and education, all in the context of a safe environment.

The work today

Today, the 4THE1 team continues to proclaim the gospel of Jesus Christ in word and deed as they teach, serve and love. As they get to know the children and their families, they are able to care for them and support them through practical acts of kindness in keeping with the vision "to instill hope by showing God's love through faith, to the glory of God".

Running alongside 4THE1's vision is their mission to reach the community with the gospel of Jesus Christ and to develop literacy and numeracy amongst children and teenagers.

The work in Sir Lowry's Pass Village focuses on three main areas:

- Evangelism and Discipleship
- Education
- Compassion and Mercy Ministry

Over time, the vision is to expand the ministry to include Sports Ministry and Community Development and Training.

A partnership with Child Evangelism Fellowship (CEF) has provided training for many

of 4THE1's teachers in how to effectively share the gospel with children. Every Friday, the focus is on sharing the good news of Jesus Christ with the children in age-appropriate ways. When children make a commitment to follow Jesus, they can join the Tuesday Discipleship groups so that they grow in their faith and live lives that are pleasing to God.

Anniversary stories

This November marked the first anniversary of the launch of the SIM South Africa 4THE1 project. This project exists to support the work and ministry of 4THE1 so that the good news of Jesus continues to be taught in Sir Lowry's Pass Village.

We want to celebrate this milestone by sharing some more stories like Rebekah's.

Danté* has been a part of 4THE1 since he was 7 years old, and he enjoys attending because he gets to learn the Word of God. He gave his life to Jesus when he was 9 years old, and Jesus has changed him to follow Him! He wants others to know that



Submitted photo



Submitted photo

people learn about God's Word at 4THE1.

Frederich* first came to 4THE1 in 2019. He loves to learn about Jesus and accepted Him into his life in 2023. He recognizes that Jesus died for us! Frederich wants people to know about 4THE1.

Annalie* also came to 4THE1 when it first started in 2019. She said that living in Sir Lowry's Pass Village can be messy but also fun. At 4THE1, she likes to learn about the Word of God and play. In the middle of the Covid pandemic in 2020, she gave her life to the Lord. She says that He helps her. He shows her the way to walk and guides her. Annalie says that 4THE1 is nice, and she enjoys her time there. She wants people to know that they are welcome at 4THE1.

4THE1 met Zander* when he was 6 years old in 2020. At the time, he was non-communicative, and we thought he was mute. At our Christmas party, the question was asked, "Who is our Saviour?", and Zander shouted out from the back of the hall, "Jesus". We then knew that he could speak. In January 2021, we did a full Occupational Therapy assessment, and he started Grade R. We did medical checks, hearing tests, and visual tests.

He is now at Rustoff LSEN (where he thrives) and is one of our regular children at 4THE1.

** Names have been changed.*

Please pray:

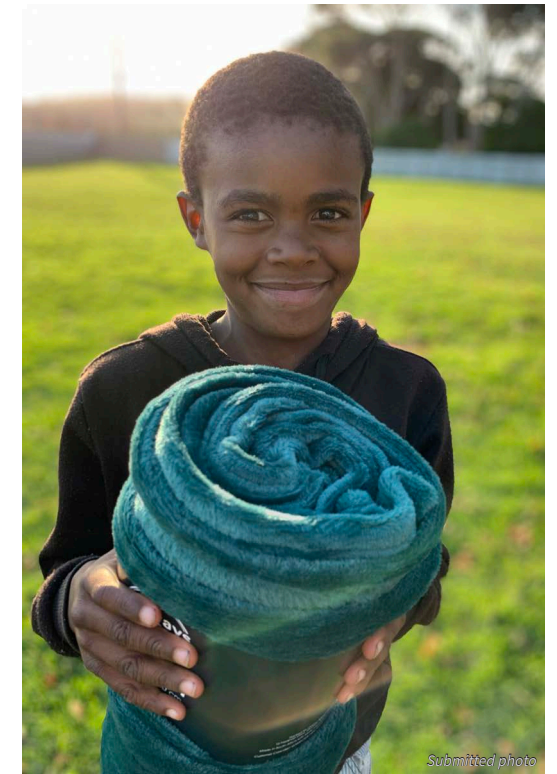
- † for the 4THE1 team as they work among the children of Sir Lowry's Pass Village.
- † for the children to flourish, grow and learn.
- † for the children to feel Christ's love and grow ever closer to Him and to share His love and truth with others.
- † for their families and the community overall.

Learn more:

For more information about the ministry please visit their website, <https://www.4THE1.org/>.

Consider partnering with 4THE1:

If you would like to partner financially with 4THE1, you can do so through the SIM South Africa website at <https://sim.org.za/give-to-sim-southern-africa/> and quoting the project number 97793 as reference.



Bearing Faithful Witness for Christ

By Tohru Inoue, SIM Stories Writer

Back to our roots

What compels us to care about the more than 3 billion people who have no opportunity to make even one Christian friend?

The *Faithful Witness* teams are not unlike SIM's founders, who believed God had called them to make disciples of Jesus in the Nigerian bush, the unknown interior of the continent. There were no mission offices where they were going—that was where Jesus was least known. They encountered hardship, sickness and death. But now, over 130 years later, there are millions of believers in Nigeria.

SIM's Faithful Witness initiative aims "to share the gospel with people who have never heard of Jesus Christ." They place teams globally in communities where there is no church and virtually no Christian witness. They send multi-ethnic, multi-skilled teams from anywhere the church already is, to everywhere that it isn't yet. This global initiative pushes SIM back to its roots, bringing the founders' DNA to life again.

What compelled the founders? What would compel us?

SIM's Faithful Witness initiative aims "to share the gospel with people who have never heard of Jesus Christ."



FAITHFUL WITNESS
IN FORGOTTEN COMMUNITIES

The early witnesses saw something

Simply put, the disciples witnessed something. More precisely, they witnessed Him, "...Jesus Christ. He is the faithful witness to these things, the first to rise from the dead, and the ruler of all the kings of the world..." (Revelation 1:5a (NLT)).

They witnessed Jesus' resurrection and it transformed them from a fearful, directionless group into one with unwavering devotion and purpose. A group with guts. A group who could be told to go to Jerusalem, Judea and the ends of the earth, and they would go. To witness the risen Lord was enough for them. And we've also witnessed him in transformative ways that compel us more than any statistical need ever could.

We see him pull out fish from an empty sea; we're convinced to be fishers of people. We see his bloodied cross; we're convinced of his love. We witness the risen Christ; we count everything else as loss. We see the Faithful Witness himself in action; we're convinced that he's still in the game. We're convinced that he's as potent today as he was when he walked the earth.

I want to show you something

Barth* from Burkina Faso has planted churches in his home country, but he's moved his family of five to Chad. They're learning Chadian Arabic to plant Arabic-speaking churches. And together, we believe they'll go all the way!

There are five families who have traded the Ethiopian highlands for a Nigerian desert. They believe God has called them to make disciples among the Fulani communities there.

There's Esther*—for such a time as this—who planted a small church at the crossroads of



some of the least-reached nations of the world in Central Asia.

They have seen Jesus, the Faithful Witness. They have seen the one with the scars who went ahead of them. They have seen him and are convinced that everything he said and did is true. They've witnessed what he's capable of.

They see something

Faithful Witness workers are like farmers who look at an uneven field, strewn with rocks, and already see the harvest. "When a gardener plants good seed, she already sees the fruit," says Dr. Jo*, Ministry Lead for the Faithful Witness initiative. "We expect to see and to be flourishing new creation garden plots in forgotten communities throughout the earth."

Breaking through the closed loop

When SIM sends mission workers from one office to another, it's a closed loop. The Faithful Witness initiative breaks the loop by sending workers beyond SIM's existing network. Like SIM's founders, Faithful Witness teams go where there is no gospel work yet. They're cutting new paths. As Dr. Jo, affirms, "Faithful Witness teams open gaps in barriers to the gospel so many more

workers can follow."

What if...?

What if for the next 100 years, Nigerian and Indian believers were to go to Mali and plant churches that disciplined millions? What if Koreans, Ukrainians and Singaporeans were to make Jesus known across Central Asia? What if God raised workers from across the Global South to broadcast good seed in Turkey? It may take another 100 years, and it will be costly for some, but we see the harvest that God is preparing.

SIM's Faithful Witness initiative is compelled by Christ himself. He is Lord and will be known in all the world.

** Names have been changed*

Please pray:

- † Perseverance for those facing hardship in service.
- † That the Lord would provide financially for those He is calling.

This article has been reprinted from SIM's Faithful Witness website; it can be viewed at <https://FaithfulWitness.org/first-you-must-witness-him/>.

Skin in the game in northern Chad

By Dr. Jo*, SIM Faithful Witness Ministry Lead

Faithful witnesses have skin in the game.

Our work exposes us to risk, pain, and loss. Convinced that no one should live and die without hearing God's good news, faithful witnesses count the cost of making disciples of the Lord Jesus Christ in communities where He is least known.

Is it worth it? The only affirmative response is action, full engagement, and putting skin in the game. We go all in.

The writer to the Hebrews exhorts us, "Remember also those being mistreated, as if you felt their pain in your own bodies" (Hebrews 13:3b (NLT)). Please join us in this kind of prayer for the Faithful Witness team in northern Chad, who risk it all to see Jesus glorified there. Their lives demonstrate that Jesus is worth everything we are and have.

Northern Chad has one of the highest rates of food insecurity in the world, due to a lack of fertile land and rainfall. Habiib*, sent from Ethiopia, writes, "A serious challenge is the heat of the air. The temperature today is 46°C (115°F), so it is very difficult to move and to serve. Many people

have died from the heat and disease. But God has carried us to this day. My wife, Aisha*, gave birth safely with God's help and your prayers."

Climate challenges are compounded by a growing refugee crisis as Sudanese people flee civil war across the border into Chad. Farah*, sent from India, asks, "Pray for the refugees. Many are suffering from poor living conditions and hunger. Pray for those few Christians living in the camp to stand firm in their faith as they face threats and persecution from the community."

The primary religion is Islam, and access to the gospel is extremely low. No more than 0.01 percent of the population believes in Jesus. Barth*, sent from Burkina Faso, recounts, "Ahmat*, who was hostile to me and the gospel, came back a friend. He fellowshiped with me for many hours about the gospel without even getting angry or threatening me. He now accepts the truth about Jesus, but he's not yet ready to give his life to Him as his Saviour. We pray a lot for him."

There is a crucial need for more workers who will live humbly in the community and introduce



Photo by Riccardo Niels Mayer on Adobe Stock

more and more people to Jesus's abundant life. Zara*, sent from Australia, explains, "People here are not always open to hearing our different beliefs, but after Easter, a local friend asked me what that holiday is about. I was able to share how Jesus died and rose again. Though I find Arabic learning hard, God is using my effort to build relationships and to show the community how much we care for them."

Of course, we can also feel in our own bodies Kevi's* joy as her Chadian community cares for her too. She writes, "After 10 months of home assignment in India, the rickshaw from the airstrip dropped me off in the village. My landlady came out and kept hugging me. She told me that whenever a plane would fly over the village, the children would shout my name. When the day of my return finally did come, the children screamed my name out of joy. It is heartwarming how happy the children and my women friends are for me to come back."

The Faithful Witness team in Chad indeed has skin in the game. They've entered deep into the community they serve, proclaiming allegiance to Jesus's name at great personal cost. With the writer to the Hebrews, they have recognised, "For this world is not our permanent home; we are looking forward to a home yet to come", "...a

kingdom that is unshakable..." (13:14, 12:28b (both NLT)). And resurrected bodies with skin that is indestructible.

Let's continue to pray for these courageous workers in the pattern of Hebrews 13:20-21 (adapted from NLT):

*Now may the God of peace—
who brought up from the dead our Lord Jesus,
the great Shepherd of the sheep,
and ratified an eternal covenant with his blood—
may he equip the Faithful Witness team in Northern Chad with all they need for doing his will.
May he produce in them,
through the power of Jesus Christ,
every good thing that is pleasing to him.
All glory to him forever and ever! Amen.*

Have you lost some skin? A wound to your flesh or your ego? Surely, Jesus is worth every bit of it. And, surely, he will also produce in you every good thing that is pleasing to him. Today, let's go all in together.

This article has been reprinted from SIM's Faithful Witness website; it can be viewed at <http://FaithfulWitness.org/skin-in-the-game/>.

** Names have been changed.*



Photo by Riccardo Niels Mayer on Adobe Stock

Why Yazid is too valuable to lose

By David Tullian*, SIM Faithful Witness Creative Manager

Sent by his church in India, Yazid* was one of the very first members of the *Faithful Witness* team to arrive in Kayes, Mali in 2019.

Now, after five years of adapting to the West African context and learning three languages, he has become the Faithful Witness team leader. He shepherds a diverse team of South Asians and West Africans developing vital ministry among the Hassaniya people, a community that otherwise would have no access to the gospel. Yazid's pioneer leadership in Mali has become too valuable to lose.

Kayes, in western Mali near the borders of Mauritania and Senegal, is characterised by its harsh living conditions and remote location. Home to four major people groups—the Hassaniya, Soninke, Bambara, and Fulani—the area has historically been difficult to access, with travel once limited to unpaved roads. The primary religion in Kayes is folk Islam, a blend of traditional animism and Islam. Less than 1 percent of the 2.8 million people in the region identify as Christian, and among the Hassaniya people, the number of known believers can be counted on one hand.

Yazid's work in Kayes is both challenging and impactful. His responsibilities include leading ministry projects and organising outreach efforts to 20 surrounding villages, which face significant obstacles, including the lack of reliable electricity or clean water. Each week, this Faithful Witness team addresses tangible needs while building long-term relationships with the community.

The team's unity in diversity is a testament to the gospel. The team lives among the people, learns their languages—French, Bambara, and Hassaniya—meets practical needs, and builds deep relationships. Their goal is to make the name of Jesus known and to foster conversations about the gospel, praying that these interactions will lead to individuals finding freedom in Christ.

One of Yazid's significant initiatives is his work in children's and sports ministries. Recognising the importance of engaging with youth, he and his team have developed programmes that combine physical health activities with spiritual

growth. They reflect Yazid's integrated approach to ministry.

His faith has been a cornerstone of his work in Mali, guiding him through challenges and triumphs. Yazid says, "It is all about trusting God's plan. Whatever it is that I am going through, I have always come to the conclusion that whatever it is, this is God's plan."

The cultural mix of Islam and ancestor worship

in Kayes presents a significant obstacle to sharing the gospel. The fear of angering unseen spirit ancestors can deter the Hassaniya people from exploring Christianity. Yazid seeks to understand and respect the cultural nuances of the Malian people and share the gospel to bring hope to this unreached community.

In the heart of Mali, Yazid's presence is a testament to the power of the Lord's direction and

provision. His journey from India to Mali, marked by unwavering trust in God's plan, continues to inspire and bring change to a region in desperate need of hope.

** Names have been changed.*

This article has been reprinted from SIM's Faithful Witness website; it can be viewed at <https://FaithfulWitness.org/too-valuable-to-lose/>.



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Give



...help equip those serving others

Throughout South Africa and around the world, SIM's workers and ministries engage in serving others and sharing Christ's love and truth, addressing daily needs and eternal ones.

Your prayer and financial support help provide workers and supplies for the ministries and programmes we undertake in partnership with local churches and believers in South Africa and around the world.

If you can help 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 southafrica.treasurer@sim.org.

Relief distribution in Cape Town. Photo by Brian Heffron

Why I wrote *Ngithume Nkosi: Lord, Send Me*

By Vicor Fredlund, SIM South Africa Missionary

I wrote *Ngithume Nkosi: Lord, Send Me* to address themes of faith, service and calling.

The book explores the idea of being available for God's work and responding to the call to serve others. It emphasizes the significance of listening to one's inner calling and the importance of stepping out in faith to fulfil that calling. By sharing personal experiences, insights, and biblical teachings, I hope it will help inspire readers to embrace their own spiritual journeys and missions.

Having started a project by the same name, I thought it seemed good to put some of the ideas that we were explaining in workshops into a book. It could be used to promote the project (although not specifically about the project).

The process of writing was quite formidable, and I did not want to produce a thesis on a theme so much as to express several thoughts in a more 'organic' way. I wrote down quite a number of thoughts as one-liners or Bible references and then went back and forth expanding and contracting them, as well as adding detail and reorganising the order—computers are helpful for that way of writing compared to paper! I did not want to write a story of my life but occasionally did use experiences I had had to illustrate what I was saying about an issue.

Time to write was snatched here and there without really having a schedule or free time. Often, I could write only a few sentences in one paragraph at a time, reading and rereading what I had written.

However, it could never really be complete, and it could always be improved—but I might die first! So at some point, I had to draw a line and say that I had done sufficient on the project for it to stand.

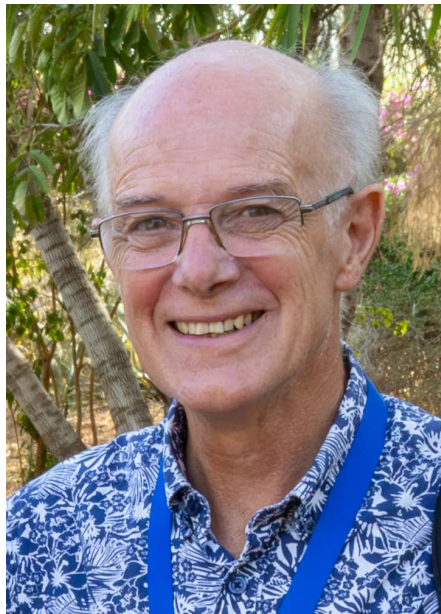


Photo by Brian Heffron

When writing songs, I have taken a similar approach, because I know that they never get completely correct. Also, sometimes it is the strange turns of phrase or notes of melody that I come to like later even though they feel uncomfortable at first glance. I have seldom done a re-write of a song once it has been laid down, and I expect I would be more likely to take up a new project than to rehash an old one to improve it.

I was worried that if I asked someone what they thought or how it could be improved, I would be told to stop or given a never-ending stream of issues to resolve, or I would end up with a smoothed-off version of what I wanted to say and lose the rough edges of original thought.

The struggle about whether to publish was interesting as I wondered whether anyone would really want to hear what I thought about such things, especially since there are many scholars who have written extensively about missions.

There is also something especially personal about writing that made me feel publishing would in some way expose me in a way that conversations do not. I have similar feelings when I write a song and sing it for the first few times—it is a bit like baring one's soul in public. Ideas are intensely personal, and people may not always understand what you mean by what you say or sing! Someone I sent it to said they thought I should put in chapters, but I felt it was not that structured or academic. However, they also asked if I was going to provide copies in other languages. So, I thought I should at least publish the English and see if it helps anyone.

The decision about how or where to publish was not based on profit from the book. I tried desktop-printing the book, but it really did not

seem very good to present the work like that. However, having seen the printed booklet, I thought it felt more like a book, so I considered going to a print shop with the draft. Costs were quite high for a few copies and only became reasonable in high quantity—something I thought very unlikely to be needed!

I discovered that it was actually possible to publish in a print-on-demand way fairly easily. It did not require purchasing any print copies or physically storing any books. So without too much comparing possibilities, I went to Amazon Kindle Direct and produced the book.

Every week or so, I look online to see if anyone has ordered a copy. I think I have bought more than half the number that have been sold—some to give away, a few to sell at conferences, and some to show as examples.

I have, however, received my first royalties payment, which has gone into the *Ngithume Nkosi* project! Although it is not a significant amount of money, it has been a great cause for internal celebration and a sense of a task completed!

Ngithume Nkosi: Lord, Send Me is available from [Amazon.com](https://www.amazon.com) in hardcover, paperback and Kindle editions; short link <https://a.co/d/9q8fto>

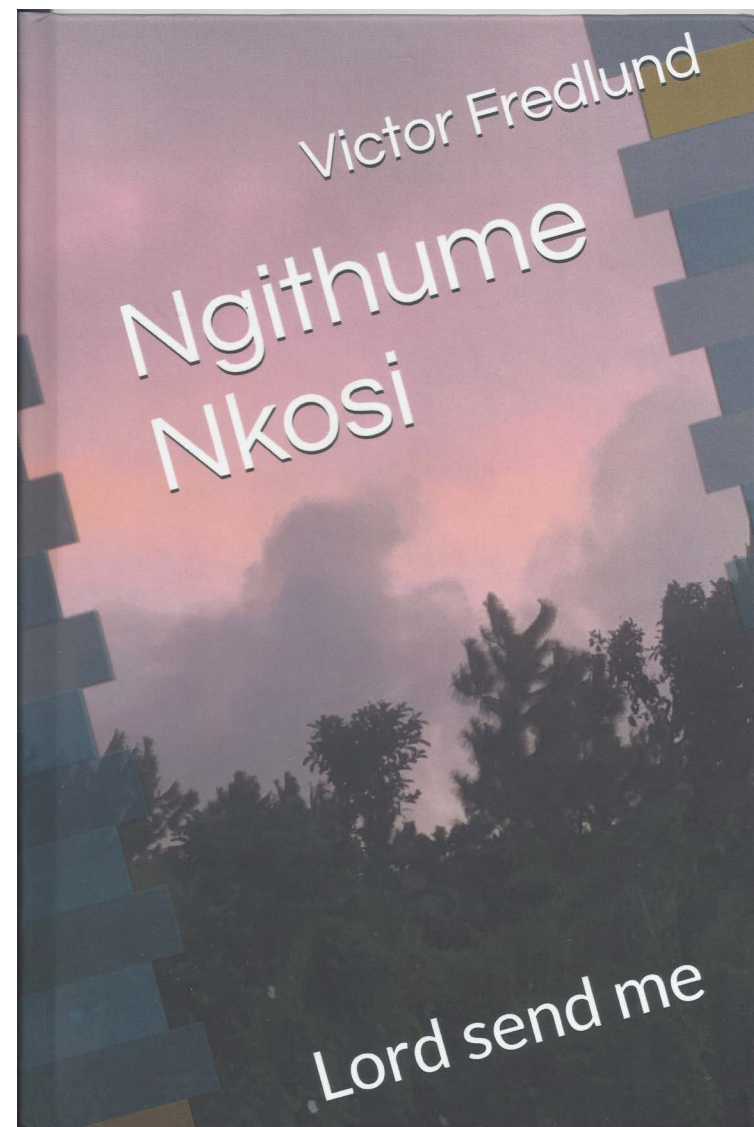


Photo by Brian Heffron

The *Ngithume Nkosi* ("Lord, send me" in isiZulu) project helps encourage South African medical personnel to get involved in missionary service.

It does so by advocating for medical missions with churches, Bible schools, hospitals, medical school Christian meetings, pastors' gatherings, WhatsApp groups and conferences held by Christian Medical Fellowship (CMF) and Hospital Christian Fellowship (HCF).

Founded in 2020 by long-time SIM workers Victor and Rachael Fredlund, the project is a partnership of SIM South Africa, SIM International health ministries, CMF, HCF, churches, Africa Evangelical Church, and The Evangelical Church of South Africa.

Learn more at <https://sim.org.za/project/ngithume-nkosi/>.

The SIM mission house

By Chantal Lengeveldt, SIM South Africa Corporate Services Manager

Situated in Tokai, Cape Town, “The Mission House” is a well-known establishment that serves as a retreat for missionaries from local and international areas.

The house is conveniently located in Tokai, within walking distance to a mall, shops, and hospitals, and is 15 minutes away from tourist attractions, making it an ideal base for those exploring Cape Town. The Mission House is a self-catering venue with a fully equipped kitchen, three furnished bedrooms, two bathrooms, entertainment and a pool area, and is fully secured with an alarm and electric fencing.

It offers accommodation for missionaries on home assignments, those undergoing medical treatment, individuals in need of a place to rest and recover, or for those seeking a simple getaway. Over the years, it has been a sanctuary for individuals seeking restoration.

The aim of “The Mission House” has always been to offer accommodation at minimum cost for those in ministry, making it difficult to keep up with maintenance and the rising costs of repairs.

If you're interested in partnering with us to

ensure that we continue serving missionaries and those in ministry, there are several ways you can get involved:

1. Consider gifting a missionary, missionary couple, or family with a stay at The Mission House.
2. Encourage other mission organisations or Christian ministries to use The Mission House as their destination when in need of accommodation in Cape Town.
3. Consider staying at The Mission House for your next holiday, ministry, or business trip before opting for more expensive accommodations.
4. Find out how you can assist with maintenance work or offer to take up some maintenance tasks.
5. Utilize The Mission House for small meetings or ministry gatherings.
6. Support us financially by contributing towards maintenance and repairs.

To learn more about partnership opportunities or to make a booking, please contact us at za.guest@sim.org or call 021 715 3200.



Photo by Chantal Lengeveldt

Because God

By Phil Bauman, SIM International Director

Why Missions?
Because God...

If you are a follower of Jesus, have you ever stopped to consider all that is positive, right, good and godly about mission? Mission is of God. The mission of God is the story of the Bible. Ever since man sinned and broke the peaceful shalom relationship with God, God has been seeking to bring people back to a relationship with Himself. Back to shalom.

I cannot adequately summarise the story of the Bible here in this short article, but God's Word tells us, from the very start, about His relentless pursuit to restore relationships with His people. In the New Testament, we see Jesus coming to provide redemption to those who repent and believe through His death on the cross and resurrection. This was God's ultimate act of love, sending His only Son to die and take the punishment that should have been ours.

After His resurrection, Jesus did not remain here on earth but ascended back to his Father. But praise God, He did not leave Himself without witnesses. He sent the Holy Spirit to indwell us and commissioned His followers. They were to be the ones to tell the world about who Jesus is. And 2000 years later, that is still our responsibility, too.

In Matthew 28, Jesus told His followers to “go and make disciples of all nations, baptising them in the name of the Father, Son and Holy Spirit”. In Acts 1:8, as Jesus was about to go to Heaven, He told His followers that they were to be His “witnesses in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the ends of the earth.”

Think about this for a moment: the God of the universe—the One Who made all things, is all-powerful, knows all things, and is present everywhere—has given us a task to do! What can we do that He cannot? Nothing! But that is not the point! The point is that He has called us,



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commissioned us, and tasked us with being His witnesses in the world; to tell all those who do not know Him about Him and His love for them! What a privilege and responsibility! He has given us a task—not because He could not do it, but because that is His gift to us, through the power of the Spirit!

I am an engineer by profession, and a key part of being an engineer is solving problems, which often includes making things more efficient.

But honestly, you and I are far from ideal for the job. From an earthly perspective, it seems crazy. The engineer in me says there is nothing ‘efficient’ about using people in this plan. However, the God of the universe—Who is all-powerful, knows everything, and is present everywhere—has left us the task of making disciples in all places around the world!

I know there are lots of things that have been done in the name of ‘missions’ that are hurtful. As disciples of Jesus, we are called to be and make disciples of Jesus and if in our efforts we are ‘hurting’ the testimony of who Jesus is, then we need to repent and make corrections. There are also things that have been wrongly interpreted as missions that cause harm to the testimony of Jesus. True mission is spiritually transformational. It is a work of God that we are called to participate in by the power of the Spirit.

We serve a missionary God who is present throughout the entire world. His footprints are everywhere, but sadly, billions of people fail to see them and recognise the God who loves them. The awesome opportunity and responsibility we have is to be witnesses for Jesus, to help people to see His footprints that are around them in their culture and in their context and then, by the power of the Spirit, to help them also become disciples of Jesus!

Why mission? Because there is no more amazing task than this: to make disciples of Jesus!

GO



Hellen, a tour guide at a Farming God's Way teaching farm in Kenya. Photo by Eban Heifron

...share your time and talents in God's service

"Do not neglect to do good and to share what you have, for such sacrifices are pleasing to God." — Hebrews 13:16 (ESV)

From farming and childcare to Bible translation and preaching, whatever knowledge and skills God has entrusted you with can be shared with others for their good and the furtherance of God's kingdom.

We love helping believers explore how the Lord might be calling them to serve Him in South Africa or around the world. Call +27 (0) 21-715-3200 or email southafrica.sending@sim.org to begin a conversation with us.

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