

Christian Reformed World Missions Advocate

For God. With You. Among the Nations.

October 2011

Get Ready, Get Set, and Celebrate!

Looking for ideas on holding a fall missions emphasis event? Christian Reformed World Missions has a variety of resources to help your church celebrate missions. Visit www.crwmm.org/missionsemphasis to learn more.

Resources include:

- Steps to a Good Missions Emphasis Event
- An interactive Missions Activity Guide for the whole family
- Downloadable offertory-length videos highlighting ministry in Haiti, Nigeria, Japan, and other regions
- Flag set litany
- Top 10 Missions Toolkit
- Our online Project Giving Guide, www.crwmm.org/project, for ways to make a difference.

Stay Connected

Our electronic newsletters, ePray and eNews, are a great way to stay updated on what God is doing worldwide through Christian Reformed World Missions. ePray is a weekly email of current prayer and praise requests. eNews is a monthly newsletter featuring two stories from “the field.” To sign up, visit www.crwmm.org/membership.

International Day of Prayer

Every day around the world, Christians face restrictions or are beaten, imprisoned, or killed for their belief in Christ. This year, November 13 has been set aside as a day to pray for the persecuted church. Take this day to pray for our brothers and sisters who are being persecuted for their faith. Pray also for their abusers and for the countries in which persecution occurs.

Encourage your pastor and worship leaders to remember the persecuted church during worship services on November 13, 2011. A free prayer kit, small group materials, worship service materials, and other resources to remember this day are available at www.idop.org.

USA: 616-224-0700, 800-346-0075, crwm@crcna.org
Canada: 905-336-2920, 800-730-3490, crwm@crcna.ca

Missionary Care Story

Sheila Dykstra was feeling a little homesick last fall. She had been working in Nigeria as Christian Reformed World Missions' West Africa Educational Consultant for almost two years without visiting her family. Then, as the holiday season approached, she began feeling the distance from her family.

One of Sheila's partner churches, Fellowship CRC in Brighton, Ontario, periodically calls her through Skype during a church service to catch up and pray for each other. For Sheila, Fellowship's phone call last fall could not have come at a better time. She shared her homesickness with them and received their prayers for her peace.

Afterwards, Fellowship CRC members decided they wanted to give Sheila a special surprise for the holidays – a plane ticket home. Imagine Sheila's joy and surprise when she received a check for a ticket – it was a Christmas gift to remember!

The holidays can be a difficult time for missionaries living far away from home. Take time to show your care for them. Some ideas include:

- Organizing volunteers to regularly write, email, and/or Skype missionaries.
- Prepare and send care packages.
- Have Sunday school classes or GEMS/Cadets write missionary children.
- Investigate the possibility of sending a team to visit your missionary on the field.
- Ask for prayer requests and share your church's prayer requests too.
- Send recordings of your services.
- Pray continually for them – pray for their families, spiritual health, relationships, safety, ministry partners, and their host countries.

Exploring Peace in Israel and the West Bank

If the Hope Equals team that went to Israel and the West Bank for five weeks this summer had a theme from its experiences, it would be, "Walking Christ's path of shalom-building." From July 19 to August 20, the nine-member team and Mariano Avila, Hope Equals program manager, visited the Holy Land's most important religious sites in Christianity, Judaism, and Islam.

"Perhaps the most important part of the trip was the fact that the team realized that there is a Christian community, committed to non-violence, that is quickly disappearing in a land that desperately needs it," Avila said.

In 1948, about 25% of the population in the West Bank was Christian. Today it's roughly 1%. Christians provide a cultural buffer between Jewish Israelis and Muslim Arabs in Israel and the West Bank. Wanting to know how to support this minority and other peacemakers, Hope Equals asked the Lutheran organization Diyar to host three weeks of the trip and the Christ-centered organization Holy Land Trust to lead the remaining part.

Diyar is Bethlehem's third largest private employer, committed to helping Palestinians of any creed and background live full lives and prepare for peace. Holy Land Trust focuses on training Palestinians, Israelis and internationals in non-violent resistance.

Through Holy Land Trust, the Hope Equals team helped build a home for a Muslim family in Thabra. The building project helped the Christian students understand a people group that is often misrepresented. This, and the opportunity to visit extremes like the Dhehishe refugee camp and the lush Kibutz Levi, gave the students a perspective on the disparity in ideologies and living conditions.

The team realized that it will not be Americans and Canadians who bring peace to the Holy Land and that it is not for them to build the road for peace. Instead, the team found hope in the freedom that Christ has already built the road, that Palestinian Christians are reaching out to Jews and Muslims with an invitation to walk it, and that a growing number of North Americans are blessed to participate in supporting their work.



Jon DeBruyn, a team member, and Carlito, a boy from the community, pray over a spot for a new church

Serving through Prayer

Recent prayer teams from North America to Guadalajara, Mexico, and Mexico City have been a blessing to the missionaries serving there and their local partners. The prayer teams are a joint effort by Christian Reformed World Missions and Prayer Missions International to send teams from Canada and/or the United States to ministry locations simply to serve through prayer.

In both locations, the teams went on prayer walks throughout the city, praying at significant sites such as government buildings. The teams met with missionaries, pastors, and churches, eating with them, praying for and with them, and even celebrating baptisms with them.

"As seasoned missionaries we know that the greatest advances take place through prayer," say Wayne and Sandy De Young, missionaries in Guadalajara. "The visible results of the prayer teams are soon evident in the weeks and months after the teams come to do a very simple thing: pray."

To learn more about upcoming prayer ministry mission trips to Haiti and Nigeria, visit www.crwmm.org/serve or www.prayermissions.org.

RMM names

Regional Missions Mobilizer for