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Editor . . . . . Dr. Les Lofquist  
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# Vision America

## *Everyone's Opportunity*

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— Les Lofquist —

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR



In the book of Acts, Luke frequently mentioned the unanimity that existed among the disciples in Jerusalem during the events leading up to and after the founding of the Church. Several verses refer to a single-heartedness and spiritual accord, portraying a truly winsome display of those “ties that bind.”

1:14 “These all continued *with one accord* in prayer and supplication”

2:1 “they were in *one accord* in one place”

2:46 “And they, continuing daily *with one accord* in the temple, and breaking bread from house to house, ate with gladness and singleness of heart”

4:24 “And when they heard that, they lifted up their voice *in one accord*”

4:32 “And the multitude of them that believed were *of one heart and of one soul*”

5:12 “and they were all *with one accord* in Solomon’s porch”

One of Luke’s frequent word choices to describe this deep spiritual unity was *homothumadon*, comprised of two Greek

words: *homo* which speaks of “sameness” or “togetherness” and *thumos* which means “passion, heat, glow, ardor.” The Jerusalem disciples had sameness of passion, sameness in heat, glow and ardor. The idea is that these believers not only shared mental agreement, but

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*The Jerusalem  
disciples had sameness  
of passion, sameness  
in heat, glow  
and ardor.*

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also agreement of spirit, heart, and passions. The things that defined them and the things they really wanted were possessed by all of them “in one accord.” The word *homothumadon* refers to more than mere mental agreement; it refers to having the same passions and values.

It seems difficult for a movement such as IFCA International to achieve the “critical mass” of *homothumadon* where every member – individual, church, organization – has a heart that beats, a soul that longs, and a corporate body that is yielded to a collective passion. With all of us representing our own God-ordained paths of life and

service, and given our notoriety for independence, it seems almost impossible that we could find unanimity about any pursuit no matter how noble! However, there are some things over which not a single IFCA member can disagree nor obediently dismiss. One concern where we should achieve *homothumadon* is in our devotion to fulfill the Great Commission. We are to be witnesses of Jesus Christ in our respective Jerusalem, Judea and Samaria, and unto the uttermost parts of the earth (Acts 1:8).

In obedience to this command, we introduced at the 2007 IFCA Convention in Tulsa a strategic program to help us fulfill the Great Commission in the USA. It is called Vision America. This church planting initiative of IFCA International proposes that we engage all the individuals, churches, and organizations of our fellowship to reach our nation with the message of the Gospel by establishing new and effective IFCA churches throughout this country.

**VISION AMERICA**  
*A Strategy for IFCA Church Planting*

**Purpose:** To generate a perpetual surge of IFCA International reproductive church planting efforts that incorporates the direct involvement of hundreds of IFCA related churches

and the IFCA Church Extension agencies throughout the United States.

**Goal:** To effect by June 2010 the initiation of as many IFCA International church plants across the United States as possible in which the direct involvement and cooperative effort of at least 100 IFCA related churches, each in proximity to one of those individual plants, plays a key role.

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*By Convention 2010,  
we seek to have  
at least 100 IFCA  
Churches engaged in  
Vision America.*

---

In order to help follow through on leading IFCA International forward toward these ends, I asked several men to serve on a select Vision America Planning Committee. I asked three men from the IFCA Board of Directors Vision Implementation Committee to serve on the Vision America Planning Committee. I also asked four men from IFCA Church Extension agencies to serve on the Vision America Planning Committee.

This committee has been directly accountable to me in the performance of their work but they also communicated with, involved, and solicited full input and help from the Church Extension Council as they worked (thereby encouraging the full involvement of IFCA Church Extension agencies). I believe that working together in this way will help us do an even better job of planting churches here in the USA.

The Vision America planning committee has determined the following schedule of goals to enlist formal involvement in Vision America. These goals represent numbers of churches becoming involved in a church plant effort:

- By January 2009, we seek to have at least 30 IFCA Churches engaged in Vision America.

- By Convention 2009, we seek to have at least 50 IFCA Churches engaged in Vision America.

- By January 2010, we seek to have at least 75 IFCA Churches engaged in Vision America.

- By Convention 2010, we seek to have at least 100 IFCA Churches engaged in Vision America.

These goals seek to motivate churches to become involved in establishing a new IFCA church in whatever ways or with whatever means each church is able. Vision America is truly “Everyone’s Opportunity.” Here are some of the ways you can participate:

#### INDIVIDUAL INVOLVEMENT

1. Join the 9:38 Prayer Team (*see page 13 of this issue of VOICE Magazine for details*). Pray for church planters to lead new churches around the USA. Encourage pastors and churches to pray for the extension of the Gospel in the USA.

2. Participate materially in Vision America (*see the Vision America website at [www.ifca.org](http://www.ifca.org) for details*). Adopt a church plant and / or plant leader and contribute financially to the effort. Material items for the ministry (church furniture items, supplies and equipment, books, etc.) can all be put to use by a new plant project.

3. Attend the 2008 Annual IFCA Convention to be held in Eugene, Oregon to learn firsthand about Vision America (*see the convention ads throughout this issue of VOICE*).

4. Make a personal connection with a Vision America planting effort and contact a plant leader by letter, email, phone, or personal visit on site. Visit the Vision America website at [www.ifca.org](http://www.ifca.org) for a directory of planters and projects.

#### CHURCH INVOLVEMENT

1. Personnel: a church can commission individuals and families from its congregation to start a new church plant in a nearby community. Such a commission can be a short-term commitment sufficient for the church to begin, or it can be a long-term commitment.

2. Prayer: every IFCA church should place into its weekly prayer schedule a listing of updated Vision America items for praise and prayer.

3. Finances: a much needed and blessed way to participate actively in the Vision America program is to financially give toward those laborers in need. Church planters in the earliest phase of their projects are typically in the greatest time of financial stress. More IFCA churches actively contributing toward new church plants and the

### LES LOFQUIST'S ITINERARY

#### JANUARY

- 23-24 BMW Board Meetings, Atlanta, GA
- 28 Institute of World Ministry Training Session, Plainwell, MI

#### FEBRUARY

- 1 Calvary Bible College Board Meeting, Kansas City, MO
- 1-3 Blue River Bible Church Conference, Belton, MO
- 17-22 Rio Grand Bible Institute Bible Conference, Brownsville, TX
- 25 SW Sectional, Ottawa Center Chapel, Coopersville, MI

church planting leaders will allow for more aggressive and effective efforts.

4. Plant Leaders: church plant leaders are needed. Perhaps someone in your church is a gifted communicator with a pioneering and people-oriented spirit. These gifted people can be used by your church to lead an outreach Bible class, and perhaps even become your very own church plant leader.

5. Sponsorship: there are several sponsorship models / strategies which are available for every church to consider. This menu of sponsorship opportunities is posted on the Vision America website at [www.ifca.org](http://www.ifca.org). See what fits your church, and get involved!

6. Web-links: those IFCA churches that have websites for their ministries can provide significant networking help by including a Vision America link to our page. Vision America has already made some new ministry contacts through web connections made by links. Help us spread the word about Vision America through your church website.

7. Support Services: Your church may not be able to plant a new church and it might not be able to send a planter. However, your church may have someone with a career or expertise in a field or discipline that could be of great help to another church plant leader. People who have skills in business, medicine, law, construction,

planning, leadership, arts, technology, can all be utilized in valuable support ministries to church plant leaders and their projects.

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*Your church may  
have someone with  
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in a field or discipline  
that could be of great  
help to another church  
plant leader.*

---

After your church has a cleaning day, that classroom lectern, set of folding chairs, flannel graph board or easel that never gets used anymore may be of use to someone planting a new church. For the cost of packing and shipping such items, your church could provide this equipment and be a great help in extending the ministry in another community.

8. Internship Opportunities: There are many churches with many gifted people. Mentoring and leadership training are key parts of the *IFCA 2020 Strategic Plan*. There is an obvious opportunity to blend these two areas of ministry development and accom-

plish a common purpose. The opportunity to invest in mentoring a young servant who has the goal of becoming a church plant leader is available to our churches. Materials for training church planters are available through a variety of sources. For example, Midwest Church Extension has partnered with Tyndale Theological Seminary of Fort Worth to offer as many as nine credit hours of Church Planting Curriculum with focus placed on six vital skills for planting churches: Teaching, Outreach, Leadership, Communication, Planning, and Teamwork. Contact Tyndale Theological Seminary in order to learn more about this curriculum at [www.tyndale.edu](http://www.tyndale.edu).

#### ORGANIZATIONAL INVOLVEMENT

Organizations such as Bible Colleges and seminaries can also participate in Vision America.

1. Recruiting assistance: A contact might be made in a church or school while the organization's representatives are traveling in their ministry. Routing pertinent information to the Vision America network can be a valuable ministry as we partner together to plant churches.

2. Staff/Faculty Involvement in Plant Efforts: Often the organization's personnel are not committed for mid-week or weekend ministries. These servants can offer their gifts and talents

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to a new plant without any disruption to their normal ministry commitments.

3. Ministry Teams: Canvassing crews, VBS teams, or musical groups representing various organizations can also provide ministry at church planting projects as well. This is true especially for schools and institutes, but other organizations have these opportunities as well. Go to [www.ifca.org](http://www.ifca.org) and let the Vision America network know what you might be able to provide.

4. Promotion: Organizational representatives can easily add a Vision America brochure to the organization's display table, mentioning it to those you meet. Adding the Vision America weblink to your ministry website would also be a great help for IFCA church planting.

5. Support Services, Internships, Financial support: These as well can be a great source of blessing as we partner with one another to realize the goals of Vision America.

### CONCLUSION

It is by no means an exaggeration or an over-statement to say that Vision America is Everyone's Opportunity! Individuals, churches, and organizations alike can find a place to participate in fulfilling the Great Commission by planting IFCA churches in the USA. Contact Vision America through the website, or contact our IFCA Home Office for more information. Let's display our homothumadon - our "one accord" - and get involved today!

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*This article was a collaborative effort of Les Lofquist, IFCA International Executive Director and Henry Vosburgh, Chairman of the IFCA Vision America Planning Committee.*

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# Seize the Day

## *The Great Commission in the USA*

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— Dan Fredericks —



**T**he USA a mission field?! Wait a minute. I thought we were a Christian nation. We sing, “God Bless America!” and, “America, America God shed his grace on thee.” We’ve sent thousands of missionaries all around the world. We have Christian radio, television, publishing companies. We’ve flooded the Internet with Bible teaching and study resources. Our land is saturated with churches. There is plenty of opportunity for people to hear the gospel. We can hardly be considered a mission field... or can we?

If you take time to dig below the surface of our “Christian coating” in the United States you discover that we, indeed, are a mission field. We are part of the world Jesus spoke of when He declared, “Go ye into all the world and preach the gospel to every creature” (Mark 16:15). America would most certainly constitute our Jerusalem, Judea and Samaria (Acts 1:8).

Our world is not static by any means. In our ever changing communities and cultures, in our shrinking and expanding global environment, we find the world flooding our shores and crossing our bor-

ders. Aside from the ethnic and cultural changes taking place, “our own” American-born citizenry is becoming increasingly more pagan. Someone has coined the term *glocal*, meaning we are experiencing an exponential acceleration of global criss-cross, impacting not only our big cities but our local communities and suburban neighborhoods.

---

*I find multiple cultures  
living side by side,  
pursuing the American  
dream. I find scores  
of churches, yet little  
gospel witness. I find  
an enormous and highly  
strategic mission field.*

---

In an article by James H. Eaton, writing about the changing face of suburban America in his home town of Laurel, Maryland, a suburb of Washington, D.C., he states: “I find paganism. I find multiple cultures living side by side, pursuing the American dream. I find scores of churches, yet little gospel witness. I find an enormous and highly strategic mission field. And

my heart cries out to God that He would send workers here.” (“Mission Field on the Edge,” *Message*, Vol.48, No.12 Winter 1996).

Dr. Earl Parvin is a long time IFCA member, missionary, pastor, Bible College professor, and former director of ANAM (Association of North American Missions). He has produced a valuable resource on the very topic of the mission field that is North America. Originally published in 1985 by Moody Press as *Missions USA*, it is now being updated online as *Missions in North America* (available at [www.mission-susa.net](http://www.mission-susa.net)). According to Parvin, “contrary to popular opinion, within North America are people groups beyond the sound of the gospel.”

Parvin continues, “America is a mission field even though 25 percent of its populace consider themselves to be Protestants. This is a fact because the evangelicals are not distributed among the unchurched people groups. Although the gospel is presented twenty-four hours daily via mass media, it is not meaningful to the great majority of pluralistic peoples in our society.”

North America as a whole is indeed a mission field. By stating this we are in no way attempting to distract from the overwhelming need still to send missionaries to “the world,” but we ought not do this at the neglect or naïve notion that the United States has been “evangelized.”

Consider these startling statistics:

In North America, some people groups are totally unevangelized, such as 27 million cultists, 6 million Muslims, 1.5 million Hindus, 500,000 Buddhists and 250,000 Sikhs. Others often forgotten and essentially bypassed by the gospel are 35 million handicapped, 10 million alcoholics, 7 million Jews, 4 million inmates in the prison system, 2 million Native Americans, 2.5 million French-speakers, and immigrants in varying numbers from every nation in the world.

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*The greatest threat  
to missions in America  
is our own complacency  
and naïve assumptions  
that we “live in  
Christian America.”*

---

As if this were not enough to convince us, consider also that significant numbers of our American ethnic populations are largely unreached. American Christians are unaware that 33 million African Americans are only 30 percent evangelized, whereas black Africans are up to 50 percent evangelized. Nor do they know that while Christianity explodes in Latin America, 27 million Hispanics here are only to varying degrees touched by the gospel. Or that nearly 1.6 million American Chinese remain almost as pagan as those living in China. Among the Native American population in North America, 95% remain in need of the gospel. Despite missionary and church planting efforts among this population group, many remain unchurched and without Christ as Savior due to a resurgence in traditional religion and the isolation of many reservations and reserves.

The United States needs to awaken to the fact that non-Christian religions are out-pacing the planting of Bible-believing and Bible-teaching local churches. Islam and Hinduism are both out-pacing the planting of evangelical

churches. Islam and Hinduism have established strategies to saturate key regions and cities in the United States for the purpose of responding to the growing populations and interest in their respective religions. Islamic and Hindu websites are popping up on the Internet, targeting a growing American curiosity with impressive savvy and modern appeal. One example is the website, Hinduism TODAY (notice its “Americanized” sounding name). It is also available in print form, as well as complete digital format, featuring articles and special interest stories for the growing American expression of Hinduism. In these post-9/11 days, Islam is growing in America at a staggering rate.

The Christian consensus has changed in the United States as well. Our Supreme Court has found unconstitutional the place of prayer in our schools. Claiming the Ten Commandments as the basis for all civil law is ridiculed and posting them in public buildings is forbidden. Religious pluralism, tolerance over truth, accommodating Roman Catholicism with Protestantism (as in the 1994 Evangelicals and Catholics Together Accord), radical environmentalism with pagan overtones, social rearranging of the traditional/biblical standards of marriage, family and education all demonstrate that the United States is a needy mission field.

Interestingly, in 1996 at the Annual Convention of IFCA International in Colorado Springs, Dr. Parvin delivered a seminar presentation that is as relevant today, if not more so, than the day he delivered it. I recently listened to this seminar on recording. It is striking and convicting to review Dr. Parvin’s exhortation in 1996. In the decade that has transpired I fear we have done little to respond to the challenge he delivered. This seminar is available from the IFCA International Home Office, in both cassette and audio CD format. Order it. Listen to it, and take action.

The greatest threat to missions in America is our own complacency and naïve assumptions that we “live in Christian America,” and that we are not a mission field. We must not become the proverbial ostrich with our heads in

the sand. We can view the ever changing landscape here in America as a great threat from which to run and hide. Or we can view it or as a grand opportunity that our God is bringing to our shores. It is time to seize the day!

---

*Dan Fredericks is IFCA International Director of Church and Pastoral Ministries. He grew up, and then returned to serve, on the Navajo Reservation before coming to the IFCA International Home Office.*

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# Praying for Planters

*The Vision America "9:38 Prayer Team"*

---

— Henry Vosburgh —



During the first official meeting of the Vision America Planning Committee, it was noted that one crucial issue must be addressed. The committee members unanimously agreed that there is one thing which could prohibit the realization of Vision America goals: the difficulty presented by the lack of church planters for the fields that exist all around the USA.

Finding enough church planters for mission fields at home and abroad of course is not a new problem for the Church. It has become one of the well-documented concerns for home and foreign missions ventures alike. The *replacement* (filling in vacancies) and *reinforcement* (adding more laborers) of servants for the harvest fields worldwide is universally a high priority for active mission agencies. Those who have spent their lives in service for the Lord are aging and are today returning from the fields, often without replacement. Replacement is necessary to perpetuate existing gospel ministry, and only after this are we generally in the position to reinforce and extend to new fields of spiritual need.

Currently in our own fields here in the USA, this problem is at a heightened level of concern not only for IFCA Church Extension agencies but for our fellowship as a whole. Many churches without pastors endure extended periods of time without viable candidates; they need laborer *replacement*. Many communities are not being reached with our solid IFCA-style of Gospel ministry; they need laborer *reinforcement*. To properly and effectively reach out to the 303 million people of our nation, we must address this issue.

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*We must make a  
determined commitment  
to pray for more harvest  
workers to be sent  
to the fields.*

---

When considering this problem of recruiting for our nation's ministry fields of harvest, there are all kinds of steps suggested to address the problem. For example, some have proposed that we need to:

Reinvigorate pulpits and charge people to consider entering the ministry.

Train young people to yield their lives to full-time service.

Recruit students out of the Christian schools, institutes, colleges, and seminaries.

This list can be expanded with more suggestions and strategies, and it is probably fair to say that any and all of them ought to be employed.

However, of all the steps to be taken to address the need to build the ministry labor force (and particularly that of church planters in the USA), there is one that **MUST** first occur. The first step that we must take is that of prayer. We must make a determined commitment to pray for more harvest workers to be sent to the fields. When the Lord Jesus was faced with precisely the same scenario as we face today in viewing the shortage of harvest laborers, this is what He said the disciples were to do:

Matthew 9:36-38 "But when he saw the multitudes, he was moved with compassion on them, because they fainted, and were scattered abroad, as sheep having no shepherd. Then saith he unto his disciples, The harvest truly is plenteous, but the labourers are few; Pray ye therefore the Lord of the harvest, that he will send forth laborers into his harvest."

The Lord viewed the multitudes with compassion, having seen their fainting and scattered condition. He called the situation of this dire need a



“plenteous harvest” – a rather compelling description of fainting and scattered people representing such a composite of spiritual need. Harvest times are celebratory, times we typically associate with joy and gratitude. When we look at spiritual needy people, we do not think of them with a mind of joy and gratitude, but one of burden and concern. This perspective on the harvest forces us to see that it is as much a labor of rescue as it is of fruitful ingathering.

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*Note that the responsibility for sending the laborers is not placed upon the followers. This responsibility is placed upon the Lord.*

---

One might presume that the Lord’s solution to this harvest of spiritually needy souls would be to call them to Himself. He saw them, and certainly He is the solution. Would it not therefore be logical for Him to address the harvest need by some form or display of His divine strength and might? Yet He has chose to address this matter by instructing His followers to pray for more laborers to work the fields.

There is significant inequity described in these verses. The harvest is plentiful, but the laborers are few. Note that the responsibility for sending the laborers is not placed upon the followers. This responsibility is placed upon the Lord. Our responsibility first and foremost is to pray for the Lord to send a labor force into the field. His responsibility is to enable the laborers. The application for Vision America is clear. In order to address the need for church planters to labor in the fields of the USA, we must pray to the Lord of the harvest to send them.

In light of this responsibility, the first call to our IFCA fellowship regarding Vision America is for us to pray that the Lord of the harvest will begin sending forth laborers into the harvest fields of our nation. It matters not the context, the target community, nor the people being reached. What each field needs universally is a force of laborers placed to do God’s spiritual reaping.

To assist us to begin praying strategically as we should, Vision America has inaugurated the “9:38 Prayer Team” and has adopted the Lord’s words from Matthew 9:38 as our foundation. We call upon our entire IFCA constituency to answer this call.

Here’s how you can join the 9:38 Prayer Team:

- 1) Visit the Vision America website at [www.ifca.org](http://www.ifca.org) and click on the Vision America icon (lower right corner).
- 2) Using the left panel menu, click on the 9:38 Prayer Team link.
- 3) Complete the information request-

ed, and a confirmation of your partnership will be sent to you.  
4) Or simply call the IFCA office.

By joining the 9:38 Prayer Team, you will be committing with the other members to pray regularly for our Lord to send forth laborers to join in the Vision America program to plant IFCA churches in the USA. The 9:38 Prayer Team encourages individuals, churches, and organizations alike to join in prayer for this need:

- 1) Daily prayer commitment from individuals
- 2) Weekly prayer commitment from churches and organizations

When you join the 9:38 Prayer Team, you will receive a weekly memo via email that will contain a prayer reminder, a list about various Vision America harvest fields from around the nation, and answers to prayers as the Lord hears and responds to us.

# Fellowship International Missions

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The 9:38 Prayer Team is open to anyone, will be secure in electronic delivery and interaction, and will also be a vehicle for advancing news items relative to Vision America exclusively. However, since its purpose is prayer, there will not be any solicitation for finances connected with this interaction. Its sole purpose is to unite our fellowship in the cause of praying for church planters to labor in the fields of the United States.

The call is made to you to join the 9:38 Prayer Team. Together, let us call upon the Lord of the harvest for the church planters needed to reap in the midst of a plentiful harvest!

---

*Henry Vosburgh is Executive Director of Midwest Church Extension. He is also Chairman of the Vision America Planning Committee.*

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# Building Leaders Together

---

— Earl Brubaker —



It was a daunting task. Jesus instructed them to represent Him in the whole world, proclaiming the gospel as they went, then teaching, training, and baptizing – planting churches. After the miraculous events on the day of Pentecost, their mission had really taken off. Thousands of new believers filled Jerusalem, straining the resourcefulness of these men even though they had spent three plus years learning from the Master and observing His ministry. They soon needed assistance, and they responded by calling on the church to appoint overseers of the widows ministry. Still it must have been difficult to keep up with teaching, training, and leading the burgeoning church.

They were still in the city. They had not left Jerusalem.

When would it be time to leave Jerusalem and begin going to Judea, Samaria, and the ends of the earth? Where would they find the personnel to take on this huge task? Jesus had clearly left them with a huge assignment that would require a massive

mobilization of witnesses, evangelists, and teachers. Perhaps the apostles had long discussions among themselves about these things as they directed the rapidly growing ministry in Jerusalem. No such discussions are recorded in Scripture, but the fledgling church did go on to preach the gospel and plant churches throughout the known world.

---

*The key issue in the New Testament (and for us today) is personnel, leadership personnel.*

---

The book of Acts records persecution which forced the followers of Jesus Christ from the city to the surrounding countryside, and eventually as far as Antioch. At Antioch the Spirit of God initiated the next step, and the church's first missionary movement was born (Acts 13:1-4).

Woven through the account of the growing church in Jerusalem, and its growth from Jerusalem through Judea and Samaria, and on to Antioch, are hints of how the early church found,

prepared and commissioned men to make the church's expansion into a world-wide movement a reality. The same pattern surfaces in the Holy Spirit-inspired account of the ministry of Paul as he pursued the task of taking the gospel to the world through evangelism and church planting.

## WHAT IS THE KEY?

The key issue in the New Testament (and for us today) is personnel, leadership personnel. How did the early church find enough leadership personnel to make world-wide outreach possible? Scripture reveals an uncomplicated, but profound, plan of action based upon commitment to two important underlying principles.

The two underlying principles are these:

The church's primary goal is not building world-class churches but reaching the world's classes, societies, and nations with the gospel.

Churches are not merely independent outposts of gospel ministry, but interdependent groups of believers committed to the common goal of reaching all classes, societies, and nations of the world with the gospel.

Absent these two underlying principles, Christians will always be content with just a bit more than status quo. If the goal is a world-class

church, any small evidence of progress is, if not affirming, at least placating. If the church is composed of merely independent local congregations, then the health of other churches and needs in other communities is inconsequential. If, however, the goal is to reach the world, one can never be satisfied merely with a comfortably growing local church. If the goal is to penetrate society, the limitation of a local fellowship seeking to reach that goal in the isolation of independence soon becomes apparent.

---

*Did the apostles  
preach good sermons  
and hope for the best?  
Or were they doing what  
they had learned from  
Jesus – making disciples  
and teaching them  
to serve?*

---

How then did the early church, committed to the goal of interdependently reaching the world, move toward that goal? How did it grow in one generation from a dozen Apostles to a worldwide force? The answer is found in the words of a prominent television commercial: “It’s The Network.”

The network existed before the birth of the church on the day of Pentecost. Those gathered in the upper room for prayer and supplication included the eleven Apostles, the women, and the brothers of Jesus – a total of about 120 people (Acts 1:12-15). Peter was so concerned about the network that he urged the group to fill the vacancy created by the defection of Judas, and Matthias was numbered with the Apostles (Acts 1:23).

On the Day of Pentecost, 3000 souls were added (Acts 2:41) and this band of 120 believers became a megachurch. These “continued steadfastly in the apostles’ doctrine and fellow-

ship” (Acts 2:42), and “the Lord added to the church daily those who were being saved” (Acts 2:47). Note that it was the apostles who were at the center of serving and teaching. That same pattern carries through chapter 3 and most of chapter 4. At the end of chapter 4 (vv. 36, 37) Barnabas is introduced. By the beginning of Acts 7, the network of ministering individuals had increased and seven men were appointed to oversee ministry to widows.

Did all this “just happen?” Did the apostles preach good sermons and hope for the best? Or were they doing what they had learned from Jesus – making disciples and teaching them to serve? If one assumes they were committed to Jesus’ teaching and principles and bound by His commission, it is safe to assume they were intentionally preparing a network of people for ministry – building leaders together.

Another step in building leaders appears when Barnabas introduced

Saul in Jerusalem. The disciples in Jerusalem were afraid of Saul because of his record as a persecutor of the church. Barnabas, however, brought Saul to the Apostles, the leaders of the Jerusalem church, and vouched of the genuineness of his conversion. Scripture then indicates that Saul “was with them at Jerusalem, coming in and going out, and he spoke boldly in the name of the Lord Jesus” (Acts 9:27, 28). When antagonists plotted for Saul’s life, the brethren secretly escorted him from Jerusalem and sent him to Tarsus. The network was rapidly growing.

When news came to Jerusalem that the gospel had reached Samaria, the Apostles sent Peter and John to minister there (Acts 8:14). Three chapters later, however, when news came of the church at Antioch, they sent Barnabas. The network was functioning.

Not long thereafter, Barnabas sought out Saul, and the two of them served together in Antioch for a full

# Cornerstone Seminary

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year (Acts 11:25, 26). An impending famine prompted the Christians at Antioch to send assistance to Judea by the hands of Barnabas and Saul (Acts 11:29-30). When Barnabas and Saul returned to Antioch from Jerusalem, they brought John Mark with them (Acts 12:25).

The team that God would send on the first missionary journey was thus assembled. But it was not just a team. It was a network of believers from Judea to Antioch, all acquainted with one another, all committed to the same ministry goals, working together interdependently to achieve those common goals. Barnabas of Cyprus was introduced in Jerusalem just as Saul of Tarsus was. God worked in both lives in very different ways, and then brought them together in ministry first in Jerusalem, then in Antioch... all with the support and backing of the original church in Jerusalem! From Antioch, Barnabas and Saul went back to Jerusalem to meet the needs there, thereby strengthening the network of believers.

At the end of the first missionary journey, Paul and Barnabas returned to Jerusalem to meet with the church council and deal with false teaching that had risen concerning circumcision. After that meeting they returned to Antioch with two of the brethren from Jerusalem. One of those brethren, Silas, became Paul's partner for his second missionary journey. During this second trek Timothy was added as a part of the ministering network. At the end of this second journey, Paul again returned to Antioch.

At the end of his third missionary journey Paul went back to Jerusalem. Acts 21:17-20 records that "When we had come to Jerusalem, the brethren received us gladly. On the following day Paul went in with us to James, and all the elders were present. When he had greeted them, he told in detail those things which God had done among the Gentiles through his ministry. And when they heard it, they glorified the Lord." The next few verses raise issues of differences between the Jewish and Gentile churches and often cause the reader to overlook the fact that Paul still felt

himself to be part of the network of believers that was committed to world-wide evangelism. It is quite probable that Timothy was introduced to the church leaders in Jerusalem at this time as well.

How large was the void in the church at Jerusalem when Barnabas went to Antioch? Who filled the hole left in Tarsus when Saul joined Barnabas in Antioch? How could the church at Antioch have sent out key people like Paul and Barnabas without suffering ministry deficit disorder? The church in Jerusalem took another hit when Silas decided to stay in Antioch after going there to represent the Jerusalem Council. The church at Derbe and Lystra was still in the process of establishment when Paul enlisted Timothy to go with him. None of this would have happened if men and churches were myopic in vision and independent in endeavor. All this was possible only because these churches were fully committed to being part of Jesus' promise to build His church, and willing to work interdependently toward that end by releasing ministry quality people than protecting their local ministries.

### **SOME APPLICATIONS FOR VISION AMERICA**

Vision American seeks to address the need of personnel for evangelism and church planting in America by assisting IFCA churches to seek, train, and send out men like Barnabas and Paul and Silas and Timothy and John Mark in an interdependent manner.

Vision America will require seasoned pastors of established churches to send out their well trained leaders to new works and then train others to take their places.

Vision America will depend upon pastors with a heart for evangelism, willingness to train and develop leaders, and the maturity to withstand church birth pangs to accept the challenge to plant a church. For example, in one American city is an experienced pastor in his 50s, whose wife is an invalid. For the first time he is planting a church because he saw the need for a multi-ethnic church and was willing to be God's tool to accomplish that task.

Vision America needs for you to look beyond your local assembly and see what God may do in America if we join together to release men for ministry in needy communities.

We must build a leadership network within IFCA International in order to help make Vision America's goals a reality. Will you do your part in building such a network?

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*Earl Brubaker served for many years as a church planter in the Pacific Northwest. Now he serves as General Director of Northwest Independent Church Extension of Tacoma, WA. He also serves as a member of IFCA International Board of Directors.*

**Lower my Phone Bill-  
Sandy Neahusan Ad  
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# Working Together to Plant Churches

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— Jeff Anderson —



“E ven the Lone Ranger has Tonto.” This barb often aimed at the independent church movement may have had more truth than humor at one time. However, today in the IFCA International it is becoming more common to find like-minded pastors and churches working together. Mission agencies are combining resources and contributing to consortiums. Leaders are exchanging ideas and spurring on one another to love and good works (meeting together as local regions as well as at national gatherings). Churches are finding the benefit of occasional combined services and working together for special projects of evangelism, camps, youth ministries, retreats, and seminars. We are increasingly becoming more defined as “churches working together!”

Since the beginning of Christian missions, its efforts have required churches to work together. The IFCA is no exception. Raising financial support for our missionaries requires networking because very few IFCA

churches can take on full support for the people we send. Mission conferences have allowed us to meet like-minded personnel who were outside of our immediate contacts, and enabled us to take mission trips that were often beyond the reach of our local body. The time has come for us to intentionally add one more ministry to that list of churches working together: domestic church planting.

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Most American communities need bi-lingual or multi-lingual churches that are preaching the Word, yet few IFCA men or churches have the expertise to plant that type of ministry. Praise the Lord that some who have that experience and expertise are part of our fellowship so that we are not alone! In most of our communi-

ties building facilities is a huge barrier to church planting. Some in our fellowship can help in that area too. It is a blessing to learn from the efforts of others so that similar mistakes can be avoided. But it is critical that we work together.

We all praise the Lord for the independent, tough-minded, entrepreneurial spirit that was required to start the majority of our churches. My father came to Colorado to plant churches immediately upon graduation from Grand Rapids (MI) School of the Bible and Music. Sure, he had some people praying for him, a few sending some occasional funds, and others showing some interest; but for the most part he planted several churches all alone. I remember him working a job during the week, preparing to preach for the weekend, running off the bulletin Sunday mornings, and leading the way to construct church facilities. If he and Mom didn't do it in early days of church planting, “it” didn't get done. His passion for the church, the Word and evangelism was effectively passed along to the next generation of church planters: three sons.

But Chris (Ohio), Dan (Brazil), and I (Colorado) have taken dramatically different routes to establish Bible-preaching ministries from the model we saw Dad use. Chris had

been added to the staff of an established local church with the design of being sent – along with a handful of established believers to lead and support – to plant a work in a needy community on the outskirts of the mother church’s community. Dan has been working with numerous Brazilian churches to implement the same commitment to work together to plant churches and equip leaders in a vastly different language and culture. Our church, Grace Bible Church of Colorado Springs, sent leadership and provided other resources to begin an Awana club outreach in a new neighborhood. That was soon followed by worship services and a church plant that became autonomous (self-sustaining financially and in leadership) within a year of the official start. Though in dramatically different environments, each of us has been blessed with fruitful church planting efforts by churches working together.

In order to plant the number of Gospel-centered churches in North America that Vision America foresees, churches, pastors, missions, and schools will have to work together as never before to accomplish a vision that is far greater than any one of us alone. Don’t be a Lone Ranger!

The “Lone Ranger” was introduced to the world through the livingroom radio sets in homes located in Michigan. Fran Striker, a freelance script writer from Buffalo NY, wrote the scripts for the early radio programs. According to *The Saturday Evening Post* (October 14, 1939), Striker knew early on that “Lone or not, the Ranger needed someone to talk to” in order to develop the plots. He also needed, “someone who could ferret out evidence of wrongdoing and present it for action.” It was decided that it could not be a woman because the slightest hint of romance would drive the Ranger’s young audience in a fast retreat from their radios. He created a loyal Indian companion and that is how Tonto was born. Tonto belonged to the Potawatomi tribe of Michigan although what he was doing so far from home not even Striker could tell.

How does this old radio character apply to IFCA International’s Vision

America initiative? One of the keys to the development of Vision America’s plot will be the development of a widespread, comprehensive network of participants working together to accomplish the goals of Vision America through the individual contributions of each. In effect we must create scores, even hundreds of Tontos from all over the country to whom all of the Lone Rangers can “talk” as they wage war against the forces of the enemy by advancing the cause of Christ through the ministry of church planting here in the U.S.

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#### WHO ARE THE TONTOS?

The source of any sort of contribution toward advancing the Vision America endeavor is a “Tonto.” They come not only from Michigan but from California, Colorado, Arizona, Missouri, Kentucky, Tennessee, Pennsylvania, Connecticut and Florida and all points in-between. In addition to the individual members of IFCA International there exists a veritable army of potential Tontos:

- Churches
- Schools
- Organizations

These first three include not only those who are members of IFCA International but those who are friends of this Fellowship as well. But then we also have:

- IFCA Church Extension Council and Church Extension Agencies

- IFCA Council of Regional Presidents and IFCA International Regionals
- IFCA International Home Office.

#### WHAT WILL THE TONTOS DO?

The Lone Ranger’s Indian friend made his debut in the tenth program of the first season and at first he merely uttered a few grunts now and then, eventually progressing to “Me go” or “Him come.” As his role developed he became a valuable and trusted team member without whom the Lone Ranger would never have accomplished many of his fabled exploits.

Vision America’s Tontos will be valuable and trusted team members from the very start. It is our intent to begin creating a massive network of “ready to use” resources that will serve as an engine to empower, from the human perspective, hundreds of Vision America church planting partners. Of course the greatest resource that can be offered, from the human side of things, is fervent prayer. It goes without saying that we understand prayer to be an essential ingredient in any successful spiritual venture. Vision America will be characterized by an energetic effort to enlist such vital support for its efforts. Additional resources will be part of the network as well:

#### People Resources

With the variety of models used in church planting today there is one thing common to all of them and that is the need for people of one sort or another. Whether it be Seed/Core personnel, Plant Leaders, Ministry Teams or some other sort of assistance that can only be provided by people, this network will seek to supply those needs wherever possible.

#### Material Resources

Material resources are always a key aspect of successful church planting. Such resources include financial support, hard goods (Bibles, hymnals, pews, church furniture, curriculum etc.) and perhaps even building materials.

#### Training Resources

There is a great need for training church planters. A goal of the Vision America network will be to provide a growing resource of training materials

as well as opportunities for internships across the country. In addition, workshops and conferences will be developed so that we can bring training to the local church wherever it is desired across the country.

#### Web Resources

Plans are being laid for using the Internet and IFCA International websites to facilitate information and resource sharing as well as for the promotional and advertising benefit that they provide.

#### Other Services

- Tactical Support – planning and strategy, research, consultation
- Literature design and production
- Promotion and Advertising
- Recruitment

#### CONCLUSION

Assembling and maintaining and managing such a massive network in an efficient way so that it is accessible and useable by those who have need of it will be a priority task. It begins with willingness and you can begin to help with that step. If you are a potential “Tonto”, please let us know now ... we need you to say “Me Go!” or “Me Come!” Send an e-mail today to [VAnetwork@ifca.org](mailto:VAnetwork@ifca.org) and let us know how you would like to fit into this network. If you have some additional thoughts or suggestions we’d be happy to hear them as well.

Because Vision America will need valuable and trusted team members from the very start. Just like The Lone Ranger *needed* his trusted friend and partner Tonto.

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*Jeff Anderson is a member of IFCA International's Board of Directors and serves as Senior Pastor of Grace Bible Church of Colorado Springs, CO.*

# Faith Biblical Counseling (4 color ad)

2/3 page ad  
emailed to GPC



# America Is Not Free Indeed

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— W.W. McEad —

America! The land of the free and the home of the brave! Land of opportunity! This land we call “home” has long held an irresistible attraction for weary and oppressed peoples all over the world. Even when this land was nothing more than a wilderness sparsely populated with Native Americans, the concept of “freedom,” carried on the wings of thought, fired the imagination and dreams of millions. These millions have left all—home, family, career and all earthly possessions; and some have lost all—even their lives—in order to reach our borders and drink, both legally and illegally, from the fountain of America’s promise.

In this land, “freedom” is a sacred watchword. We vigorously and proudly defend and champion, even to the point of bloodshed, the ideals embodied in the freedom of speech, the freedom of religion, the freedom to travel, freedom of the press and other freedoms that have become almost synonymous with America. These ideals formed the framework of the vision for America which inspired and drove the founding fathers of this nation.

Sadly, however, in spite of the noble aspirations of our founding fathers and the lofty ideals which those aspirations spawned, there is a serious flaw in the fabric of America’s freedom. America is not really free, at least not “free indeed.”

Jesus said to his disciples, “If you abide in My word, you are My disciples indeed. And you shall know the

truth, and the truth shall make you free.” The disciples responded with a bit of confusion by saying, “We are Abraham’s descendants, and have never been in bondage to anyone.

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*America is not  
really free. Her people  
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of all.*

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How can You say, ‘You will be made free?’” We might understandably echo such thinking today by saying, “We are Americans! We are not in bondage to anyone. How can Jesus say ‘we will be made free?’” Jesus explained: “Most assuredly, I say to you, whoever commits sin is a slave of sin. And a slave does not abide in the house forever, but a son abides forever. Therefore if the Son makes you free, you shall be free indeed.”<sup>1</sup>

America is not really free. Her people by and large are in bondage to the most grievous slavemaster of all. It is popular in Washington to use the word “quagmire” when speaking of economic, social, military and a whole host of other difficulties in which America finds herself mired. It is hard-

ly ever mentioned, however, that the greatest threat to this nation is the quagmire of sin and depravity which has caught the nation in a death grip. Corruption in high places, sweeping relativism, abortion, all forms of sexual perversion, and rampant moral depravity are just a few of the sores that have erupted on the landscape once praised for its “purple mountain majesties and amber waves of grain.” No indeed! America is NOT free indeed!

The cause of this desperate situation can be traced in part to the failure of the Church to vigorously pursue and fulfill the Great Commission in America:

In 1900 there were 27 churches for every 10,000 Americans. In 1950, there were 17 churches for every 10,000 people.<sup>2</sup> Since 1950, we actually have 30 percent fewer churches to reach the growing number of un-churched people in America!

Estimates place the number of church closures in our nation at between 3,500 and 4,000 every year. Yet even the most optimistic estimates suggest that about 1,300 new churches are being planted annually.<sup>3</sup> The net result is that opportunities for people to hear the Gospel are growing fewer and fewer with each passing year.

America is the most ethnically diverse nation in the world and one of the most religiously diverse nations as well.

Christianity is declining while cults and traditional world religions are up 400% from 1950.

Both Muslims and Mormons now outnumber Jews and Episcopalians in America.

Islam now claims an estimated six million followers, making it the second largest faith in our nation. Buddhists now number 2.5 million adherents; Hindus, some 1.2 million. False cultists have increased from one million in 1900 to over 26 million today.<sup>4</sup>

We have just turned the page on a new year and these alarming trends are still at work in the battle for men's souls, wresting even more territory from the grasp of the Church (which has been sent into the world with the Lord's assurance that even the gates of Hades cannot stand before it). And yet it would seem as though a large portion of that Church in America has circled the wagons and sits hoping the Lord will return soon and rescue us from this miserable world.

The time has come for a new vision for America. It is time for the message of spiritual freedom, carried on the

wings of prayer and on feet shod with the preparation of the gospel of peace, to permeate every level of our society so that millions may drink from the fountain of life eternal.

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It is time for God's people and the churches where they worship to redouble their efforts to make America the land of the spiritually

free. It is time for America to be the home of those emboldened by the Spirit of God to go forth from "Jerusalem" to our "Judea" and "Samaria" with the purposeful intent of pushing back the darkness by establishing new churches that will proclaim the message of the Gospel, thereby snatching souls from the kingdom of darkness and bringing them into the kingdom of light!

Vision America is a bold new initiative by IFCA International for such a time as this. It shall be our endeavor to increasingly blanket America with the faithful, biblical ministry of an ever-growing number of independent Bible churches. The fabric of that blanket will be made by weaving together the involvement of each individual member, church, organization and church planting agency as we work together to establish new IFCA International churches across the land.

In this endeavor we must allow no feeble excuses. We must shun no sac-

# Bridge to Life Ministries

pick-up N/D 2007 ad

rific. We must countenance no indifference. We must tolerate no pettiness. The eternal destinies of men and women and, perhaps, the very soul of America hang in the balance. We can and must make a difference! If not us, who? If not now, when? If not you, why?

If you are reading these words, there is a vital part for you to play in Vision America. Read the articles in this issue of VOICE Magazine and browse the Vision America web-page accessible through the IFCA home page ([www.ifca.org](http://www.ifca.org)). Begin planning prayerfully for your involvement and

that of your church. Your involvement in Vision America today will make a difference for America's tomorrows.

#### ENDNOTES

- 1 John 8.31-36
- 2 Richard Harris in—*Church Planting Today*, page 2. See also Lyle E. Schaller, *44 Questions for Church Planters* (Nashville: Abingdon Press, 1991), 14-26
- 3 Win Arn, *The Pastor's Manual for Effective Ministry* (Monrovia, CA: Church Growth, 1988), 16. See also Tom Clegg and Warren Bird, *Lost in America* (Loveland, CO: Group Publishing, 2001), 30.
- 4 For stats on religionists in America, see Clegg and Bird, *Lost in America*, 30-32.

Calvary Bible  
Church - Flagstaff  
Ad  
pick-up N/D 2007 ad

# Young Pastors' Conference

*The Purity of the Pastor...The Purity of the Ministry*

APRIL 7 - 9, 2008

The Apostle Paul exhorted the young pastor Timothy to make it his priority to train men for ministry (2 Timothy 2:1-9). The YPC seeks to facilitate the ongoing equipping of young men for long-term ministry effectiveness.

Equipping young pastors to navigate the sometimes dangerous waters of church ministry is just a part of IFCA's commitment to the preparation of those who will suffer hardship in ministry like good soldiers, disciplined athletes and dedicated farmers. Our Young Pastors' Conferences are one of the growing number of tools used to develop effective pastoral leadership, fully equipped for ministry in the local church today.

Equipping young pastors with an understanding of, and appreciation for, the historically rich significance of biblical fundamentalism - what it is and what it is not.

Equipping young pastors with a broad range of practical ministry knowledge shared by men proven in

the trenches of ministry and who can provide first-hand knowledge of the "do's and don'ts" of ministry

Equipping young pastors in the essential disciplines necessary to protect and preserve their marriage, family, ministry and above all, their own walk with Christ as His approved servant-leader.

The 2008 YPC will focus on this theme *The Purity of the Pastor...The Purity of the Ministry*. As goes the pastor, so goes the ministry. Those placed by God, through the agency of local ministries, into the ministry are obligated to live a life of purity lest they become shipwrecked and bring harm to Christ and His precious bride, the Church.

**Who qualifies?** Pastors in their first 5 years of local church ministry (no age restriction) who are either members of IFCA International or are pastoring an IFCA member church.

**Where?** The YPC takes place in the facilities of the Home Office of IFCA

International, in Grandville (Grand Rapids), Michigan.

**Expenses?** You provide for your transportation to Grandville MI and IFCA will provide lodging, meals, and materials.

**Schedule?** Begins Monday, April 7, 2008, 5:30 pm (Eastern) with supper, and concludes Wednesday, April 9, at Noon.

**Limited?** To maintain a personal and practical forum of interaction and learning, the YPC will be limited to the first 20 men who sign up.

For more information, or to sign up today, call the IFCA Home Office at (800) 347-1840. Or you may register on line at [www.ifca.org](http://www.ifca.org), and click on the link to Young Pastors' Conference.

## ❧ DEATH OF HIS SAINTS ❧



**CHAPLAIN  
ART ISBELL**

Arthur Isbell died Saturday, September, 8, 2007, and

went home to his Commander-In-Chief, the Lord Jesus Christ.

Arthur Isbell, a long time IFCA member, was born in Berne, Indiana where as a young man he gave his heart to the Lord. Because it was a Swiss community, he learned to speak Swiss-German before he learned English. Though he came from a poor family, he was able to attend Wheaton College. It took seven years to get through during the Depression as he had to both work and attend college. He also ran track and competed with many of the world's best at the time in the mile. He would continue running daily until he was in his 70s when he fell on some ice and broke his knee. After attending Wheaton he went to Dallas Theological Seminary. In Dallas he met his future wife, Bonnie, who was a nursing student.

Because he lacked the four years of pastoral experience necessary to be an Army Chaplain, he became a pastor in MacDonal, Kansas after trying many times to enter the Army during World War II. In Kansas, his only child Ted was born. During Korea, the Army was desperate for Chaplains and waived the age requirement and allowed Arthur to enter the Army.

Arthur was a soldier's Chaplain, not a pulpit Chaplain. He was always in the field with the troops. He was the only Chaplain at many commands who went through the exercises and training with the trainees just as if he was a trainee. This included the live fire exercises

like the infiltration course and the close combat course. A picture of him made it into an Army newspaper, crawling through the mud in front of all of the trainees with tracer machine gun bullets flying over his head. His face was full of mud and his eyes were barely visible. Since he usually finished first, he would be at the end of the course yelling encouragement to all the men coming through. Since he was a Chaplain, not a Sergeant, he could yell with encouragement and hope and not sarcasm and belittlement. This gave Arthur the credibility to talk, one on one, to soldiers and officers alike about his Lord. This was what Arthur loved.

On one occasion in Germany, his unit sent a sharp shooting team to compete against the German Army in a joint good will competition with many German teams, each made up of four sharp shooters. Because of Arthur's German language abilities, he went along to translate for the American team. As a good will gesture, the German officers in charge suggested he also compete. They knew that American Chaplains usually knew nothing of firearms and would refuse the offer. To their surprise, he accepted. Not only did Arthur compete, but also he got the third place medal, beating almost all of the German sharp shooters who prided themselves on their marksmanship.

Arthur was stationed in West Berlin, as the Cold War heated up. U.S. Uniformed Military Officers by the Four Powers Treaty were allowed free access to any Berlin sector including the Soviet sector. Every week U.S. Officers were selected to go to the Soviet sector and just walk around. They were

then to write a report about what they did or saw. Most officers just wrote out a description of the route that they walked. Arthur, however, enjoyed walking down the streets and talking to shop proprietors or those he passed who many times were anxious to talk to a Uniformed American who spoke their language with a Swiss, not American accent. He had the opportunity to talk to many about the Lord in this unusual situation. His reports were long and detailed. Apparently, more than upper level infantry officers were reading the reports, because his next assignment was to an Army intelligence unit. The rest of his career was spent in intelligence.

Much of his work in intelligence remains known only to those to whom he ministered and to God. He was awarded the Legion of Merit. Because of the nature of his work, the citation was only one sentence long: "For exemplary and superior sustained service."

Arthur Isbell retired after 20 years service as a full Colonel. After retirement, he ministered for a time as a substitute pastor in the Colorado Springs area. His beloved wife, Bonnie, died of cancer in 1996. In 2001 he moved to California with his son until his death at age 93.

Arthur Isbell served in two wars, Korea and Viet Nam. He was awarded the Army Commendation Medal with two Oak Leaf Clusters, the Bronze Star with one Oak Leaf Cluster, and the Legion of Merit in addition to numerous campaign, service, and foreign government medals. Most of what he did is known only to God and those he helped. IFCA International honors his memory!



**REV. LEVI  
JAY MINNICH**  
Levi Minnich, 73  
of Union City,  
IN passed away

Sep-tember 17, 2007. He was born February 22, 1934. He was an ordained minister serving in Bellefontaine, OH, Groveland, IL and Greenville, OH. In addition to his parents, he was preceded in death by one daughter in 1956 and two brothers. He became a member of IFCA in 1994.

He is survived by his wife of 51 years, Theresa Kessler of Union City, IN, two daughters, his mother-in-law, six grandchildren, two sisters, one sister-in-law as well as nieces and nephews.



**RANDY  
TEMPLETON**  
Randy Stephen  
Templeton, 53, of  
Arnold, Mo., formerly

of Chesapeake, Ohio, went to be with his Lord after a long illness on Friday, November, 2, 2007, in St. Louis, MO. Randy was born December 20, 1953, in Huntington, WV, the son of Imogene Templeton of Chesapeake and the late Billy A. Templeton. He is survived by his wife, Kathleen Childers Templeton; daughter and son-in-law, Alison and Matthew Jones of Kernersville, NC.; son and daughter-in-law, Kirk and Michelle Templeton, of Kamas, Utah. Randy graduated from Chesapeake High School and attended Ashland Area Vocational School. He was a graduate of Tri-State Bible College, South Point, Ohio, and Appalachian Bible College, Bradley, WV. He served as minister of youth in several churches, the last being South County Bible Church in St. Louis. He was on the staff at the home headquarters of Berean Mission in St. Louis and served on the IFCA International Youth Committee. He was known for his cheerful and positive spirit in faithful service.

# Grace College & Seminary

New ad forwarded to  
GPC on 11/20/2007

# How To Minister to Your Missionaries

— Annette J. Hillebrand —



Having been very involved in missions as a pastor's wife in Bark River, Michigan for over eight years and now as a missionary in Ukraine, it is my privilege to share some thoughts and personal experiences on how to minister to your missionary and to their children.

## MISSIONARIES ON HOME MINISTRY

When missionaries return to the States for home ministry, whether for a summer or six months or longer, they have some very specific needs. You can be a great help and encouragement to them at this time.

Some of the big needs will be for a place to stay and use of a vehicle. But there are some other needs. When missionaries are scheduled to be at your church, offer to house them, have them over for lunch or take them out to a restaurant. Show interest in them and what they are doing. Visit their display table after the service. Sometimes missionaries have very few people talk to

them after a service. This can be discouraging. I remember after the first service of a large church while most people were talking to each other or going out the side door and avoiding our display, our son Luke saying, "I guess they don't love us." Of course he was joking, but you get the picture.

it. Tabitha, our youngest, said when she grows up and missionaries come to visit she is going to give their children money to spend just for themselves.

Here are a few additional suggestions to bless missionaries who are either still raising support or are on home ministry assignment:

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*When missionaries are scheduled to be at your church, offer to house them, have them over for lunch or take them out to a restaurant.*

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- Give them phone cards
- Gift certificates for restaurants
- Gift cards for department stores
- Gas cards for traveling
- Thank-you cards and stamps
- Provide for a hotel stay while traveling
- Offer to baby-sit their children
- Offer good used clothing you no longer need

Once while we were still raising support and the church we were visiting knew that it was our anniversary, they put us up in a bed and breakfast and provided a meal for us at a local restaurant. That was a special treat!

You can encourage your children to befriend missionary kids, to invite them to events at your church, youth group or recreational activities. They can then keep in touch with them via the Internet. This is a way for your children to be exposed to missions and their peers who live in a foreign land, as well as a great way for missionary kids to reconnect with their peers in America.

## MINISTERING TO ADULT CHILDREN OF MISSIONARIES

For missionaries who have adult children in college, there are many opportunities for you to minister to their needs as well, this will also be a blessing to their parents on the field. Here are some suggestions:

- Send care packages for birthdays or Christmas
- Offer a place to stay during spring break, holidays or summer
- Offer to take them places, appointments, shopping, if they don't have a driver's license or car
- Offer to help them get their driver's license
- Offer them a job or other way to earn income
- Support them in college with a monthly gift
- Correspond with them, pray for them. Often they are lonely, stressed with studies and not able

to take care of so many details without their parents, especially if they've lived most of their lives overseas.

- Send them a phone card to call their family or friends

After spending two years with us in Ukraine, our daughter returned to the States for college. As anticipated, her first year was very difficult. One family invited her to their home for Thanksgiving and sent her back to college with gifts and money. That's just how the body of Christ is supposed to function -- by being family to those who are without their families. Another great encouragement to our daughter was when a friend of ours, who also had a daughter in college, began sending her gifts. In December she sent her a box containing 24 small gifts, one to be opened each day until Christmas, with a larger one for that day. This helped our daughter get up each morning, knowing there was another gift to unwrap.

When our son unexpectedly ended up in the hospital for an appendectomy his first year of college, we were able to call a pastor in the area whom we had met the summer before and another friend each of whom paid him a visit. Since the following week was spring break and he had to be out of his dorm room, others offered to house him during his recovery. Of course this put our hearts more at ease, knowing there were others willing to look after him. Also one of our supporting churches unexpectedly began sending him \$10 a month. While this may not sound like much, it was a blessing to him (and us).

In conclusion, in regard to missionaries often seeking aid, the Apostle Paul said, "Not that I seek for the gift itself, but I seek for the profit which increases to your account" (Phil. 4:17). He went on to say that what others gave was "a fragrant aroma, an acceptable sacrifice, well-pleasing to God. And my God shall supply all your needs according to His riches in glory in Christ Jesus" (vs. 18-19). When you assist those who are spreading the gospel, you are exercising your faith and becoming partakers with them in the rewards of the harvest. And this pleases God!

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*Annette Hillebrand has been a missionary in Kiev, Ukraine, since 2001, serving under CrossWorld with a focus on women's ministries. She and her husband Randy have four children, two in college in America, and two teenagers at home. Randy is a member of IFCA International.*

# UIM

pick-up N/D 2007 ad

# Don't Like Football? You Missed the Point

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When Jesus called His disciples He was very clear about what He had in mind: "Follow Me and I will make you fishers of men." The call to discipleship includes a call to an ongoing lifestyle of evangelism. The disciples could not help but notice that their Master loved LOST people, and if they were going to follow Him, they would be in regular contact with LOST people as well. To follow Christ was to embrace a radically different lifestyle than the isolationist patterns of the religious "professionals" that Jesus loved to confront for their hypocrisy.

The Philosophy of Ministry statement of Sunset Bible Church of University Place includes this definitive statement: "We want to use every scriptural means possible to reach lost people for Christ."

One small expression of this in our church has been our decision to cancel evening "church activities" on Super Bowl Sunday and thus free up our people to invest that evening by intentionally spending time with friends who do not yet know Christ. Each year we call our people to think strategically about which neighbors they might invite or whose house they might visit that day. Each year more people take the challenge to step alongside unbelieving friends for the afternoon. Each year I also hear a similar statement: "That may be your thing, but I don't really like football." My response – with a smile – is always the same. "You don't like football? You missed the point. You don't have to like foot-

ball. You just have to love LOST people." Until "tax collectors and sinners" call me their friend, maybe I am not as much like Christ as I had hoped.

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*So how do people in your church connect with lost people? What have you found effective in your community?*

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And what have been the results? One family that has known estrangement and great problems took our Super Bowl get together as a "time out" from strife and shared the time

with us as we loved them in Christ's Name. We were able to follow up our Super Bowl event with dinner out with another neighbor couple a few weeks later. Our church family are building relationships for the Gospel's sake.

So how do people in your church connect with LOST people? What have you found effective in your community? Is there a community fair where your people serve? Is there a local parade you enter? Do you welcome the neighborhood through a Block Party? And what about YOU personally? Do YOU obey Christ's call to discipleship by spending time with LOST people?

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*Rev. Jay Mosser  
Sunset Bible Church  
University Place, WA*

Southwest Bible church Mission

pick-up N/D 2007 ad



# Fellowship News

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IFCA Christian camps have a great ministry among our young people. Recently IFCA member Steve Ransom, Director of Pioneer Bible Camp in Eden, UT met with Bill Bennett of IFCA member camp Ao-Wa-Kiya in Shelby, MI. Pictured here (L to R): Les Lofquist, Bill Bennett, Steve Ransom.



The Kansas Regional met at Calvary Baptist Church of Derby, outside of Wichita. The folks in attendance are pictured here.



The Michigan Regional recently met and Dr. Rich McCarrell, General Director of IMI/SOS International was speaker. The meeting was held at Grandville Bible Church.



Pictured here is the Southern CA Regional Faithful Men Retreat at 1000 Pines Camp & Conference Center. ED Les Lofquist and Santa Rosa (CA) Bible Church Sr. Pastor Chris Bauer were the speakers.



At the 2007 Annual Convention in Tulsa, we received an offering for weaving looms in Manipur, India. Those will serve as a means of self-support for the Thangkhal Bible Churches. Pictured here is the dedication service.



Here are the Manipur weaving looms in action. These are a gift from the IFCA International 2007 convention delegates.



The new looms brought great joy in Manipur, India.

Piedmont Baptist College

pick-up N/D 2007 ad

# Youth Center & 9/11

The Wisconsin Regional recently met at the Merrill Bible Church. As part of the conference, a dinner and evening meeting was held in a most unusual location.

Otts Garage was originally a real, operational auto maintenance business founded decades ago with the same name. But it went out of business and was an empty building in downtown Merrill. That all changed after September 11, 2001.

Ken and Jane Oswald served in the Merrill Bible Church (Ken as an elder). Their son worked in New York City as an accountant with the Cantor-Fitzgerald investment banking firm on the 105th floor of the World Trade Center. Jason Oswald was killed in the terrorist attack of September 11, 2001.

In Jason's memory, Ken and Jane Oswald purchased the empty garage in Merrill and redecorated it and dedicated it as OTTS Garage Youth Center (Only Trusting The Savior). Today it is an effective outreach center of Merrill Bible Church.

Here are some of the men who served at Otts Garage Youth Center (L to R): Current pastor of Merrill Bible Church Todd VanRyn, Music Leader Howie Pulkowski, and former pastor of Merrill Bible Church Paul Graves.



Pictured below is the WI Regional meeting at Otts Garage Youth Center in Merrill.



# IFCA International Sunday

SUNDAY, FEBRUARY 24, 2008

- To inform our churches about IFCA ministries
- To encourage our mutual interdependence
- To unify us in common purpose, an offering will be received for the Vision America church planting initiative.

*Prayerfully add this special day  
to your church's calendar.*

**CONTACT THE HOME OFFICE AT 800/347-1840 IF YOU HAVE ANY QUESTIONS**

## **2008 IFCA CHURCH EXTENSION CONFERENCE**

**June 18-20, 2008**

Eugene, OR, Hilton Hotel

Sponsored by: IFCA Church Extension Council

Contact CE Chairman Fran Gardner Jr for information about registration

(941) 351-1453 [sarasotagardner@hotmail.com](mailto:sarasotagardner@hotmail.com)

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## **IFCA Youth Convention 2008**

**JUNE 23- 28, 2008 GEORGE FOX UNIVERSITY, PORTLAND, OR**

**Theme: "For Me to Live is Christ"**

**SPEAKER: CHRIS BAUER, SENIOR PASTOR, SANTA ROSA (CA) BIBLE CHURCH**

[www.ifcayouth.com](http://www.ifcayouth.com)

# IFCA International Convention 2008

Hilton Eugene & Conference Center, Eugene, Oregon

June 20 - 24, 2008

Dear IFCA friends,

Dear IFCA Brethren, Friends and families

All of us in the Pacific Northwest Regional of IFCA International extend to you a very cordial invitation to attend the 2008 Annual Convention in Eugene, Oregon.

You'll be challenged by the ministry of the Word, blessed by the wonderful fellowship, and encouraged by the seminars and workshops at this year's Convention. The opportunity to share in the 50th Anniversary of the Northwest Independent Church Extension promises to be the "icing on the cake" of a worthwhile IFCA experience.

Let me not only invite you to come – I would URGE you to plan to join us at The Hilton Hotel and Convention Center in downtown Eugene, Oregon Friday June 20 through Tuesday June 24. We will be convening over the weekend, thus allowing opportunity for you to enjoy all that the Pacific Northwest has to offer in scenic beauty and relaxation either before or after the Convention.

God willing we'll see you in Eugene!

Yours for the furtherance of the Gospel,

Dr. Roy Sprague

Pacific Northwest Regional President

# IFCA International Annual 2008 Convention Registration

Hilton Eugene & Conference Center, Eugene, Oregon  
June 20 - 24, 2008

Send form and your payment in full to IFCA, PO Box 810, Grandville, MI 49468-0810

Name \_\_\_\_\_  
(LAST) (FIRST) (TITLE)

Name \_\_\_\_\_  
(LAST) (FIRST) (TITLE)

Address \_\_\_\_\_

City \_\_\_\_\_ State \_\_\_\_\_ Zip \_\_\_\_\_ Phone \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_ Please check if this is your first IFCA Convention that you have attended.

Child Registration Infant-age 12 (Children 13 and older should attend the IFCA Youth Convention or pay the adult registration fee.)

Name \_\_\_\_\_ Age \_\_\_\_\_ Name \_\_\_\_\_ Age \_\_\_\_\_

Name \_\_\_\_\_ Age \_\_\_\_\_ Name \_\_\_\_\_ Age \_\_\_\_\_

## REGISTRATION & MEALS

### Adult Registration Fees

#### Weekly Registration (5 days)

Number of Adults \_\_\_\_\_ x \$72                      \$ \_\_\_\_\_  
 (after May 23rd \$82)

**OR**

#### Daily Registration (per day per adult)

Number of Adults \_\_\_\_\_ x \$26                      \$ \_\_\_\_\_

### Child Registration

(infant - age 12) \_\_\_\_\_ x \$35                      \$ \_\_\_\_\_  
 (after May 23rd \$45)

### Weekly Meal Tickets (includes Ladies Luncheon)

#### Guests staying in the hotel

Number of Adults \_\_\_\_\_ x \$92                      \$ \_\_\_\_\_  
 Children (ages 4-12) \_\_\_\_\_ x \$56                      \$ \_\_\_\_\_

#### Guests not staying in the hotel

Number of Adults \_\_\_\_\_ x \$102                      \$ \_\_\_\_\_  
 Children (ages 4-12) \_\_\_\_\_ x \$66                      \$ \_\_\_\_\_

Ladies Luncheon Ticket only \_\_\_\_\_ x \$18                      \$ \_\_\_\_\_

**Total Amount Due**    \$ \_\_\_\_\_

## IMPORTANT NOTE

*You must contact the hotel to make room reservations for the convention. **This form is for IFCA Convention Registration and Meals only.** Thank you.*

# 2008 IFCA INTERNATIONAL ANNUAL CONVENTION INFORMATION

## LOCATION

Hilton Eugene & Conference Center  
66 East 6th Ave.  
Eugene, OR 97401  
Phone 1-800-445-8667 to make reservations,  
request the IFCA INTERNATIONAL GROUP RATE.

## HOTEL

The Hilton Eugene & Conference Center is prepared to meet all the room needs of individuals and families attending the 2008 IFCA Adult Convention. Each of their guest rooms is appointed with amenities for your comfort and convenience. Every room features a hair dryer, iron & ironing board, in room coffee maker, internet access and voice mail. Other hotel features pool and fitness room.

The room rate is \$79.00 single or double per night plus tax currently at 10.5%. This group rate will be available Wednesday, June 18, 2008 through Wednesday, June 25, 2008 based on availability. You can book your reservations online at [www.hilton.com/en/hi/groups/personalized/EUGEHHF-IFCA-20080616/index.html](http://www.hilton.com/en/hi/groups/personalized/EUGEHHF-IFCA-20080616/index.html) For the Group/Convention code enter IFCA to get the \$79 rate. You can also call Hilton central reservations at 1-800-445-8667. If you are making reservations outside of the dates listed above, please call the Hilton Eugene directly at 1-800-937-6660 (M – F 7am to 4pm PST). You must request the IFCA INTERNATIONAL GROUP RATE. **The hotel is holding a block of rooms for our convention through, May 23, 2008.** After that cut-off date, the hotel will release the unreserved rooms for general sales. Plan to make reservations early to avoid the higher rates or the room block being full.

Check-in time is 3:00 pm and check-out time is noon.

## MEALS

The package includes four dinners and three lunches inclusive. The Meal Plan begins with dinner on Friday, June 20, and ends with dinner, on Monday, June 23, 2008. No breakfast provided.

Pricing: Weekly Meal Ticket for those who are guests staying in the hotel, adults \$92.00 and children ages 4 - 12, \$56.00. Children 3 and under, may eat off their parents plate for free.

For those who are not guests staying in the Hilton Eugene & Conference Center, the weekly meal ticket is adult \$102.00 and children ages 4 - 12, \$66.00

## WOMEN CONFERENCE

Please join us for a special Women's Conference. We'd love to see all of you there! More details will be included in the March/April 2008 VOICE magazine.

## CHILD CARE

Details to be available in the March/April 2007 issue of the VOICE Magazine

## YOUTH CONVENTION

Details to be available in the March/April 2008 issue of the VOICE Magazine

## TEENS

The IFCA Youth Convention will be held at George Fox University. Please visit the IFCA Youth Convention website at [www.ifcayouth.com](http://www.ifcayouth.com) for additional information and registration form.

## TRANSPORTATION

The Hilton Eugene provides complimentary shuttle service to and from the Eugene airport. Just call from the concierge phone after you pick up your luggage. It will take 15 minutes for them to get to the airport.

## PARKING

Complimentary on-site parking

## POLICY ON FACILITY USE

Use of facilities does not imply endorsement of the doctrines or associations of an organization.