

# gcm connect >>

*What's happening around the GCM world...*

## Growing Young Churches *by Sarah Draves*

*In 2008, four churches were planted across the nation. You'll be amazed to see how God has worked in each church throughout the past two years.*

### **AWAKEN CHURCH - JACKSONVILLE, FLORIDA**

“Our hope, our burden, our mission is to build a church community that effectively mobilizes young people today and empowers them to live mature and missional lives. That burden and vision led us to launch Awaken Church in September of 2008 in the Southside area of Jacksonville, Florida,” says Frank Liu, pastor at Awaken Church.

The ministry in Jacksonville began over 10 years before Awaken Church's launch. GCM missionaries Frank Liu and Vashii Nemecek began a campus ministry at the University of North Florida. As the ministry grew, Frank shares that “our passion had grown into reaching a broader population of young singles, young families, and the young-at-heart... helping them fulfill their God-given potential.”

“It has been 16 months now since we launched Awaken Church and we're excited about where God has led us,” says Frank. “Our current focus is centered upon discovering ways to effectively reach our community. One of our upcoming projects involves spending a month training our church in practical evangelism through our worship service. After that month we will send our entire church into the community to introduce ourselves to our neighbors and offer to pray for their needs and requests.”

Frank looks forward to the day when Awaken Church multiplies. In the meantime, “Awaken Church continues to work hard at building an environment where both the unchurched and churched can engage and thrive.”

Continued on page 5



## Rugby Revival *by Sarah Draves*

*Sarah Draves, GCM missionary at New Life Church in Ann Arbor, shares her experience in women's ministry at the University of Michigan.*

As I'm sure is true for many college ministries, our plea at New Life Church in Ann Arbor, Michigan, has been that God would give our campus a spiritual heartbeat. What I did not expect, however, was for Him to begin resuscitation on the University of Michigan Women's Rugby Team. In the last two years, what began as a prayer that one girl would get saved became a hope that her whole team would be transformed, and is now the vision that the entire Midwest rugby community would be affected!

As a senior at UM in 2007, I co-led a Bible study with several friends. One of these leaders joined the women's club rugby team that winter, and by the end of the year one of her new teammates, a freshman named Rachel (not actual name), began coming to the group. She “liked being around people who believed in something,” although she wasn't ready to call herself a Christian.

For this reason, we were surprised the next fall when Rachel began inviting her teammates to Bible study. By winter, four girls were coming regularly and masks were starting to come off. Michigan is a liberal campus, and rugby a liberal sport, so it was amazing to see them engage and wrestle, almost physically, with ideas like absolute truth. Yet in the midst of doubts, they were pursuing their relationship with God personally for the first time.

Continued on page 4

# International Ministries



## Africa

### NIGERIA - STEVE KESSLER

"We're very missions oriented at our church. In our outreach we're focused on several different groups; one of them is Muslims," shares Steve Kessler, pastor at Fellowship Church at Texas A&M University. In 2006, Steve traveled to southwest Nigeria to the Fulani people, the largest nomadic unreached people group in the world, also 99% Muslim.



A year later, Steve returned with a mission team from Fellowship. God opened the door to work with former Muslim Fulani pastors, who want to reach their own people. "We saw over 160 professions to faith."

This summer Fellowship is taking a five-week trip to live in the bush and model discipleship for Fulani believers. "As we see people come to Christ, we'll start immediate discipleship and teach the people how to live in community and multiply disciples."



## Asia

### TAIWAN - DAVID LOVELAND

"Things are going well in Grace International Church in Taichung, Taiwan. We began two weekly prayer meetings four months ago and since then things have improved, markedly. We see God on the move, working in our midst, bringing people to Christ and changing us - especially our team of core co-workers.

We're after a biblical DNA as we learn how to make disciples: believers who want to fellowship, grow, serve, give, worship, reach out & GO with the Gospel. However, real and lasting change requires long-term investment where trust is earned as God opens hearts and doors.

We've come to join God in His work in Taiwan as our partnerships with local churches and leaders progressively deepen. We're blessed to work with and learn from Taichung Grace Church and the Cell Church Missions Network and to complement the good work God is doing as we contribute in areas where God has caused us to excel."



### KENYA - KAIROS LOS ANGELES



In March 2005, a team from Kairos Los Angeles went to Kenya to bring famine relief. JR Woodward, pastor at Kairos, shares, "We realized that long-term sustainable solutions were necessary in addition to urgent short-term needs."

In 2006, JR co-founded the Solis Foundation with a business man in the church, which "mentors entrepreneurs and gives small business grants to people so that they can be agents in overcoming their own poverty." Mike Thomas, an IT professional and leader at Kairos Hollywood, was recently appointed the managing director of the Solis Foundation.

"Last year we helped start 10 new businesses and this coming year, we are looking to help start 10 more." JR and GCM missionary, Andy Bleyer just finished a seminary class on poverty and development to help prepare themselves for this ministry. Andy Bleyer will be the managing director of Unembraced, a division of the Solis Foundation that ministers to orphans.

### THAILAND - CORY KLEIN



"Having now lived in Thailand for two years, I have come to more appreciate the people of Thailand; their language, their culture and their way of life. In many ways the people here have a less stressful life than people in America, yet they also experience greater social problems than America does. Whether it is poverty, political unrest, the child sex slave industry, or the drug culture, Thailand has a long way to go to experience healing.

At the root of this issue is the entrapment of a Buddhist/Animist way of life. To the Thai person, everything is based on merit. If you live a good life, you will have good karma, but if you don't, you must make merit with the Monks and the spirits. Yet God has a different plan for the Thai people, and it is to bring them into his kingdom. My family and I hope to be a part of this plan.

Our work at the Centre student ministry has been fruitful and I praise God that we have seen Thai university students enter into the kingdom. Our hope is to start a Thai church focused on university students that will raise up an emerging generation of leaders for Christ."



## SPAIN - DOMINIC MARRONE

In September 2008 Dom Marrone and his family travelled to Spain to shine a light in a spiritually dark place. Dom shares, "The nation of Spain has less than 1/2 of 1% evangelical Christians, but a door has opened for us to begin reaching young Spaniards." The Marrones serve on two Spanish college campuses, neither of which has an evangelical Christian ministry.

One goal for the Marrones in 2009 was to build better relationships with Spaniards. "Through a two-week intense English club in May, Spanish-English language partnerships over the year, and several key outreaches in the fall, we have built many friendships with unbelievers at both universities!"



In December, Dom was invited to dine with a couple from one of the universities. "During the lunch, Jesús asked me if I could

pray for their home since they are expecting their first baby. I told them that more important than the actual dwelling are the inhabitants and their relationship with God. I shared the gospel with both of them and it became clear that Jesús affirmed he was a true follower of Jesus Christ. After the meal, Susan placed her trust in Jesus. They have been studying the Bible, praying and fellowshiping regularly now! Praise God for His salvation!"

## DOMINICAN REPUBLIC - H2O CHURCH

H2O church at the Ohio State University has partnered with Mission Emmanuel, an organization with a strong presence in the Dominican Republic. Dan Luk, a leader at H2O, has been on two short-term trips.

"We build houses, do children's ministry, and put on skits and passion plays. We also assist with their dental and medical clinics."

"I'm excited that several children from the Emmanuel School have been financially sponsored by our students who are still in college," says Dan. "Our small group is sponsoring a Haitian-born orphan named Nathanael, who is just starting first grade. He was very shy when we met him, but I am excited to be able to watch him grow up!"



Dan shares H2O's hope for the future: "Our dream is for people to go on these short-term trips, catch a vision and call from God on their lives to serve as full-time international missionaries."

## ENGLAND - LEE DUBOIS

"We moved to Sheffield in June 2008, where The Crowded House, an international family of church planting networks, graciously extended an invitation for us to work with them.

One of our key phrases is 'ordinary life with Gospel intentionality.' Part of our vision is to be a church where evangelism, discipleship, and pastoral care, is not dependent on programs, buildings, or budgets, but all are lived out faithfully in the ordinary 'stuff' of Spirit-led community life.

Since being in England my primary role has been that of an evangelist, and particularly among those that are traditionally 'hard to reach.' I spend most of my time with people, and more time than ever before with those not in the church.



I have used the line on multiple occasions, 'I am a Christian and I am here to serve people.' Sometimes that means helping people with projects, being a taxi service or leading fitness training, but a lot of times it means fasting and praying for people and simply making myself available to people to answer their questions about God and to teach them the Bible (which happens to be my favourite thing to do!)."

# Latin America



## HONDURAS - THE ROCK CHURCH

The Rock, a campus church on the University of Missouri campus, has a growing ministry in Latin America. John Drage, pastor at The Rock says, "Four years ago, we created a strategic partnership with our sister GCLA church mission in Choluteca, Honduras. Since that time we have sent numerous trips, three short-term missionaries, relief supplies, many child sponsorships and some investors."

This year the Rock plans on sending several teams to Choluteca. In addition to the mission trips, this spring, a shoe project will be launched. "The Rock will endeavor to collect 15,000 pairs of shoes and 1000 backpacks to ship to Honduras. These shoes will be used to reach out to many poor areas with the love of Christ."



# Overwhelmed with Love

by Frank Liu, Pastor at Awaken Church

"I rejoiced in the Lord greatly that now at length you have revived your concern for me. You were indeed concerned for me, but you had no opportunity." Philippians 4:10



The church at Philippi was founded by Paul in Europe about 10 years before he writes this letter to them. Unfortunately it is a letter Paul writes from prison. But from the letter it is clear that Philippi is a church for which he has great regard, and that is reflected in his free and spontaneous writing. This letter has the tone of one written to beloved friends, rather than a people in need of instruction or reproof.

Paul has shared some final words of encouragement and comfort to the saints at Philippi. In the verses that follow, Paul will share his secret to being content in any and every circumstance. But here in this verse Paul is rejoicing. His imprison-

ment has given his friends at Philippi an opportunity to demonstrate, to renew their love and concern for him.

The phrase "you have revived" is actually represented by the Greek word anathallō. It is the only time this word is found in the Bible. Typically, anathallō was used to describe trees,

plants, and flowers that have had their strength drawn inward and concealed during the winter and then blossom again in the Spring. It flourishes... it springs up anew.

Paul's use of this image gives us insight into how the Philippian church felt about him. It's as if Paul shared, "I know you have always cared about me and I'm glad to see that, when the opportunity arose again to show your love, you have overwhelmed me."

Continued on page 6

## Stepping Out with the Good News

by Tom Mauriello  
Executive Director

"I must preach the good news of the kingdom of God to the other towns as well; for I was sent for this purpose." -Luke 4:43 (ESV)

As Jesus was beginning his ministry we see this scene from Capernaum. Because of his work there – teaching in the synagogues and healing the sick – the people sought to keep him from leaving. But this Good News was not for just one people, and they could no more contain Jesus there than He could contain the Father's love to just one town. He had come so that He could GO.

In this Connect we want to highlight some of the ways GCM Missionaries, in this same spirit of Christ, have stepped out with the good news of the Kingdom of God. By crossing boundaries, whether they are relational walls or vast oceans, going brings light into darkness. The Spirit compels us out of our comfort zones for His glory.

But this act of going is always hard. Your prayers, giving, support and work with them is what equips and sustains missionaries and church planters. Without you, this world would be a darker place!

Thank you for being used by God in His kingdom work!



Tom

## RUGBY REVIVAL (CONTINUED)



These four became a traveling "life group." On road trips and even at rugby parties they would talk about what they were learning. Because of their deeper friendships they began to play better together on the rugby pitch, a fact their other teammates noticed. Rachel, especially,

continued to invite them. She encouraged them to come regardless of their beliefs, saying, "I'm not a Christian either, and they let me come!" She would even approach girls at rugby parties and ask, "Do you like Jesus?" Ironically, one of her reasons to not become a Christian was her dislike of evangelism, so we never told her she was already doing it!

By the end of the 2008 school year, ten of the twenty-one rugby players were attending Bible study. Girls who had never set foot in a church were coming to New Life with the group, some remarking, "If these are what church people are like, I want to know more of them." Many of

them were bonding on such a heart level that at socials after games they would sit around – sober – enjoying each other and engaging about real things. At this point, other rugby teams started to notice that the Michigan girls were different and began asking questions.

This past summer, Rachel accepted Christ. (We found this out after she invited a freshman to come to Bible study by sharing the Gospel with her!) Right now there are ten girls faithfully attending Bible study, two of whom are interning with GCM this summer and are contemplating future leadership roles. There are currently so many spiritually interested players that their coach actually considered having a team chaplain. Who expects to hear someone say the biggest turning point in her faith was joining a rugby team? Our promise verse at New Life this year is Isaiah 49:19, "Even the most desolate parts of your abandoned land will soon be crowded with your people." God has made this a reality in ways we barely dared hope for. In a culture of relativism, students truly do "just want something real."

Please pray that greater things are still to be done here!



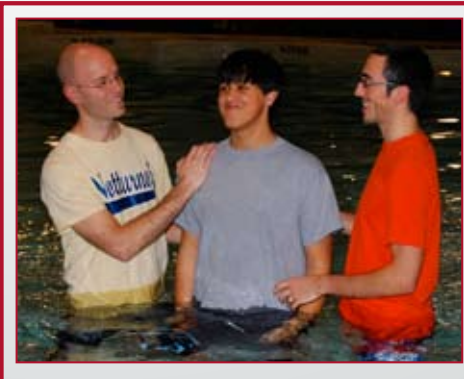
## Growing Young Churches

(continued) >>>>>>

### H2O KENT - KENT, OHIO

In fall 2008, a team from H2O Bowling Green moved to Kent to begin a campus ministry at Kent State University. This past fall, H2O Kent officially launched a service and over 100 students attended. Regularly, H2O Kent averages 60 students per service. There were also two students baptized in the fall semester.

Chad Frank, pastor at H2O Kent, shares that KSU students “live in Kent during the week, but many go home on the weekend. We felt that this was largely due to a lack of community on the campus, so as a church we wanted to strive for a genuine community. We feel like this happened.”



“Less than two years ago nothing like this existed on KSU’s campus. Sixty-plus students are being impacted by the gospel that otherwise wouldn’t be,” says Chad. Currently H2O is

focusing on multiplication. Their hope is to “see God grow H2O to 80 this semester and multiply our small groups.”

Chad shares, “Since sensing God’s call to go, I’ve seen God move in more tangible ways than ever, been ordained as a pastor, and fallen in love with the city and school at Kent State.”

### NEW LIFE CHURCH - ANN ARBOR, MICHIGAN

In 2008, New Life Church in Ann Arbor, Michigan sent a team to The Ohio State University to plant a church. Seven GCM staff members from New Life Church, including one pastor, followed God’s call to Michigan’s rival school. This wasn’t the first church plant for New Life Church and it won’t be the last.

Sending out seven staff members can be a potential burden on a sending church, but not with New Life Church. “Leadership development is focused on all the time,” shares Joel VanderSchel, administrative pastor at New Life Church. “If we know we’re going to plant churches, then we know we need a certain number of leaders. The better we raise up new leaders, the more equipped we’ll be to send out church plants on a regular basis.”

There are many ways to raise up leaders, and New Life explores those ways for the purpose of reaching the world for Christ. Joel says, “We live in a fallen world, surrounded by people in need of God. The church is there and able to provide an opportunity for life change for people who really need it. I’m particularly excited about the kind of ministry we and GCM do by working with college students. They have an opportunity to change the world.”

### H2O CINCINNATI - CINCINNATI, OHIO

The ministry at the University of Cincinnati is still young, but Matt Hilderbran brings a combination of fresh passion and years of experience to the table. In the summer of 2008, after 12 years of ministry in Bowling Green, Matt and his wife Jeni felt God calling them to their hometown of Cincinnati. Matt shares about his experience.



“Our first step in establishing a church at the University of Cincinnati (UC) was to find students and establish a student group at the university. Anyone in college ministry knows that student groups hold the keys to the campus.” Before their move to UC, two student mission trips from Bowling Green were sent to UC

**“Anyone in college ministry knows that student groups hold the keys to the campus.”**

to survey part of the student population. “Through those trips (and much prayer) we found enough students to establish our student group. Since then, we have established H2O Cincinnati as a church.”

“We are still at the very beginning stages of our plant. Our goal is to start a Sunday service at the end of May.” Currently the ministry is focusing on developing leaders. “Discipleship is key to our ministry. We are praying to find young men and women that see their campus, their classes, and their living situations as their mission field. I truly believe the college campus is one of the most vital mission fields in the world.”



## GREAT COMMISSION MINISTRIES

4037 Metric Drive, Suite 500  
PO Box 7101  
Winter Park, FL 32793  
407.671.9700  
877.614.4600 toll free

[www.gcmweb.org](http://www.gcmweb.org)  
[www.mygcm.org](http://www.mygcm.org)

**Thomas Mauriello**  
Executive Director

**Dave Meldrum-Green**  
Finance Director & Treasurer

**For donor inquiries:**  
Judi Major, Gift Processing Coordinator  
donor.services@gcmweb.org x142

**For employment inquiries:**  
Angie Marlow, HR Manager  
hr@gcmweb.org x114

**For media inquiries:**  
Deborah Kennedy, Communications  
content@gcmweb.org x105

## BOARD OF DIRECTORS

**Greg Guevara**  
Chairman of the Board  
Partner—Bose, McKinney & Evans,  
Indianapolis, IN

**Dan Benson**  
COO; American Senior Communities  
Indianapolis, IN

**David Bovenmyer**  
Pastor—Stonebrook Community  
Church, Ames, IA

**Joe Dunn**  
Managing Director—Great  
Commission Europe, Orlando, FL

**Noel Heikkinen**  
Pastor; Riverview Church  
East Lansing, MI

**James Kaufman, CPA**  
Partner—Ernst & Young,  
Philadelphia, PA

**Greg Van Nada**  
Managing Director—GCM Churches,  
East Lansing, MI

**James Winslow, CFP**  
Vice President; United Bank & Trust  
Ann Arbor, MI

**JR Woodward**  
Pastor — Kairos Church,  
Los Angeles, CA

## Overwhelmed with Love (continued)

Reading this verse reminds me that many of us are more loved than we know. There are people around us who really do care deeply about us. But it is a care that can often be hidden, not by intent, but by the mundane rituals and habits of life. Sometimes care and affection requires an opportunity to be expressed. Paul's trials and imprisonment gave the Philippian church that opportunity. Our trials can do the same for us!

It can be difficult for us to share our struggles, especially when we're in the middle of them. We tell ourselves that it's not anyone else's business or that we don't want to "burden" other people. But the true effect is that we keep those who are truly concerned about us at arm's distance. We rob them of an opportunity to show concern and care.

This verse and Paul's image of anathallō should serve to remind us that most of us really are loved more than we know. And if we are willing, sharing our burdens and trials provides our friends and family the opportunity to overwhelm us with love.

## Prayer Requests

- Pray that the Lord will continue to move on the women's rugby team at the University of Michigan.
- Pray for international ministries in the world, that God would continue to bring forth fruit overseas.
- Pray for the four young churches, that God would build their ministries in the community and on campus.
- Pray that we as believers would share our struggles with each other and overwhelm each other with love.

## WAYS TO GET INVOLVED!

GCM is committed to mobilizing missionaries to take the good news of Christ's love to the ends of the earth. Would you consider giving to one or more of these life-changing ministries? It is your ongoing partnership that makes the work of GCM possible.

### NEW LIFE CHURCH

New Life Church is always working to raise up leaders for the purpose of spreading the good news. Your support will go toward the A2 Project to help cover the costs of New Life Church's new facility.

### AWAKEN CHURCH

Awaken Church is beginning to branch out into the greater Jacksonville community. Your gift will help them train the congregation for community outreach as they continue to plant roots in their city.

### H2O KENT

H2O Kent has provided the students at Kent State University with much needed Christian fellowship and discipleship. Your support will give them the resources to continue to multiply.

### WHERE MOST NEEDED

Help support GCM's calling to multiply missionaries around the world. This fund is currently directed toward recruiting and training new missionaries.