

➤ partners

SPRING 2024

connect

God at work *around the world*

The Gospel continues to advance in some of the hardest-to-reach areas.



OUR VISION

A thriving community of Jesus followers in every people group on earth.

OUR MISSION

We connect Kingdom investors with builders of Christ's Kingdom to advance the Gospel among the least reached.



Identify

LOCAL LEADERS REACHING
THE NEXT GENERATION

FINANCIAL UPDATE

Throughout this spring, our giving campaign was focused on Identifying Local Leaders Reaching the Next Generation. The goal of this campaign was to raise \$200,000 so we could identify even more local leaders advancing the Gospel in unreached areas.

We are happy to report that this campaign exceeded our goal! Together, with your help, we raised \$227,342!

Thank you for your faithful investment and your support of the Great Commission.

THREE WAYS TO GIVE

ONLINE wearepartners.org/give

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MAIL PO Box 117567 Atlanta, GA 30368

Meet Jennifer

In Partners' 80-year history, we have seen so many examples of God using ordinary people to fulfill extraordinary plans. Ordinary people like you and me—all of us with a God-sized vision—ready to use our time, talents, and treasure to see the Gospel reach those who have yet to hear the Good News.

Our Board Chair, Jennifer Holloran, is one of the people God is using to help build His Kingdom as she has decades of experience working with Gospel-centered organizations.

Recently, she has taken on the role of Chief Executive Officer at the American Bible Society. In this historic moment, Jennifer becomes the first female President in the 207-year history of the American Bible Society. With over 22 years of dedicated service to Wycliffe Bible Translators, including her recent role as Chief Operating Officer, Jennifer brings a wealth of experience to her new position.

We are truly honored to have Jennifer leading our board. Her impact on our organization has been profound. Jennifer's passion for the global Church is evident through her involvement with various organizations dedicated to spreading the Gospel to all people.

Jennifer embodies the spirit of mutuality in partnership that we carry as the WE of Partners. WE strive for mutuality in partnership, including mutual honor, contribution, and transformation in our relationships. We recognize that it takes a collective effort to fulfill the mission of bringing the Gospel to all corners of the earth. Jennifer's leadership exemplifies this collaborative spirit, and we are pleased to support her as she has taken on her new role at the American Bible Society while continuing to guide us as our Board Chair.



We believe that God has given us the right leadership in our Board of Directors and our Partners Leadership Team during an important time in our history.

We want to thank you, too, for your support and commitment to the ministry of Partners and for the impact you are making. Billions of people still need to know Jesus, and **together**, we are making a way for the Gospel to reach the ends of the earth!

Undeterred in Their Mission for Christ

FROM DR. CHAO



My father, Calvin Chao, was a pastor in China and the first ministry partner of Partners which was then known as China Native Evangelistic Crusade (CNEC).

The 1940s were tumultuous times in China due to the war with Japan, which affected Chinese and Westerners alike. Western missionaries who assisted Chinese pastors wanted to ensure that the ministry continued even after they had to leave. This vision gave birth to CNEC in 1943, a true blessing to pastors like my father, both spiritually and materially.

In a short time, my father's ministry expanded dramatically. He established "preaching bands" that quickly spread across China, resulting in the creation of fellowship halls and Bible schools.

I vividly recall tent meetings where thousands gathered to hear the Gospel. Also, my father played a pivotal role in initiating the China Inter-Varsity Fellowship for university students.

The post-war era brought new challenges. As communists advanced south, the "cultural revolution" took its toll on evangelists. Many faced persecution, with some becoming martyrs and others imprisoned. Yet, many remained undeterred in their mission for Christ.

In 1957, God gave my father the vision to establish Chinese churches in the US, anticipating an influx of Chinese students. With CNEC's support and a miraculous provision of visas, our family moved to the US. This relocation paved the way for a sprawling network of Chinese churches across North America.

Thanks to my father's tenacity, countless souls in China embraced Jesus. His North American churches and the leaders he mentored continue to advance the Kingdom.

THANK YOU FOR BEING A PART OF THE "WE" AT PARTNERS.

Whether you've been giving for decades or only a short time, your prayers and financial support are continuing the legacy and advancing the Gospel among the least reached.





Once the Capital; Now a Ghost City

EAST & WEST AFRICA

On April 15, 2023, violent clashes erupted (and continue) between the Sudanese army and the paramilitary forces in Sudan, resulting in what the UN declares “one of the worst humanitarian disasters in recent memory.”

The former capital city of Khartoum has become a ghost town with public buildings, hospitals, schools, utilities, museums, anything to do with the government destroyed. Many thousands of people, Muslims and Christians alike, have been killed. Millions have fled to neighboring countries, only to end up merely existing in a crowded refugee camp, their only possessions what they carried with them.

God protected our partner’s churches, and 30 to 40 people meet when possible for worship in three of the locations. But some believers’ homes were destroyed as well as the women’s training center with the sewing machines and computers were stolen.

For those who could not flee Khartoum, the situation is almost unbearable. South Sudanese leader, Rev. Jala, shared how it is for many:

“People still in Khartoum are starving because there’s no water and no food in the stores. People are smuggling food in, but if a family member goes looking for bread and water, he or she may never return home. The situation is tough. It’s beyond our understanding. We don’t know when peace will come.”

HOPE IN THE MIDST OF CHAOS

Then Rev. Jala threw a different light on a hopeless situation. He said that the very Muslims who used to persecute Christians are now as desperate as the believers, only without hope in Jesus!

“Though we don’t want war, the very people who wanted to kill the Christians have become refugees and are themselves suffering and needy. They too lost everything they owned and have become vulnerable. God brought the mission field to us. We are helping those we can. Many of them have turned to faith in Jesus Christ. The opportunities are huge before us right now.”

Sowing into Women's Lives

Over the past year, one of our partners in Indonesia saw 50 people come to faith in Jesus Christ and were baptized. Praise the Lord! Can you imagine that? In a country where persecution is high and there are cultural pressures, 50 people were eager to publicly show their dedication to their new faith.

Of those new believers, some of the women started sewing classes to support their families and teach other women to sew. These sewing classes have been great ministry opportunities. Since the class is made up of baptized believers, they always begin class with a Bible study. They discuss ways they can reach out to their family, friends, and neighbors, share prayer requests, and pray for one another. It's a beautiful time of fellowship and growth in their Christian walk.

Bianca's husband was one of the 50 people who came to faith last year. He shared the Gospel with his wife, and she too put her trust in the Lord. Bianca was taken with the story of how Jesus died for her sins and if she believed in Jesus as her Savior and Lord, she could have a guarantee of forgiveness of sins and a guarantee of going to heaven.

As a new believer, Bianca heard of the women's sewing class and asked if she could join. She was welcomed with open arms. She found a loving community of women where they would talk about the Bible and learn how to share the Gospel with others.



In time, six of the women, including Bianca, opened sewing businesses in their homes. She said this has been a big financial blessing for her family. Since she lives in a remote village where money is scarce, sometimes she gets paid with rice or other produce from their fields. "I'm so grateful to the Lord for saving my husband and me and for caring for my family in ways I never dreamed could happen," she said.





Swapping Manmade Idols for the True God

SOUTH ASIA

Two years ago, one of our leadership teams shared the Gospel in a South Indian community. They met a village leader named Bhavin who was a devout Hindu priest. He belonged to the Lingayat sect, a break-off of Hinduism, and worshiped the Hindu god Shiva.

The Lingayats are leading merchants in the region and claim the respect of all the Hindu castes. For income, Bhavin's family owns a flour mill and recently added a red chili powder business.

Bhavin and his wife Kalyani were strong idol worshippers. Over four months, the team shared the Good News with the couple and answered all their questions. After one more time explaining the cross and the love of God, Bhavin felt convicted of sin and committed his life to the Lord Jesus Christ! Angels in heaven rejoiced as he became a follower of Jesus!

Bhavin's first step of action was to get rid of his idols. Before long, after seeing the change in her husband, Kalyani also came to believe. And their son, Arjun, who was away in college, also believed as did their daughter! Now the entire family were followers of Jesus Christ.

Arjun was in his final year of college. Each weekend, he would return home to learn more about their new-found faith and to help with a fellowship of believers that was meeting in his parents' home. On weekdays, he studied the Bible by Zoom through the ministry's training

seminars. The leadership teams also gave him training materials to study on his own.

The family has faced opposition in the village, but so far, no physical attacks. The couple is witnessing mostly to blood relatives who are responsive because of seeing this family's changed lives.

This January, one of the leadership team visited Bhavin on a Sunday and found about 16 men and women gathered in their home. They came from surrounding communities. All the believers told the leader they came to know Jesus because this family shared the Gospel with them. In February, 14 people were baptized.

Bhavin and Kalyani decided to start a community of Jesus followers in their home since the nearest church is about 20 miles away. Thanks to the perseverance of one leadership team, God's love is transforming entire families from worshipping manmade idols to worshipping the Creator of mankind.



Hope in Gaza

MIDDLE EAST & NORTH AFRICA

The current conflict in the Holy Land has reached unprecedented levels of intensity, presenting immense challenges. Around 850 Christians remain in Gaza – 20 of these are from Muslim-background. Our partners know these individuals personally and have spent time worshipping with some of them.

Sadly, we have lost 23 believers in Gaza, including a mother and daughter who were shot and killed in the church courtyard, and the church's piano player who was shot while checking on her home during what was supposed to be a two-hour cease fire.

BUT THERE IS HOPE

The Lord is actively at work in Gaza. Our partners fervently pray “for life to emerge from death,” and we are witnessing answers to those prayers. Despite facing immense fear, the church in Gaza is pursuing the Prince of Peace with unwavering faith. Even in the midst of gunfire and bombs, people have noticed a sense of peace in the believers. They are intrigued by their faith and are asking questions about Jesus.

Remarkably, 20 Muslim-background believers scattered throughout Gaza are standing strong in their faith and building the faith of other Jesus followers. They're holding onto the truth that the Lord is their Shepherd. They tell about very real encounters with the Holy Spirit in their darkest moment, providing comfort and strength in their time of need.

THANKS TO YOUR GENEROSITY

We have been able to help in tangible ways. We helped a few believers start a simple bakery to provide employment opportunities and fresh bread for the community. The children are very fearful, so our partners have initiated two new children's ministries to offer hope to the children and their families.

Believers remind us that your prayers and support are invaluable during these horrific times in the Holy Land. We know that even in the darkest moments, the light of Jesus will prevail.

Never Too Old to Learn God's Ways

One of our local leaders in Pakistan was about to start a new community of Jesus followers. Sunil, a more experienced leader from the ministry, was asked to attend, observe, and give the local leader any suggestions on how it could be improved.

Sunil sat in the back of the small room, notes in hand, to make sure the leader followed protocol and that everything went well. And it did! In four questions, the group had discovered what the Word of God was telling them, then they encouraged one another and prayed for each other. Sunil told the leader, "You did great! Seeing most of the people engaged and participating was a blessing to observe."

While tea was being served, a 70+-year-old woman came up to Sunil and thanked him for coming and helping them. Then she said, "I have a question. How can an illiterate person who does not know God's Word and has never learned how to explain it comment on the text?"

Sunil was quiet for a moment. Then he asked her, "What do you call God?"

She said, "I call Him Father."

Sunil said, "This means you are His daughter, and the Word of God tells us that He gave His only begotten Son for you and for me. Not only this but we were given the Holy Spirit. I agree with you that we cannot understand His Word, but this is only possible when His Holy Spirit helps us!"

The woman quietly asked, "Do you think I have the Holy Spirit?"

He replied, "When we accept His Son as our Savior and Lord, He promises to give us His Holy Spirit as a gift!"

"I've never heard that before," she said.



"It is very simple," said Sunil. Then he took her hands in his and told her to repeat a prayer after him. He led her in a prayer of repentance, and she asked Jesus into her heart. Next, Sunil said, "Aunty, from today, you have His Holy Spirit!" She was so happy. She kissed his forehead and asked him to come again. Sunil returned home with a heart full of joy and praise!

Two weeks later, Sunil was in the neighborhood and went to the same Bible study. This woman was there and came and sat right next to him. After the passage was read, she was the first to respond. Sunil was so happy. People in the group told him that since their last meeting, they had seen a great change in her.

After the session ended, the woman told Sunil, "I wish someone had told me what you said long before. I do not have much time, but since I accepted Him, I feel so full of joy and peace!"

"Praise the Lord!" he exclaimed and prayed with her. Sunil returned home, again encouraged and committed to continue multiplying this blessing!

The Partners Way

As you know, Partners has a rich legacy—more than 80 years strong! Since our beginning, our commitment has always been to continually learn and adapt in our partnerships with indigenous leaders, aiming to carry the Gospel to some of the hardest-to-reach places. Today, we believe God has led us to a new chapter in Partners' history and a new opportunity to make an even bigger Kingdom impact.

Our vision and mission do remain the same: we will continue to connect Kingdom investors with leaders who advance the Gospel among the least reached. And we can achieve this by focusing on identifying, investing, and inspiring indigenous leaders who are pioneering church movements among unreached people groups.

We partner with Kingdom building local leaders who are focused on church multiplication. These local leaders work with other local leaders to identify communities in need and strategize how to introduce the Gospel. By collaborating for a larger Kingdom impact, we all can strengthen and equip communities of Jesus followers to make disciples who make disciples, and to start churches that start more churches.

Scan this QR Code or visit wearepartners.org/thepartnersway to read more about our strategic direction.

Your continued giving to Partners will allow us to accelerate the broader work of Partners, with the goal of establishing a community of Jesus followers among every people group. We are grateful for your partnership. Your investment in the Kingdom is having a significant eternal impact.



Scan this QR Code to view our full strategic direction document.





Because You Asked

FREQUENTLY ASKED INVESTOR QUESTIONS

How is our organization addressing the challenge of restricted or illegal Gospel outreach in areas of persecution, given the shift away from holistic community development strategies?

We recognize the importance of having an entry point to reach and serve the lost. Local leaders that we partner with will apply many of the same community development strategies but will have the autonomy to implement strategies for greatest local impact to build new communities of Jesus followers.

This WHOLEistic process forms the core of our vision, and we are partnering with like-minded organizations to achieve this goal.

Are the church planting movements we support focused on making disciples or converts?

Our support encompasses BOTH! We invest in local leaders who share the Gospel, disciple new believers, and initiate communities of Jesus followers.

The heart of disciple-making and church multiplication is to lead people into a lifetime of obediently following Jesus. Obediently following the commands of Jesus includes making disciples, and not to simply make converts. The core strategy of disciple-making and church planting is to make disciples that make disciples and plant churches that plant churches.

What defines a thriving community of Jesus followers?

A thriving community of Jesus followers is a church that experiences growth in both depth and width. “Depth” refers to maturing in Christ and discipleship, while “width” signifies evangelism and outreach expansion.

We believe in fostering both aspects, embracing a “BOTH AND” approach, where the Church grows internally in spiritual maturity and externally through evangelism and discipleship efforts, creating a thriving community of believers.





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JOIN THE MOVEMENT

A MONTHLY GIVING COMMUNITY
COMMITTED TO BRINGING
THE GOSPEL TO EVERYONE, EVERYWHERE.

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