

~UPDATES~

In our September 2005 prayer letter, Russ and I asked you to pray for the OC Research Workshop that was to be held in Worthing, England (where we were living at the time). We coveted your prayers that the Lord would show our researchers how they could better handle the research responsibilities in their country of ministry, that they would be an encouragement to each other, and that they would be a big help in meeting the needs of the national church under the guidance of the Holy Spirit. Now, fast-forward to our May 2011 prayer letter. We asked you to pray for the upcoming OC Research Consultation, to be held May 9-13. I caught up with our Director of Research, Jeanie Curryer, and asked how the consultation had gone. These are her words:



*“The consultation went very well. There was excellent interaction among the approximately 30 participants, who represented more than 10 countries. It was exciting to see how far our 11 core researchers had come since 2005, maturing in ministry and leadership. It was a powerful time of learning, sharing, and encouraging each other. Nearly everyone was up front doing something ... each had something to offer. These researchers are giving of themselves beyond OC. Networking takes place regionally, nationally, continentally, and globally. Put researchers in a room together and watch what happens!”* At the end of the consultation, after 12 years as Director of Research, the baton was passed from Jeanie to Larry Kraft (who resides in England). We are deeply grateful to the Lord for the years Jeanie invested in leading our research team. A job well done!

At the time of this writing, Russ’ health is much improved. His energy is returning, he has lost approximately 20-25 pounds of body fluid, and his heart continues to stay in rhythm. We are indeed grateful to the Lord for his healing touch upon Russ’ body. Thank you for your prayers on his behalf.

In May, we attended Katie’s graduation from Multnomah University. It was a proud moment to see her walk down the aisle to receive her bachelor’s degree in biblical studies. Katie is now in the application process of joining Cadence International, where she hopes to go back overseas and work with military youth. Over the next months, she will be attending Cadence’s candidacy program, raising her support, and determining her place of ministry. We are excited to see how God is going to use Katie. She has much to offer! (A piece of trivia: Katie will be a fourth-generation Lambert missionary—now that’s exciting!) In June, we also attended Andrew’s (youngest grandson) high school graduation in Boring, Oregon. Another proud moment! Andrew’s plan is to study Bible for a year at Frontier School of the Bible in Wyoming, and then see what God has next for him in his journey. Andrew loves people and is very creative working with his hands. We look forward to seeing what the Lord has in store for him in the future.



*Katie, Grandpa,  
and Andrew.*

This year’s Personnel Enrichment Program (PEP) will be held July 21-30 at Christ Haven Conference Center in Florissant, CO. Pray for our furloughing missionaries who will be attending, that this will be a time of refreshment (emotionally, physically, and spiritually) as well as a time of encouragement as they share with each other.

We want to wish you a wonderful summer as you travel, stay home, visit family and friends, tend gardens, enjoy the sun, etc. We are blessed because of you.

Serving Him together,

(for Russ, too!)

# From the President...

## CLOSING THE GAP

In May I asked you to join me in praying for six strategic conferences and workshops being facilitated by OC throughout the month in countries around the world. Each gathering sought to stimulate strategic cooperation among leaders for the discipling of nations. Here's one way in which the Lord answered your prayers.

**Closing the Gap** was a global event initiated by OC and facilitated by a team of six agencies. Working together, we brought together 122 leaders from 28 nations. These men and women represent 80 organizations and networks, and directly influence 167,000 Christian workers.

A common yearning drew us together: *What will it take to reach the remaining least-reached people groups and nations? What "deep change" is required to see an acceleration in church planting among those who have never heard? How can we leverage our efforts by partnering together?*

Reports were heard from around the world and best practices discussed. Our central focus was devoted to facilitating church planting movements, defined by David Garrison as "a rapid multiplication of indigenous churches planting churches that sweeps through a people group or population segment." Such movements are drawing thousands to Christ in some of the toughest places in the world.

During the week, it was thrilling to see friendships born between leaders and bridges built between organizations. Hearts connected, creativity was unleashed, and collaboration flowed! Hours were spent in energized conversations around tables as leaders discussed practical ways to more effectively cooperate in pioneer ministries.

**Closing the Gap** gave rise to a surge of new (and strengthened) partnering initiatives. Imagine ... 80 organizations and networks working side by side to share Jesus' love in some of the world's most challenging places. It's happening! These initiatives are gaining momentum in places like Central Asia and North Africa. Organizations are joining hands in new ways to penetrate unengaged, unreached people clusters like the Bengali of India and the Malay of Indonesia. Many more could be mentioned.

This is the result of the Lord's gracious answer to the prayers of many. In a similar way, his blessing was seen on each of the six conferences highlighted in May.

One of OC's greatest joys is to serve as a catalyst in drawing Christian leaders and organizations together to advance God's purposes. Partnering reduces duplication, leads to innovation, multiplies effectiveness, and, above all, honors the Lord.

Thank you for helping OC stimulate teamwork for God's glory among the nations!



Dr. Greg Gripenrog

## CLOSING the GAP



Partnering For Strategic Church Planting

### Did You Know?

**Closing the Gap** was a global event initiated by OC and facilitated by a team of six agencies, that brought together 122 leaders from 28 nations.

### Our Vision

Healthy churches working together to disciple all nations.