

REPORT OF THE SPECIAL COMMITTEE ON FOREIGN MISSIONS
To the Diocesan Council of the Northeast and Mid-Atlantic
November, 2011

Here is some of the latest information concerning R.E. missions:

By means of your gifts and offerings the Board of Foreign Missions of the Reformed Episcopal Church has continued to support our missionaries: the Jerdans, Judy King, Bishop Gerhard Meyer and Grace. The BFM raises awareness of international and intercultural missions in parishes at home while partnering with a number of developing ministries around the world. Bishop Royal Grote is the President of the Board, and the Rev. William Jerdan is Executive Secretary.

At the General Council in Texas in June 2010 it was urged that every parish contribute to the mission projects of the Reformed Episcopal Church. These projects are supported by the voluntary giving of parishes and individuals. Neither the budget nor the tithe system underwrites the BFM. Here are some current opportunities to give to missions:

- Support a Reformed Episcopal missionary in Brazil \$400.00 needed monthly
- Support a Reformed Episcopal missionary in Germany \$1100.00 needed monthly
- Support a national church planter in Croatia \$ 300.00 monthly
- Support a national church planter in Serbia \$ 300.00 monthly
- One-time training course for 50 catechists in Africa \$2000.00
- One-time training seminar for 40 national pastors in Nepal \$4000.00. The Rev. Jerry McLynn is scheduled to lead the first one to Nepal.

Executive Secretary.

Bill and Diane have traveled extensively spreading awareness and support for our current R.E. ministries and commitments, and forging new ones. Bill and Dianne Jerdan are trying to give a greater mission mindset in our parishes. They put together the bulletin insert called, "Reformed Episcopal Missions" which has been helpful in getting out news and updating our parishes on the latest needs of our missionaries.

By being available to answer emails, phone calls, and respond to questions, communication between the BFM and the parishes has improved, and this will hopefully translate into more support for our missionaries and their projects. The Board of Foreign Missions requests that the parishes pray for Bill and Diane's work as executive secretary of the Board. His continued financial support is needed.

Moreover, communication and contact with Anglican missionaries and mission agencies of the A.C.N.A. has increased. Bill has been giving presentations of the mission work at the Diocesan synods. He facilitated the short term mission to Croatia last summer, helping with the organization, financing, and preparation.

Nepal/SE Asia

When Bill and Diane visited Southeast Asia, they made contact with Anglican leaders in Cambodia, Nepal, Singapore, etc. There are opportunities for English teachers to go and serve in

these countries. Nepal has become a special partner for the Reformed Episcopal Church in terms of the orphanage there, and new churches springing up. This emerging diocese is currently called the Deanery of Nepal. The first 2 Nepalese to be ordained presbyters in the Anglican Church in Nepal (ACN) will be ordained Sunday November 6. The BFM encourages each pastor to pray for the spread of the Gospel this Sunday Nov. 6, and pray especially for God's blessing on the Mission Deanery of Nepal.

Jerry McLynn to Nepal.

Bill Jerdan is organizing a teaching mission with Jerry McLynn to Nepal for June 2012. Bill and Jerry plan to meet most of the Nepalese lay pastors in this people movement, provide some training, and better see how to continue our REC-ACN partnership. It is hoped that the \$4000.00 needed for Jerry can be raised in the Diocese of the Northeast as a Diocesan mission project.

Symposium on Southeast Asia.

Think about attending the Jan 26-27 "Symposium" on Southeast Asia to discover the outreach opportunities in 7 South and Southeast Asia countries. The Anglican Church is getting involved in this amazing mission movement, and we have an open door to assist the Province of Southeast Asia to reach out to the peoples of Indonesia, Nepal, Vietnam, Thailand, Laos and Cambodia and Myanmar. The event will be held Jan 26th -27th at St. Vincent's Cathedral, Bedford, Texas. This symposium is being sponsored by Anglican Global Mission Partners. See the AGMP website for more information.

Egypt.

Bill Jerdan, Greg Miller and Paul Howden met with Dr. Chris Taylor, an Anglican professor who grew up in the Arab world and leads university students on short-term missions to Egypt. Chris teaches at Drew University. God willing, Chris will lead a team this January. The team will work with the Anglican Church in Egypt on several worthwhile projects helping refugees and other charities. Anybody interested in serving on such a team should contact Chris at CTaylor@drew.edu. The changing situation in Egypt makes this opportunity a challenge.

The Rt. Rev. Charles Dorrington and Cuba.

Bishop Charles Dorrington has spearheaded a mission effort in Cuba. His diocese of Western Canada is able to do this owing to Canada's lack of travel restrictions. In the last ten years, Bishop Dorrington has led small teams to Cuba where the Anglican Church is growing dramatically. Bishop Charles has planted churches, ordained ministers, baptized new converts, done confirmations, preached, married couples, preached, taught, got thrown in jail for meeting illegally, delivered needed medications to poor Cuban believers, given away Spanish Prayer Books, etc. This is an exciting ministry for Canadians, and U.S. parishes may be able to get involved in as well in the future God willing.

Sue Brodish.

Sue has returned to U.S. and shifted her ministry to serving the elderly as she cares for her mother in Florida. We are grateful to Sue for 20+ years of service in Germany. She continues to send reports on her new US ministry and can be supported through Global Outreach Mission.

Greg Wright.

With the merging of Arab World Ministries into Pioneers Inc. and the closing of the national office in Pennsylvania, Greg has shifted to doing Information Technology work for the REC. Greg is now working with the Diocese of the Northeast and Mid-Atlantic and R.E. Seminary in Blue Bell, where he has reorganized computer systems and improved our web sites. Greg put together the online RE parish map in Google Maps and designed the online registration system for Council.

Roger Converse.

Roger is working with international students in the Philadelphia area. Roger is leading a Bible study at the Graduate Student Center of the University of Pennsylvania under the auspices of Intervarsity Christian Fellowship and Drexel University. Roger has good ideas on how to reach out to internationals, something which some of the parishes of the diocese could get involved in. Roger has a newsletter with fascinating details of his teaching methods and activities with internationals. Please contact Roger to get on his newsletter list. Rogerw33@verizon.net

Germany.

Every summer Bishop Gerhard Meyer invites a team to assist him at the Knull Camp near Swartzberg, Germany. Bishop Seamans of the Diocese of Mid-America attended this last summer. As usual, this last summer (July/August 2011) the team prepared the camp, did general cleanup, then enjoyed a week of immersion with German young people on the English Camp. If you feel that the Lord is moving you to get involved, please contact Bishop Gerhard Meyer via email.

Recently Bishop Meyer has helped establish contacts with Croatia/Serbia, and Sweden. After the work and ministry of the summer camp, the team typically does historical tours and travel.

Nigeria Mission Cancelled.

After the Board of Foreign Missions voted to sponsor a mission trip to Nigeria in the summer of 2011, the mission had to be cancelled due to the threat of violence. This was on the recommendation of the Archbishop of Nigeria. The money sacrificially raised by our parishes for the recovery ward of the hospital was sent, and hopefully the wing of the hospital planned is being built. Future summer missions to Nigeria will depend on the safety and the recommendation of the Archbishop.

Brazil.

Judy King was home for a short while for medical reason and is now back in Brazil. This year the Rev. Eric Jorgensen traveled to the Apurina village to dedicate the church facility built by the summer 2009 team. The Rev. Joe Fockler has posted Brazil team's activity on YouTube touching the building of the church in 2009. As Judy King returns to Brazil, your Board of Foreign Missions invites our parishes to include both Judy and her Wycliffe co-worker Cathie Aberdour in their intercessory prayers. Both Judy and Cathie have on-going health concerns that require continued diagnosis and treatment on the field. Joe Fockler's YouTube video can be viewed at: <http://youtu.be/5q36bXGepVU>. Joe has at least 4 videos on YouTube, but this one connects to the others.

South America Mission Team.

The BFM is allowing the Rev. Paul Howden organize a mission team to serve in South America

for the summer of 2012. At the deadline for turning in this report, no concrete plans could be established, although a joint mission project with SAMS-USA is possible. SAMS stands for the “Society of Anglican Missionaries and Senders” formerly known as the “South America Missionary Society.” They have been working in South America for over a hundred years.

Christian Formation.

Mrs. Chris Fous has retired as Coordinator for this Catechist Training program that is used in various countries of Africa. It is called, “Following Christ: A Christian Formation Program.” The Board of Foreign Missions seeks someone with experience in Anglican Churches in Africa to serve as a volunteer coordinator and promoter of this ministry. The Rev. Samuel Maduma organizes the ministry in East Africa.

Summer Teams within Diocese.

The summer outreach within our diocese took place in Brooklyn, NY this past June 2011. Such ministry harmonizes nicely with global outreach. The Rev. David Crum has a report on last summer’s project.

2011 Summer Mission to Croatia.

The Lord opened doors for the Board of Foreign Missions to sponsor a summer mission to Croatia. Here are my (Paul Howden) general impressions of the 2011 Summer Mission to Croatia. Perhaps some of this will inspire a parishioner of our diocese to join a future summer mission to Croatia.

The Croatia mission was one of the best short-term missions I have participated on. The team got along well, and by God’s grace we accomplished good things for Christ’s kingdom.

In terms of accomplishments I believe that the 2011 Summer Mission to Croatia strengthened bonds between Good Shepherd Church in Old Town, Osijek, the Tordinci parish and the Reformed Episcopal Church. I would like to believe that the parishioners of the deanery of Croatia that we had contact with think, “This church from the U.S.A. is one we want to be part of.” There was mutual encouragement and perhaps this summer’s team smoothed the way for future mission efforts.

The Good Shepherd facility in Osijek had a nice worship area, and the \$5,000.00 from the BFM had been used to hire professionals to fix up the entrance before we arrived, a huge project. Archdeacon Jasmin and other Good Shepherd church members from Old Town Osijek had fixed up the kitchen, bathroom and the two rooms where we stayed. The Croatian brethren did a lot of prep work so that we the team could stay comfortably there. The bathroom, kitchen, and bedroom situations were perhaps not up to American standards, but this is a summer mission, not a five-star hotel.

Nevertheless, much of the rest of the 300-year-old facility was run down and dilapidated from years of disuse. One of the purposes of our summer mission was to clean it up and improve it. We converted two of the downstairs rooms into a second smaller chapel to be used in winter, and a sacristy. The walls where we put the sacristy and small chapel were marred by holes and cracks and required much plaster work to fill in.

We were able to improve the entry doors to the main sanctuary by sandpapering off the roughness, putting primer coats and finish coat of paint.

We pulled out tall weeds and landscaped a bit the garden area with flowers, mowed overgrown lawn and leveled a depression at one place in the grass.

We filled a dumpster with trash and debris, vacuumed and wiped down.

We spent a good amount of time and effort cleaning the windows of which there were many.

The floor was spattered with paint, and we cleaned that.

We, the members of the Croatia 2011 summer team, gained a love and admiration for Archdeacon Jasmin Milic and family. Jasmin is an indefatigable servant, a great intellect, a wise pastor, an inspiration to others, and natural leader. His wife Tamara is wonderful and fixed us a nice meal. We enjoyed her company. Son Mikael and daughter Ivana are good children; Mikael especially helpful with the filming and computer technology. Archdeacon Jasmin was a great host. He was at our service the entire time, willing to drive us places, do whatever we wanted, and answer questions. It seems that the deanery is in good hands with Archdeacon Jasmin.

We also had the privilege of meeting the Rev. Jasmin Koso and his wife from Zagreb. We came to know the Rev. Nenad Adzic of Tordinici, and the Rev. Petar Petrovich of Serbia. Besides Archdeacon Jasmin, we spent the most time with Petar. I think that Damien and Jolie may not have met him since they needed to depart before Petar arrived. Fr. Petar worked with us, and got to know him well. We never did meet the presbyter from Shibenik, Fr. Jadran Jelovcic. It is my intention to keep these good people in prayer. These pastors work full-time jobs and do their ministry as they can. Your gift of \$300.00 would free them up for full-time ministry.

Outreach and evangelism was minimal due to amount of work we had before us. We worked every day up until the Friday afternoon before we left. We scarcely had time to carry out an English class, or evangelistic series. Perhaps next time? The team still had a high profile and visibility in the surrounding neighborhood of Good Shepherd. We made the acquaintance of the shop owners at several places, and others we met here and there.

Fr. Damien Grout and wife Jolie were an inspiration to me and others. Damien's expertise was extremely helpful in the work projects. I pray that this could be the start of more missionary activity for them. In my opinion the Lord God has made Damien of missionary material. He is well-read, educated, a hard worker, talented in construction, physically and spiritually strong, and other good traits. He is certainly capable of leading a mission team in the future, if that worked out.

Caleb Andrews, our 19-year-old champion wrestler, was the perfect team member – easy to get along with, flexible, hardworking, uses common sense when traveling and working, picks up foreign languages quickly, never complains and is cheerful. Being a top-level wrestler in high school and college meant that no job was too hard for him to do. I thank God that Caleb joined our team. He was a great room mate for me, and God willing will continue to be an asset for summer missions. St. Stephen's R.E. Church has a good missionary in Caleb.

The Rev. Canon Ron Moock did a splendid job behind the pulpit, preaching at both Tordinici and Good Shepherd. At key moments he helped in a big way, such as getting our departing flight reworked once it was cancelled. Kathy was unfortunately recovering from a severe illness most of the trip that left her with a cruel cough, and weakness of body meant she was unable to work for long stretches of time. Still, Kathy was a blessing with her posting of events, and cheerful encouragement and good spirit.

As this report is being submitted there is no confirmed plan for a summer mission to Croatia, but it is probable. As soon as the Board makes a decision, the news will go out, and I would challenge and encourage you (the gentle reader) to pray about serving the Lord in Croatia/Serbia this summer.

Also there are opportunities for individuals or couples who could raise their own support, to apply to stay in Osijek, Croatia teaching English. This could be one month or several months stay. More than likely, Archdeacon Jasmin would offer the same living quarters the summer team used. They are right in the Old Town center where there is much opportunity for outreach with college students.

How do pray and what to do.

The following are some practical ways for each parish to pray for and encourage mission activity:

1. Bill Jerdan sends out a bulletin insert on a regular basis. The half-page newsletter features updates about our missionaries and mission in general. Each parish should receive the half-page insert sent via email, make copies of it, and be sure it gets put in the bulletin or the hands of the parishioners.
2. For each parish to set aside one Sunday out of the year to focus on global mission, perhaps the first Sunday of October.
3. For each parish that is not yet giving to missionaries to begin to do so; and for parishes that are currently supporting missionaries to increase their giving by 2% annually.
4. To create banners with the names of missionaries the parish supports, pictures of the missionaries, the flag of the country in which they serve, etc. This could be hung in the parish hall, or put up on special mission Sundays.
5. To pray for the Anglican Church in Nepal this Nov. 6.

Web Site.

Please visit the BFM web site for more information about mission work: RECBFM.org. The layout of our web site is attractive and easy to navigate. Go to this site to learn about past and future trips to Germany, Croatia, and South America. Thanks to Deaconess Theresa Johnson for her dedication as webmaster. As the Chair of the Committee on Foreign Missions for our Diocese please feel free to contact me about any question, recommendation, concern. paulhowden6@yahoo.com or (570) 346-2762.

Respectfully Submitted,

The Rev. Paul S. Howden

Rector of Grace Reformed Episcopal Church, Scranton, Pennsylvania

Chair of the Foreign Missions Committee of the Diocese, and member of the BFM of the REC