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## GLOBAL LOSTNESS

*God's purpose  
to conquer lostness*

A Deaf woman is baptized in Batangas province of the Philippines. Ministry among the Deaf in Southeast Asia continues to grow. IMB Photo



In the beginning, God created the heavens and the earth and everything in them. And it was good, until it wasn't. Since those fateful moments in the garden, creation has suffered the consequences of sin while humanity has perished, living a hope-deprived life far from God. But God, in His grace, made redemption possible through Jesus Christ. And through His gospel we declare that the lost are found, dead are brought to life and hope is renewed.

In Revelation 7:9-10, we see the victorious culmination to the grand narrative that transcends this earth, and we rest in the certainty that this vision will come to pass. But today, somewhere between the Great Commission and the Great Multitude, we find ourselves facing the greatest problem in the world: lostness.

As war, natural disasters, humanitarian crises and political instability grip the world, Southern Baptists are sending International Mission Board missionaries to be steadfastly present among those who have never heard the gospel. Christ is present among Christians through His Holy Spirit and your missionaries are present among the nations. They spend years, decades even, building the relationships that lead to establishing an enduring Christian witness.

Missionary presence represents IMB's core mission, and has since our inception. Missionary presence cultivates gospel access, gospel belief and church planting and multiplication.

Gospel access that knows no geographic or social boundary.  
Gospel belief that results in lives transformed.  
Church planting and multiplication that leads to local ownership of God's mission.

Through the cooperative investment of Southern Baptist churches, we've deployed the best and brightest missionaries throughout the world. It doesn't end with sending. We train them, support them and sustain their presence all over the world so the nations can continue to hear the gospel.

Your church can't be everywhere. You can't be everywhere. On the other hand, by partnering with the IMB you can have a global impact. Your partnership allows us to deliver the gospel around the world while your church bears fruit right where God has planted you.

God's glory known to all people is why we ask you to pray – not just this week, but every day. Your prayers are the power source through which missionaries serve. Together, we seek to take the gospel to every nation, all tribes and peoples and languages. We give ourselves to this mission every day through praying, giving, going and sending.

As you pray today, ask God how you should respond to His mission to reach the nations. Lift your 3,500+ IMB missionaries and their families to the Lord right now. Pray that our hearts will not be content to see 157,690 people die without Christ every day. Praise God for His continued work among the lost. Praise Him that His purpose is for every person to hear the gospel and join Him for eternity.

Pastor Thomas Abgemeh from Grace Baptist Church in Pakro, Ghana, baptizes a new believer in the Densu River outside of Nsawam, Ghana. One of the IMB's key goals is to see gospel belief that results in lives transformed among the nations. Each baptism an IMB missionary is a part of is another example of God's work in transforming lives through our missionary presence. IMB Photo



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## HEALTHCARE

*God's reach  
through healthcare*

Medical volunteer Anna Leigh Breedlove plays with a toddler in the pediatric ward of the Baptist Medical Centre of Nalerigu, Ghana. Healthcare missions gives access to the unreached, allows for intimate conversations, meets needs, makes disciples and empowers the church. IMB Photo



Word spread quickly in this North African town. A medical clinic arrived, and anyone is welcome. Setting up in a local church gave some people pause, but free healthcare is hard to turn down.

Security guards sent by the local government wander close by. They are used to keeping a close watch on activities hosted by Christians. The medical needs in the area are numerous and most people have very few opportunities to see a doctor or nurse or even get needed medicines. This time police choose not to deny people entry. The clinics don't seem to cause trouble in the community.

International Mission Board missionaries Patrick and Anne Stein work with ministry partners to facilitate medical clinics all over the country. Healthcare strategies offer access to people they wouldn't even have a chance to meet, let alone engage in gospel conversation. By meeting physical needs, believers can also bring the cure to their greatest spiritual need — separation from Jesus.

The Steins are used to being watched. It's part of their lives in a region where Christians are not always welcomed. Inside the church, though, set up on these days to receive patients, security is relaxed. Even the police are invited to have their blood pressure checked or see a doctor.

People come ready for help, but they also come ready to talk. They bring their ailments, their concerns and even their spiritual questions. One patient seeks care for an infection.

Another had a dream last night and wonders if someone in the church can help them understand it.

Healthcare professionals are ready to receive them, but so are Christians trained in evangelism, discipleship and church planting. The Steins train several hundred people each year in gospel-sharing strategies; many are used alongside the medical clinics. They see countless relationships built as contact information is traded and follow-up visits in homes are added to calendars.

It's usually after the clinic has closed that church members find those who are ready to accept Christ. People come for the free medicine, but some find eternal life. The Steins hear reports from their partnering churches about those who have come to faith. After one clinic in the fall of 2021, more than 60 people made professions of faith as a result of the relationships started.

In one town, the good will formed by a church clinic was so strong that local police and religious leaders allowed a pastor to hold prayer meetings. People of different faiths were invited to ask the pastor to pray for them in Jesus' name. This exposure to the gospel is unprecedented in most countries where the growth of Christianity is strictly guarded.

Pray for the Steins and their work among the lost of Northern Africa. Ask God to bring boldness and wisdom to the believers in these areas. Pray for continued access to the lost through healthcare strategies around the world.

Dr. Buck Rusher prays over the patient, doctors and nurses prior to a surgery. He performs and gives consultation to patients and doctors in the rural hospital in Khoved, Mongolia. Caring for the needs of people is integral to the missionary task. IMB Photo



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## STUDENTS

*God's ministry  
through students*

As part of an intensive training in the Nehemiah Teams program, students participate in a Bible study, preparing them to take the gospel first to the Philippines and then to the nations. IMB Photo



Across the 2,000 inhabited islands of more than 7,600 that make up the Philippines, is a vast spiritual darkness. People are not only trapped by the islands, but trapped in their sin — separated from God because many have not yet heard the life-saving gospel.

International Mission Board missionaries Jess and Wendy Jennings committed their lives to bringing the gospel to these islands. The Philippines is their home, the place where they raised their three children, who are now adults.

Much of their work has been focused on student mobilization, specifically through Nehemiah Teams. Nehemiah Teams is one avenue for students to serve with the IMB. The Jennings coordinate the work of training and sending out both American and Filipino students each year. Since 2004, almost 2,400 Americans and 1,200 Filipinos have participated in Nehemiah Teams. They see the long-term value of short-term commitments made by students who experience God's work among the unreached.

A man called "Tatay" was one life whose eternity changed when he met a small group of believers committed to reaching his remote island with the gospel. The Journey Church in Tennessee adopted his island, first in prayer and then by sending volunteers to serve on the island. Several mission teams met him and shared the gospel. Tatay, 81, welcomed visitors and enjoyed time spent with them in his home.

During the summer of 2019, the church sent a team of college students to live on the island and serve there for several months. Jess went to visit these faithful students and during that trip, the team went to Tatay's home. Tatay had grown up religious because of the strong Catholic influence that is common in the Philippines, but he didn't know Jesus personally. By the time Jess met him, the students had already shared six or seven Bible lessons with him. Jess helped facilitate a Bible study on Nicodemus with Tatay. Jess explained that he had two birthdays — the day he was physically born and the day he accepted Christ and was born again.

Tatay kept a notebook in his house with all the names of visitors who came. In this notebook were the signatures of many believers who had shared the truth of the gospel with him. Tatay asked Jess to sign it. Then Tatay wrote the date and said, "This is my spiritual birthday."

When Jess visits Tatay, they look at the notebook and talk about that day. Tatay is being discipled by Filipino believers and still looks forward to visitors. God used missionaries, students, a U.S. church and local believers to reach one man on one island, but many lives were changed.

Thank the Lord for the faithfulness of missionaries Jess and Wendy Jennings. Praise God for the willingness of a church to care for the unreached on a remote island in Southeast Asia. Ask God to send more students who are willing to sacrifice a summer or semester so that others can hear truth.

Donna, a student with Nehemiah Teams in the Philippines, takes a moment to laugh with another student on the team. Through this program, hosted by Jess and Wendy Jennings, the students are given an opportunity to go to unreached people groups and hard to reach places in the Philippines to share the gospel with those who have little-to-no access to it. IMB Photo



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## REFUGEE MINISTRIES

*God's healing  
among refugees*

A Send Relief team visits a Ukrainian refugee center in downtown Iasi, Romania. An office building is being used to accommodate refugees temporarily. Ginny Wheeler, center, talks with a Ukrainian refugee staying at the center. Wheeler is involved with Send Relief efforts. IMB Photo



Olga wanted to go to church for years, but her husband forbade it. He didn't believe in God and didn't want his family dabbling in a faith he understood to be false.

After Russia invaded Ukraine in the spring of 2022, Olga, her daughters and grandchildren fled and were welcomed at the border of Moldova by Christians from Dancu Baptist Church in Dancu, Moldova.

Moldova shares an eastern, southern and northern border with Ukraine and a western border with Romania. When news of the war emerged, the Moldovan Baptist Union, comprised of 400 churches, converted their buildings, summer camp facilities and children's homes into shelters. Dancu Baptist Church sent buses to the border to meet refugees. The church created a welcoming environment by placing stuffed animals on beds for the children and having school supplies on hand. They provided WiFi, three home-cooked meals a day and counseling.

David and Shannon Brown serve with the International Mission Board and they, along with their home church, partner with and support the pastors of Dancu Baptist Church and the Moldovan Baptist Union in ministering to Ukrainian refugees. They've been impressed at the way Moldovan believers have embraced refugees like Olga.

Olga's family found safety and family in Dancu Baptist Church. Her grandchildren found freedom and safety within its walls. The emotion rose in her voice – strong and insistent, but also trembling – as she said, "They've surrounded us with love and care.

"They are supporting us psychologically, emotionally and spiritually," she continued.

The Browns recruited volunteer medical teams to meet the needs of refugees housed in Baptist churches, campgrounds and a medical clinic in the capital.

Olga called her husband to tell him how well the Baptists cared for them. She was astonished by his response.

"Praise the Lord! That's God's grace. God is good and protected you," he said.

She never imagined she would hear these words leave her husband's mouth.

She finally had what she waited so long for – the chance to go to church. After attending church on two Sundays, Olga and her daughter, Alexandra, committed their lives to Christ.

Olga and her family often read a children's storybook Bible. The illustrations helped their understanding of the Bible stories.

The children were more interested in reading the Bible than their school lessons, and they paid attention during the church services. They affectionately called the senior pastor "grandpa."

"Did you listen to what grandpa said?" Olga asked after a service.

"He said to love your neighbor," they responded.

"We came here through God's grace, and we are in God's grace here," Olga said.

Praise God that Dancu Baptist Church members are loving their Ukrainian neighbors and that love led to Olga and Alexandra's decisions of faith. Give thanks to the Lord for the Browns as they support Moldovan Baptists and continue to minister to the needs of Ukrainians.

Ask God how you can reach refugees and displaced people with the gospel.



Russ Wise, a volunteer with a Southern Baptist Disaster Response team, offers water and snacks to Ukrainian children coming across the border into Romania. Russ attends Vertical Church in Yuma, California. SBDR and Send Relief teams served Ukrainian refugees crossing the border at Siret, Romania, by handing out snacks, water and hot drinks and providing cell phone charging stations. The station was originally started by the Romanian Baptists who were some of the first to respond to those Ukrainians crossing the border after the war started. IMB Photo

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## CITIES

*God's influence  
in global cities*

An overlook in Ankara, Turkey. The majority religion in Turkey is Sunni Islam. IMB Photo



Everyone in the small church wondered if the baptism was ever going to happen. In this Central Asian city visited by thousands of tourists each year, the delays kept stacking up.

Delay one: A new believer fell through a double-paned glass sliding door, landing him in the hospital.

Delay two: The pool overflowed, flooding everything around it.

Finally, everything fell into place and the new believers were baptized. They shared stories of meeting Jesus and choosing to follow Him. The celebration marked an extra special occasion — welcoming a man and a woman into the family of God. In this Central Asian city, only about 0.01% of the population follows Christ.

"It's kind of a number that doesn't mean very much," Erik White, International Mission Board missionary, said, trying to explain a statistic that normally rounds down to zero. "The best way to explain it is 'very, very, very few believers here.' Because of that, there are even fewer churches."

Each decision, and subsequent baptism, is cause for celebration. Having a female submitting to Christ is rare. In this city, most interest in the gospel comes from young men. Through strategic placement of advertisements on social media, the team made up of IMB missionaries and local ministry partners have piqued interest in learning more about the gospel. Those interested click on a link or scan a QR code which leads them to a local church or believer for follow up.

The one-on-one contact most often begins with answering questions and progresses to studying Scripture.

A lot of young people are disillusioned by the majority religion in this area. Many turned to a hybrid-form of Deism — not wanting to say there's no god but searching for a better answer.

"So that's why Southern Baptists sent us," Erik explained. "Here, we try to do the missionary task to see healthy churches among the peoples and places of our city."

In this global city are immigrants sleeping on dingy warehouse floors, troubled youth escaping into the shadows of gaming salons and minority groups struggling to find acceptance. Erik sees a lot of beauty here but what God continues to show him are neighborhoods filled with people in desperate need of the gospel.

Equipping a local church or believer to engage their neighbors with the gospel can take 5-10 years. The goal is to have local believers pouring into others so they might go and see new churches planted. The reality is that there are few believers. Millions walk the city streets without knowing the Savior. That's why each proclamation and baptism is cause for rejoicing and celebration, despite the delays.

Thank God for these new decisions and baptisms. Pray for local churches to focus on seeing others grow in their faith and be equipped to tell others about Jesus. Ask God to send more workers into the world's cities with the saving message of the gospel.



Tourists hang out in front of the Pantheon, a major tourist attraction, in Roma, Italy. By 2050, urban areas will host two-thirds of the world's population. These cities will include large slum areas, ethnic neighborhoods, migrants and refugees, young adults and working professionals. IMB Photo

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## DIASPORA

*God's impact  
among the diaspora*

Immanuel Baptist Church mission trip to New York City. This Arkansas church sits a couple miles from the Southern Arkansas University campus. As the church reached out to college students and professors, they began to feel a call for the nations. They ended up adopting two diaspora groups - mandarin speakers and Uzbeks - based on this interaction. IMB Photo



Bibles lay open amid the food wrappers on the fast-food restaurant table. The two men sat quietly discussing a key concept in Christianity — Jesus rising from the dead.

"WHAT? NO WAY!" the college student from Uzbekistan exclaimed and grabbed one of the Bibles. "Did he fly or something?"

Ben Coulter, pastor of Immanuel Baptist Church in Magnolia, Arkansas, stifled a chuckle and explained Jesus' resurrection. The excitement on Alex Pokusaev's face showed he understood. The next Sunday, the Southern Arkansas University international student chose to follow Jesus.

The decision was not made on a whim. Alex spent months asking Ben and anyone else at the church question after question. He explained that as an international student 7,000 miles away from home, he was curious about everything. It was all new.

"I didn't grow up with any beliefs," Alex said, noting that he was baptized in the Russian Orthodox church by his father while his mother was a nominal Muslim.

Most at Immanuel Baptist Church had never heard of Uzbekistan. As the college student shared about his homeland, members of the congregation began to love Uzbeks. Fewer than 1% in his home country claim Jesus as their Savior. Their hearts broke as Alex asked, "What happens to those who have never heard of Jesus?"

That question spurred the church to action. They committed to working with Uzbeks in Arkansas. The Arkansas Baptist

State Convention works in conjunction with the International Mission Board and the North American Mission Board to reach diaspora people groups within the United States. Diaspora means the movement, migration, settlement or scattering of people away from their indigenous homeland. Immanuel Baptist Church strategically engaged diaspora groups by reaching out to internationals in their community.

But, they wanted more. They sent a team to New York where more than 100,000 Uzbeks live.

"God gave us a heart for Uzbekistan. Alex had been in the United States for multiple years. No one ever sat down and explained the gospel to him before coming here," Ben said. "Our church realized God was bringing unreached people groups to us...not just Arkansas but the United States."

As the Arkansans came out of the New York subway and surfaced on the streets of Brighton Beach for the first time, they didn't hear much English. The smells from food stalls and restaurants were unfamiliar. It was international missions without leaving the U.S.

"What started out as reaching an Uzbek student in our backyard, turned into a burden for an entire nation," Ben said. "How many Uzbeks don't know Jesus rose from the dead? We need to do something about it."

Thank God for Southern Baptists' desire to reach the nations coming to the U.S. Ask God how you can respond to the need to reach the diaspora in your community with the gospel. Pray for Alex and his spiritual growth so that many more can know the truth of Jesus.



The college Sunday school class is where the love of internationals began for Immanuel Baptist Church, Magnolia, Arkansas. International students visited the church and got involved. From there, church members learned about their cultures, beliefs, families and needs. Hearts opened to the possibilities of reaching the world through the connections in this class. Every Sunday, students pray for the nations marked on the map where current and former students call home. IMB Photo

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## GLOBAL MISSIONARY PARTNERS

*God's work through  
global missionary partners*

Min Jae "Danny" Kim (left), greets a friend he has been witnessing to in Zambia. Kim served as a global missionary partner on an IMB team. Global missionary partners help to multiply the work of career missionaries. IMB Photo



On another sunny day in northern Uganda, Hector steps into the river and turns to extend his hand to Oketa Robert, a new believer. Oketa Robert walks into the water, ready to take the next step of faith and be baptized. He is one of 34 believers baptized on this day in early spring. Each new follower of Jesus is a refugee from the Rhino Camp Refugee Settlement.

Hector Cabrera is a global missionary partner who works closely with International Mission Board teams in Uganda. He was sent by the missions agency, Cuba to the Nations. His primary work is discipleship and outreach in refugee camps filled with South Sudanese and Congolese. What he really wants to see is a healthy church planted in the camp.

Hector, IMB missionaries and national partners are intentionally discipling new believers and looking for every opportunity to build relationships. Hector's partnership multiplies the ministry in the area.

When Hector went to build a well in another camp, he took Joshua who attends a Bible study but is hesitant about baptism. While they worked on the well, they talked. Hector is intentionally pointing him to Christ.

Each week, Hector hosts a group of 13 young men in his own home. He feeds them homemade Cuban food and shares the gospel. He's helping another house church planted by his friend Arich, a South Sudanese believer who was discipled by IMB missionaries a few years ago. Arich wants to reach youth in her village.

As Hector ministers in the camps, he's never alone.



Global Missionary Partner Hector Cabrera baptizes one of the 34 new believers in Rhino Camp, a refugee camp in Uganda. Hector has been working alongside IMB teams and national partners to build a ministry among refugees. One of the IMB's objectives is to mobilize 500 global missionary partners on IMB teams by 2025. IMB Photo

Frankie Mosses is a South Sudanese refugee who disciples and baptizes alongside Hector in the camps. Hector's days are busy but never complete until he heads to Rhino Camp, usually with a soccer ball. He can count on being joined by a group of boys, eager to play. On a dirt field, he shares the hope of Christ with refugee kids who have seen more violence, destruction and hopelessness in their short lives than anyone should.

Soon the kids will play in a permanent sports facility, funded through the generosity of Southern Baptists. Hector is praying that outreach will grow and flourish through the new youth center.

Like these refugees, Hector is acquainted with political turmoil and unknowns at home. During a time of uncertainty in Cuba, he entrusted loved ones to the providence of God and to the care of his sending church, Montes des los Olives Baptist Church in Alamar, Cuba. They made his journey to Uganda possible.

He's also familiar with not only living cross-culturally, but with sharing life with people from a third culture – the IMB missionaries.

While his ministry is multifaceted, his heart is focused on one goal – the lost in these camps being found in Christ.

Thank God for partnerships between IMB and cross-culture mission partners. Pray for Hector Cabrera and all global missionary partners to further the gospel among the nations. Ask God to spread His hope through the refugee center of Uganda.

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## GLOBAL LOSTNESS

*God's purpose  
to conquer lostness*

Christians worship in a South Asian megacity. At the IMB, we believe that missionary presence cultivates gospel access, gospel belief and church planting and multiplication. IMB Photo



The big outreach event was almost here. Plans had been made and prayer supporters engaged. South Asian believer Abel was leading the efforts for a widespread gospel outreach to a largely unreached district. But COVID-19 disrupted the plans. Transportation to the region shut down and the event had to be cancelled.

But Abel didn't feel like God was canceling the efforts. He sensed the Lord saying he should focus on a community closer to home. The prayers kept coming and Abel and his wife, Sarah, went out boldly to share the gospel. That's when God led them to a community of M-Jo people with no known believers. Living in family clusters, the M-Jo had not heard the gospel, but two families showed an interest in the visitors and hearing more of the stories they told.

God chose to move in this village, but His movement started years before with International Mission Board missionary Paul Nations. Paul, who made a home with his wife and four children in South Asia, spent years discipling Nathan. Nathan is the one who led Abel and Sarah to the Lord. They all serve together now with one purpose — to penetrate the darkness of this region with the light of Christ.

Abel and Sarah returned week after week to the M-Jo community, faithfully sharing the gospel. Several chose to believe and after the seventh week, a man named Stephen chose to follow in believer's baptism — the first known baptized believer in this people group. Stephen was the answer to many prayers, and not just the prayers of the missionary team.

He was the answer to the prayers of those who faithfully ask God to move among the world's unreached people.

Stephen was anxious to grow in his faith and his Christian friends faithfully disciplined him. The more he learned, the more he taught others. The first person Stephen baptized was his own mother. Her eternity changed forever because of her son's obedience to the Lord and the boldness of Christians to bring the message to his village.

Stephen leads efforts to reach his own people group with the gospel. There are now 11 known believers in this community and 27 families regularly meet to hear the Word of God taught.

With a strong team of national believers, Paul invests his time in discipling, training and building in them the vision to reach the millions of unreached in their country with the gospel. Paul emphasizes the lost living around them. They are intentional to pray for them and ask others to do the same. In this country, the value of disciples who make disciples is on full display and changed lives is the result.

Will you join Paul and his family in praying for the unreached people of South Asia? Thank God for believers and disciple-makers Nathan, Abel, Sarah and Stephen. Praise God for other believers among the M-Jo people and ask Him to extend His reach into this people group.

*Some names may have been changed for security reasons.*



A Ghanaian woman leads Bible study during Sunday school at Kolinvaai Baptist Church in northern Ghana. A prayer of IMB missionaries is to disciple national believers to embrace their role in the Great Commission. IMB Photo