

Update on the Worldwide Ministry of The HOPE . . .

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HOPE on The Amazon

Helping Indigenous Believers Reach the Unreached

An almost inaccessible area the size of the United States, the Amazon Basin has been called the most unknown place on earth. It is also a place where the Gospel is largely unknown. Of the roughly 350 indigenous tribes that live in this area, over 150 are yet to be reached with the Gospel.

The Amazon Basin represents one of the remaining great mountains that must be climbed (or should we say, forests that must be penetrated) to complete the Great Commission. And to further complicate an already formidable challenge, the governments over these regions are now working to eliminate all missionary activity in this area to keep these people groups "pure" from outside influences.



The Amazon Basin - roughly the size of the U.S. - home to 350 indigenous tribes

In November 2011, God set in motion an amazing chain of events that is allowing Mars Hill, through The HOPE, to have a strategic part in reaching the people of the Amazon for Christ. It began when Fred Carpenter, President of Mars Hill, and Jean Ngo, Communications Director, took a road trip to visit two Mars Hill partners in the ministry of The HOPE.

Their first destination was Waxhaw, NC, home of VMS, the Vernacular Media Services of JAARS, a division of Wycliffe Bible Translators. VMS is working with Mars Hill to create versions of The HOPE for people groups all around the world.

The second destination was a farm outside of Athens, GA, home of Renew World Outreach. Renew is assembling and distributing solar powered backpack video projection systems for use by missionaries in remote areas of the world. Most of their systems are preloaded with The HOPE.

From both of these partners one message came through loud and clear, "We need a Portuguese version of The HOPE." Why? Not only is it one of the last major world languages without a HOPE translation, it is the gateway language for translation work with most of the indigenous languages on the Amazon Basin.

Both VMS and Renew know most of the world's unreached people groups are oral cultures. They wouldn't read a printed Bible if they had one. They must be reached with oral methods such as Bible storying and media. Stephanie Palusky, co-founder of Renew, believes that with The HOPE, the Jesus Film and audio scriptures it is possible to start a Church planting movement in any unreached people group. David Palusky, President of Renew, calls The HOPE, "a weapon of mass instruction." Both Fred and Jean came off that road trip with a greater conviction of the need for a Portuguese version of The HOPE, yet no specific plan for the project was in place.

Fast forward to the morning of February 28, 2012. Fred received an email from Stephanie saying that in July she and David were going to an unprecedented

meeting of about 3,000 tribal people on the Amazon. While many of the tribes on the Amazon basin are unreached, a significant number, perhaps as many as 100, now have a healthy Church community within the group. Essentially the indigenous leaders in these groups are now saying to their non-indigenous missionary brothers, "If you are banned from the Amazon, equip us and we'll finish the job of reaching the unreached tribes!" This meeting, CONPLEI 2012, would be a key step in "passing the torch."



Indigenous believers such as these committed themselves to the perilous task of taking the Gospel to unreached tribes of the Amazon.

ready to take to CONPLEI! Since this writing, CONPLEI has taken place. Hundreds of tribal people committed to God and each other to plant Churches among unreached tribes. Thirty projectors, loaded with The HOPE, and stacks of HOPE DVDs were distributed. Indigenous leaders wept as they received these tools. Even before the end of the conference, some were planning their trips into the jungle to show The HOPE. You can just sense it; this story is about to get even more exciting!

Though their villages may communicate in a tribal tongue, most of these indigenous leaders speak Portuguese as a trade language. Stephanie and David were planning to take 30 projection systems to CONPLEI, and they hoped to load these systems with The Portuguese HOPE. If The HOPE is ever to be translated into the hundreds of indigenous languages on the Amazon, the tribal leaders at this gathering would be vital to the process!

Immediately after receiving Stephanie's email, Fred contacted VMS. VMS Team Leader, Jim Doll, agreed to release seasoned staff, Rebecca and Mike Navratil, to work on The Portuguese HOPE project. Time was short. There was less than 5 months to complete the translation process, select the narrators, record their lines, edit in the audio and create micro SD cards to go in the projectors.

Rebecca, Mike and their team did an absolutely amazing job! On June 12, Rebecca sent an email to Mars Hill and Renew announcing that A ESPERANÇA, The Portuguese HOPE, was

HOPE Around the World Stories Worth Telling

With over 46 translations currently in use, it would be impossible within the scope of a single newsletter to fully convey what God is doing with The HOPE around the world. The following are just a few more stories we did not want to leave out of this update.

Mexico and Central America - One of our partners, Harvest Partners, is using The HOPE for evangelism and Church planting. For the first half of 2012 they reported that in 57 village screenings 8,766 people saw La Esperanza (The Spanish HOPE). 438 decided for the first time to follow Jesus and 579 asked to be discipled.



One of our favorite recent photos - students in Kenya watching The HOPE on a laptop computer. It is still the greatest story ever told.

Russia - This summer we helped one of our Russian partners, the Evangelical Union of Russia, duplicate 2,500 DVDs of The Russian HOPE for use in conferences across Russia at the end of the summer. They are also using our 65 lesson HOPE study guide which they recently translated into Russian.

An Unnamed Global Event - In partnership with several ministries, 35,000 DVDs and 15,000 Micro SD cards were distributed at a summer event that drew millions of people from hundreds of countries. To help ensure the success of the project and the security of those taking media back to their home countries, the partners in this project agreed not to name the venue. Each DVD and MSD card contained The Arabic HOPE and numerous other Bible resources in Arabic.

Stories within The Story - This year we've launched eight new HOPE translation projects, bringing the total of projects in process to 38. Each HOPE translation is an amazing story unto itself. But really, it all begins with God's great story of redemption which, by His power, works its way through The HOPE into the heart and mind of receptive viewers. Their story then becomes part of His story in a new, never-ending way. It is beyond epic, and we are blessed to play a part!

HOPE on The Internet

Mind-Boggling Ministry Potential

There are currently 6.93 billion people in the world. Nearly 2.3 billion of them use the Internet. Hundreds of millions of these will use the Internet this year to search for answers about life and God.

Since the beginning of The HOPE, we've desired to reach out to such people. Even before we officially launched distribution of the original English version of The HOPE, we partnered with the ministry, Christian Answers, to offer an online version of The HOPE. Our first online salvation decision was a woman named Tonya in 2002. Since then, thousands of people have been impacted for Christ through this partnership.

In 2007 Mars Hill and Gospel Communications International launched www.thehopeproject.com with video streams of The HOPE in English and Spanish, and a 65 lesson study guide. GCI put a link to The HOPE on their Bible Gateway website, which had about 150 thousand visitors daily. The traffic to the new HOPE website grew rapidly to well over a thousand visitors a day. We were constantly hearing from people around the world that they'd made a decision for Christ after spending time on The HOPE website.

For nearly two years, the partnership between GCI and Mars Hill resulted in much fruit. In 2008 GCI sold the Bible Gateway to a publishing company. The link to The HOPE website was discontinued. Though the traffic has dropped from thousands a day to hundreds, the website is still having a significant international impact.

Today, we are praising the Creator of new beginnings! He is positioning The HOPE for a ministry on the Internet that could dwarf anything we've seen thus far. About a year and a half ago, we launched a project to expand thehopeproject.com to a total of 8 languages, complete with study materials and relationships with ministries in the appropriate countries to respond to requests for help. From the onset, we knew there was a missing component to this project, but we moved forward trusting God to provide. We needed a relationship that could leverage this new updated site, the same way that

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This website was created by our new partners, Global Media Outreach. Real-time decisions for Christ appear on the map, and total decisions above the map. GMO is now averaging over 50,000 decisions a day!

The HOPE Goes Social

Try it. You'll "Like It!"

There are over 950 million Facebook users worldwide. Over half of all Americans now have Facebook accounts, with the greatest growth sector being among those 45 or older.

Social media is not just a fad, it is a powerful way to communicate. From its use in the last US Presidential campaign to its well documented impact in the Arab spring uprisings, it cannot be denied, social media is reshaping our world.

And now it's official, Mars Hill has gone social with The HOPE. Some reading this may say, "Finally!" Others may say, "Why?"

The Mars Hill staff is constantly being blessed by the



amazing things God is doing with The HOPE around the world. But it takes a lot of time to organize, compose and send out email or snail mail updates that capture this kind of activity in a way that will bless you. Consequently, it may not get done, and then you miss hearing about what God is doing.

Our Facebook page will be a place where we can report news while it's fresh; while it really is news. Our goal is that God will be magnified and you will be encouraged. Please visit our page at www.facebook.com/thehopeforall. If you like what you see, then move your cursor to the lower right corner of our cover image and click "Like." Then you can stay in touch with the latest news.

Of course, this only applies if you have a Facebook account. If you don't have one, just go to www.facebook.com and set one up. If you'd like us to send you Facebook instructions, then email us at hopeinfo@mars-hill.org. It's great to be connected! You'll "Like it!"



GCI did for the original site through the Bible Gateway. Within the past 6 months, we have been amazed to watch God pull the pieces together.

In December 2011 Mars Hill participated in a missions conference. Global Media Outreach, an Internet ministry, was also there. In 2011 GMO recorded over 19 million decisions for Christ on the Internet . . . over 50,000 a day! At the conference, God launched a dialogue between Mars Hill and GMO which resulted in a partnership, formally announced at a GMO event in May. We are now working to adapt our new website to compliment the ministry of GMO. This partnership promises not only to use The HOPE to reach more people online than we had ever imagined, but also to expose The HOPE to more people wanting new translations.

But wait, there's more! Our partners on The French HOPE, Top Chretien, also have an Internet ministry averaging 8-10 thousand decisions for Christ a day! While we were building the partnership with GMO, we learned they had just completed a new discipleship ministry built around The HOPE. It is designed so that people enroll in the course. Within a few days of its launch, over 1,000 people enrolled. That number has continued to grow and they are now planning to construct an English site.

In the words of Walt Wilson, founder of GMO, "There is a sense . . . that this is one of those historic moments when a few people committed to following God can influence the future by changing the lives of hundreds of millions."

Answers to Prayer

New and Returning Staff

If you've followed the ministry of Mars Hill, you know that one of our most consistent prayer requests is for more workers. We are pleased to announce two answers to that prayer request!

The first is Joe and Jessica Birkmire. Joe is coming on as our Director of Production Operations. For the past 10 years, Joe oversaw the U.S. Professional Tennis Association Production Department where he produced and directed over 70 episodes of "On Court with the USPTA" for the Tennis



The Birkmire Family

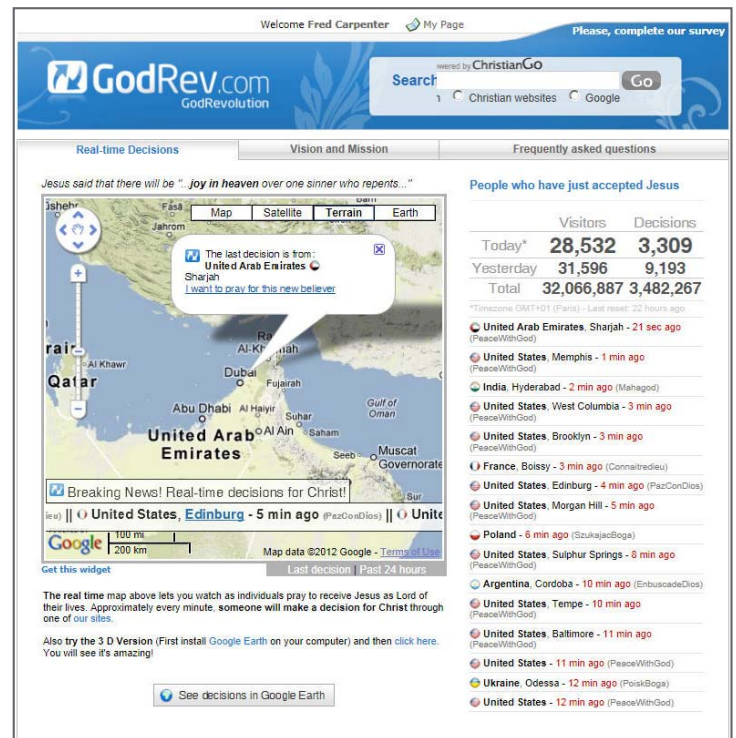
Channel. Joe and Jessica are members of BridgePoint Bible Church.

Our other addition is actually not new to Mars Hill at all. Brenda Bowman served with us from 1989 to 2002. Since that time she has worked in a family business and for Macy's. Brenda will be rejoining Mars Hill in the areas of Partner Relations and Special Projects. Brenda is a member of Christ Evangelical Presbyterian Church.

All full-time Mars Hill staff serve as media missionaries, and in that capacity, build teams of people who provide funding and prayer support for the ministry to which they have been called. The Birkmires and Brenda are now building their teams, a process which must be completed before they assume the other responsibilities of their role. Please pray for our new staff!



Brenda Bowman



GodRev.com, created by our French Partners, offers a curriculum built around The HOPE. Real-time decisions show on the map. Totals and a listing of recent decisions show on the left.



The HOPE is a project of Mars•Hill, a non-profit ministry dedicated to ministry through media. For more than 30 years, award-winning Mars•Hill films and videos have been used around the world to introduce thousands of people to Jesus Christ.

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