

WORLDreviews

t h e G L S c o n n e c t i o n

spring 2010

Blossoming Partnerships

emerge from
first IPFBM
conference
in Bangkok



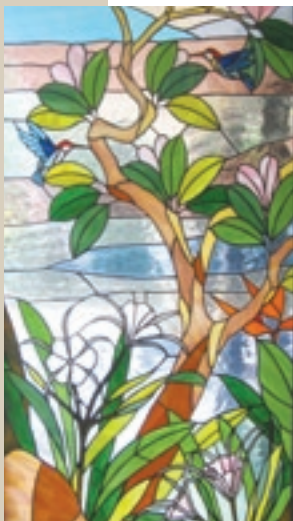
A ministry
of the GARBC

Blossoming Partnerships

The development of the International Partnership of Fundamental Baptist Ministries parallels the maturing of an orchard; preparing the ground, planting the trees, pruning, and watering have yielded an orchard of trees. In 1999, the IPFBM gained a foothold in the soil as the concept of partnering associations emerged. Then the orchard itself took shape as fundamental Baptist associations noted this initiative and joined the partnership. A period of development then allowed for the flow of information and the beginning of ministry relationships. Most recently, at the first partnership conference, the partnering trees began to blossom, a sure sign of future fruitfulness. This edition of *World Reviews* focuses on the blossoming partnerships, a foreshadowing of fruitfulness beyond what we could ask or think.

Check out the article on the last page.

The earthquake in Haiti highlights the need to be connected in a time of crisis.



A stained glass window located at the IPFBM Conference Resort in Bangkok, Thailand.



The first biennial conference of the International Partnership of Fundamental Baptist Ministries convened in Bangkok, Thailand, on November 4–7, 2009. One hundred fifty messengers representing 22 partnering associations from 10 countries converged to begin the strategic work of collaboration as they explored the meaning and risks of partnering. Ten messages focused on the conference theme, “Implementing Partnerships to Fulfill the Biblical Mission.”

The Wangree Resort graciously accommodated the conferees in a beautiful setting, punctuated by tropical flowers and typical Thai hospitality. As the busses rolled in from the airport, the various association leaders and pastors were greeted by a reception line of Bible school students, who draped them with leis of purple orchids.

A buzz of excitement filled the registration lobby as, for the first time, e-mail names were matched with faces. The interaction of this multi-ethnic gathering gave a glimpse of the future heavenly reunion of God’s people. Everyone seemed pleased with their rooms as they settled in, and their anticipation grew as they looked over the 35-page program.

Chris Hindal, director of GARBC International Ministries, opened the first session by identifying four purposes to be achieved through this historic meeting:

- develop relationships,
- gain a better understanding of how a partnership works,
- transition from the General Association of Regular Baptist Church’s being the organizing partner, to an international administrative council, and
- begin the creative process directed by the Lord in developing strategies and projects that will help in the global spread of the gospel.

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First IPFBM Council of Eight formed.

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Spring Water Baptist Church in Korea goes global.

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The IPFBM is about informing and “resourcing.”

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Consider sending a team to help rebuild a church.

opened in Bangkok?



Far Left: Conferees arrive from the Philippines, Myanmar, India, and Bangladesh.

Left: John Greening brings the keynote message.

Below: Conferees from 10 countries meet in Bangkok.





In the keynote message, John Greening used imagery from Ecclesiastes to lay a foundation for partnering. He depicted the benefits of having others in one's life, by contrasting the strength of a multistranded rope with that of a single strand. Being a maverick that goes it alone contributes to prideful underachievement, but working with others requires humble cooperation and leads to expanded results.

In the remaining nine messages, international speakers brought new insights to the dynamic interplay of partnership. Each contributed to the widening understanding of global partnerships for Great Commission work.

During workshop sessions, groups wrestled with ministry issues that have common denominators across cultural lines. Participants began to realize the overlap of challenges regardless of geographical setting. This understanding is helpful, as ministry similarities will be the talking points in future strategy discussions.

The business meeting on Friday morning opened with a review of the IPFBM history: The GARBC functioned as the organizing partner, but the time had come for the partnership to form an international council to govern its activities. A plan was adopted

to elect a Council of Eight at each biennial conference.

This year's council of eight men from four continents will meet via the Internet, using GoTo meetings. This technology facilitates interactive meetings on a global basis.

During the conference, Dr. Mark Jackson was honored for his role as the first IPFBM consultant and the man God used in the initial stages of developing the partnership. He was presented with a special gift to commemorate his service to the IPFBM.

One of the uplifting aspects of the program was the five-minute presentations by the partners. Each had an opportunity to report on what God is doing in his corner of God's vineyard.

As at most conferences, participants filled out evaluation forms. Several suggested we add another day or at least a half day to the schedule. Many of them suggested topics for future workshops. And an overwhelming number commented on the joy of meeting and fellowshiping with others of different countries and cultures and learning of their ministries.

In summary, the four purposes for the conference were achieved. The potential for ministry is beyond our ability to conceive, as there is no way to calculate how God may be pleased to use the synergy of 57 partnering associations exchanging ideas and

First IPFBM Council of Eight

AFRICA

Sam Quapourlee

African Fundamental Baptist Mission Liberia

David Osoyi

Independent Faith Baptist Churches of Kenya

ASIA

Hoi Cung Tum

Chin Association of Baptist Churches—
Myanmar/Burma

Arleen Fidel

The Association of Fundamental Baptist Churches
of the Philippines

Chatla Devasahayam

Indian Christian Bethel Baptist Gospel Fellowship—
India

H. C. Stephen

New Testament Baptist Churches Association—
India

NORTH AMERICA

Chris Hindal

General Association of Regular Baptist Churches—
U.S.A.

SOUTH AMERICA

David Cole

Association of Baptist Churches in Guyana

cooperating together in fulfilling the Great Commission.

Thank you to those who prayed and to those who sponsored partners to attend. Pray that God will enable this partnership to cut a new path in carrying out His work for His glory. ■

Below: Mark Jackson leads in dedicatory prayer for new council.

Bottom: John Greening leads workshop with leaders from other partnering associations.



Blossoms from South Korea



Joseph and Sue Hwang—pastor and wife from Korea.



Brother Hoi Cung Tum reports on Chin Association in Myanmar.



Brother Thawng Za Mung brings update from the Biblical Baptist Churches of Myanmar.

Joseph Hwang pastors the Spring Water Baptist Church in Daegu, South Korea. His enthusiasm for the Bangkok conference can be detected from his writing.

It was my privilege and blessing to participate in this great conference. You sure worked hard and for a long time. It was also so nice to meet you personally. The conference was great. It was such a blessing to meet so many diligent servants of God. It also was such an exciting thing to see how God is working in the field of South Asia. At first I was somewhat confused because it was such a different situation than where I am working. But soon I realized the Lord works differently in different areas.

The Lord burdened my heart to participate with works in Bangladesh and two other churches in Myanmar. Our church members are also excited about this project.

We will partner with prayer for each other. Our church plans to help with some finances. We will send some missionary packages or we will collect used clothes to send for some in the orphanage. We also plan to send some young people to the areas for short term missions. Whatever God permits us to do, we will do.

Later Pastor Hwang wrote this update.

Greetings from Korea. We had much blessing this month. Two families have joined the church and one 75 year old man who is the father of a church member got saved.

Another blessing from this month is that we started supporting \$100 each month to Brother Hoi Cung and Brother Khepi Mang in

Myanmar and Brother Ajoy Mittra in Bangladesh. It is such blessing to hear about their ministries. We pray for them and I know they pray for us. We might even invite Brother Cung this summer for our summer retreat if the Lord wills. He writes often to me and his standard is so much like where I stand.

My wife and I have translated one of the Men's Bible Studies Series, "Real Men are Godly" by Dr. Greening and a book titled "The Secret of Contentment" written by Juanita Purcell for the ladies. We are planning to translate the Sunday School materials as well. Please send us more Bible studies and also some studies for young people on marriage and finances.

So we see that within the network of the International Partnership, a church in Korea caught the vision to support ministries in Myanmar and Bangladesh. Meanwhile, Regular Baptist Press in the United States prints Sunday School curriculum and Bible studies that are translated into Korean. And prayer is crossing political boundaries. A conference speaker is invited to the Korean church conference—not a speaker from the U.S.—but a speaker from a partner in Myanmar. The Korean pastor recognizes that they take similar positions on Biblical truth.

The political boundaries that separate nations do not apply to the Body of Christ. Ephesians 4:16 says, "From whom the whole body fitly joined together and compacted by that which every joint supplieth, according to the effectual working in the measure of every part, maketh increase of the body unto the edifying of itself in love." To God's glory this is happening through the International Partnership of Fundamental Baptist Ministries. ■

Blossoms from the IPFBM Conference



The conferees received USB flash drives full of Bible helps.



Chris Brown, right, donates a computer to partner Mitra Ajoy of Bangladesh, center, as Larry Allen looks on.

Larry Allen serves as an ABWE missionary in Bangladesh. After attending the IPFBM conference in Bangkok, he shared these reflections:

One Bengali leader who attended wants to be a missionary. The ministry leaders from South Korea really encouraged him to consider their country. We are working on that possibility, though it will take some time.

One of our pastors received a needed computer at the conference to do his theological studies for a master's degree. Brother Mitra Ajoy was very grateful to Chris Brown for the gift of a small HP computer.

I was discussing with Ajoy before we arrived about the possibility of a survey trip to India for missions across the border. This would be a first for their churches. Pray with us for that goal to be realized. We learned a lot about the needs in NE India. We are thinking also about the SE region of India.

Part of the purpose for an international conference is to open the eyes of our ministry partners to the global harvest. Since many of them had not traveled outside their own countries, the conference enlarged their vision as they met with brothers and sisters from other parts of the world and heard the challenges of reaching other people groups.

The scope of the Great Commission is unrestricted, and the participants are also unrestricted. From any place to any place, from any ethnicity to any ethnicity, God so loved the world.

This love is demonstrated in the Body of Christ. What a joy it is to share resources! A brother with a computer meets a brother without a computer and decides to give his computer to his new friend. One hundred USB flash drives loaded with Bible resources were given to national church planters and pastors. An often-heard question, "Do you have a website?" indicates the growing use of technology. E-mails, social Internet forums, and websites contribute to the connectivity of the international body of believers.

This connectivity and awareness drives curiosity and passion. The church in Bangladesh looks across its border into India. Such concern for people outside their own borders parallels the words of the apostle Paul, "How then shall they call on him in whom they have not believed? and how shall they believe in him of whom they have not heard? and how shall they hear without a preacher? And how shall they preach, except they be sent?" (Romans 10:14, 15a). The IPFBM is stoking the fire of missions, not just Americans going to other nations, but the nations seeing the world as their field of responsibility. ■

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Haiti: Changed Forever

Even in its pre-earthquake condition, Haiti had no close rivals as the poorest country in the Western Hemisphere. Historically, Haiti reeled with political instability, health crises, unimagined pollution, and people bored for lack of gainful work, yet rarely did it attract the world's attention—that is, until January 12, 2010, when in God's providence, a powerful earthquake reduced its capital to piles of rubble. After about two weeks, the Haitian government estimated the body count at 150,000. As of this writing, that number has risen to 250,000. International relief organizations have struggled to deliver needed aid.

Those who believe the Bible understand that God gets no delight in the suffering of mankind. However, He Who controls the wind and the waves has an all-encompassing plan. Devastating events in the world indicate that God is up to something. Haiti may have been largely forgotten by the world, but now multiple nations are sending resources. In a sense, Haiti has an opportunity to start afresh.

What about the opportunity to share the hope of the gospel to the beleaguered people of Haiti? Using hands

filled with tangible resources, the compassion of Christ reaches beyond the immediate to offer hope for eternity. Haiti will not be rebuilt in a few months; this is a long-term effort. So gospel-preaching churches need to mobilize their congregations, prepare people for a trip without niceties, and in every way embody the servanthood of Jesus.

Our relationships, established through the IPFBM, with fundamental Baptist church associations and ministries provide an entrée into the lives of God's people and local churches. Therefore, our efforts can be focused and intentional. While the love of Christ is without restriction and the opportunity to do good for every person is open, we have a special obligation to those of the household of faith. Consider helping Haitian believers so they can, in turn, help their neighbors.

If you would like information or assistance in sending a ministry team, contact Chris Hindal, director of GARBC International Ministries, via email: chindal@garbc.org. Consider a donation as well. Visit our website, www.garbcinternational.org. ■

