

A THRIVING CHURCH FOR EVERY PEOPLE

# ETHNOS 360

MAGAZINE



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## ETHNOS360 magazine

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Cover photo: by Dale Stroud



## FROM OUR FORMER CEO

Dear Friends,

As CEO of Ethnos360 for 17 years, I have been blessed to write a heartfelt message for *Ethnos360* magazine. I think of all the progress that God has allowed us to make together. New members mobilized and sent out by their churches, entering ministry with a heart to see new people groups hear about Christ and what He has done for them. People groups hearing foundational biblical teaching which has laid a bedrock of truth for them, seeing them reach out to other villages because they have a burden to make Him known. New Testament translations being completed and lessons developed by the teachers. Seeing the excitement of people reading for the first time. Changed lives, marriages, families and communities because of the transforming work of Christ. This has been our journey together.

Now I am stepping away as CEO so a new leader with his team can lead Ethnos360 into what God has for us next. I do this with great joy and confidence because I have worked with Steve Sanford for more than 12 years. I've witnessed his heart for Christ and the importance of his relationship with Him. I have witnessed Steve's commitment to the core historical purpose of Ethnos360 and his and Sharon's personal involvement in church planting in a people group. It encourages me to see his value and desire to remain secured to our theological moorings and his love for God's Word. Steve is a great friend and leader who listens well and builds strong teams. I encourage you to pray for him as he transitions into this important role.

For quite some time, engaging in international opportunities has been demanding more of my attention. I'll continue to serve as part of Steve's team but will serve as chairman of our Global Ministry Agreement Board, working to build stronger partnership and cohesion among our Global Partners. I am blessed to serve with a highly experienced international team from whom I look forward to learning.

Thank you for the privilege of serving alongside you, and I'm excited to introduce you to Steve and Sharon Sanford.

Yours in Christ,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Larry M Brown".

Larry M Brown



## FROM OUR NEW CEO

Dear Friends,

Hanging on my office wall is a photograph that many of you have seen. It is called the "Hubble Ultra Deep Field." It's an image that required 800 exposures taken over the course of 400 orbits of the Hubble Telescope around the Earth. It focuses on a portion of the sky so small it would be equivalent to the portion of sky you would see while looking through an 8-foot-long straw. This portion of sky was thought to be empty. Nothing appeared in this space through any of our land-based telescopes or in any previous Hubble photograph. But when these 800 exposures were developed into one image, what was visible shocked the astronomical world. Nearly 10,000 galaxies can be seen in this tiny spot of sky—10,000 galaxies with several hundred billion stars in each one. As Psalm 19:1 says, "The heavens declare the glory of God; And the firmament shows His handiwork."

The reason this photo means so much to me is that, as a boy growing up, I recall my father speaking many times about the greatness of God as revealed in the universe. He talked about how the God who created all of that is a personal God who loves us. He is a God who loves not just us, but all peoples. That stirred in me a desire to be part of what that Glorious God is doing.

Today, I am humbled to introduce myself to you as the new CEO of Ethnos360. My wife, Sharon, and I have served with Ethnos360 for 32 years. We were privileged to be part of a church planting team to the Joti people group for our first 13 years of ministry. It was the joy of our lives to see the Lord build His Church and bring several hundred Joti people into His family over those years. In the years since, we have been part of the mobilizing team in Ethnos360.

Over the past 10 years I have also had the privilege of serving on the Executive Leadership Team. In my opinion, the most important word of those three words is Team. From its founding, New Tribes Mission/Ethnos360 has practiced a team approach to leadership. It is my conviction that God has used that to keep us on track. Larry Brown, our outgoing CEO, has provided me with an excellent example of what team leadership looks like. We will continue to look to the Lord, as a team, for guidance and direction.

Thank you for partnering with us. It is my prayer that the Lord will continue to use us together to further the gospel.

Yours in Christ,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Steve Sanford".

Steve Sanford, Ethnos360 CEO

# NEWS AROUND THE WORLD



## THE DINANGAT CHURCH

It was an exciting day as we got to watch 12 people follow the Lord in baptism! Ten teens and two elderly ladies were baptized and declared their faith publicly. Such a blessing to get to see them honor the Lord this way! The church is not without its problems, and we are continually asking the Lord to raise up more leaders,

but overall we were excited to see [both] the elders teaching faithfully and the believers growing in their understanding of the Word!

Ralf got to spend a whole week hiking through the beautiful mountains of the Uruwa language group, which borders the Dinangat village. With two new missionaries and three Dinangat believers, they visited every single village



of this group and were overwhelmed by the welcome and positive responses like, “Yes, please come and translate the Bible into our language!” Or them saying, “We are like rocks who understand nothing of the Word of God! Please come and explain it to us!”

Recently a group of men from town came into Dinangat and committed a serious crime. The Dinangat

church responded to this with much compassion, care and prayer. On top of this, something happened which they say has never taken place in Dinangat history. Instead of revenge, they chose to leave this matter in God’s hands and forgave this group of men publicly. Wow! Thank you, God, for changed hearts!

—Ralf and Elli Schlegel  
Papua New Guinea

## CULTURE CORNER

### New Year’s Mud

On January 1, Luke and I were out the door fairly early to start driving from where we live in Goroka to a city called Lae. We wanted to get an early start for security reasons. With this in mind, we were a little cautious as we saw about 30 people gathered in the middle of the road while driving.

As we approached them, they had yet to move out of the way. They were excited! “Hey, it’s our friends,” Luke said. “Our Upegu friends!”

“Happy New Year!” they told us as one guy, Samson, climbed on our car. They rubbed mud all over the car, they smeared some on us too, and they left their mark with handprints and UPEGU in bold letters down the side.

In PNG Highland’s culture on the morning of January 1, they run around and rub mud on each other to celebrate and welcome the New Year.

—Luke and Jessica Thek  
Papua New Guinea



## STEPPING UP TO LEAD

Recently our evangelical Bible teaching program was completed for the third time. The students—56 in total—have been very faithful in their attendance over the last 10 months and have finally finished the 90 lessons. Well before the end of the program, the students were giving clear testimony as to their repentance and belief in Christ as their Savior.

But the exciting thing is that we didn’t have an “up-front role” in any of the teaching. All the teaching was done by the four Bible teachers that we have been training up specifically for this purpose. For us both, it’s a milestone reached and therefore a double celebration.

During a Sunday church celebration, we welcomed these new believers into our Christian family. It was planned that the teaching for that day would be on baptism. And then on Monday morning, with joyful spirits, we all walked down to the river and baptized all the new believers. Jon did the first few to show the Bible teachers an example of how it was done, and then they took turns in baptizing the rest.

The previous believers have really stepped up and taken the new believers under their care and are discipling them with love and the Scriptures.

—Jon and Janet Mitchell  
Papua New Guinea



## SPITTING IN HIS FACE

Sweet baby W died. In the Maliyali culture, death is blamed on sorcery done through people, not on sickness or accidents. Sadly, baby W’s older brother, A, a believer, called for two “witches” (innocent women) to be “courted” for “eating W’s spirit” (killing her). These two women are the missionaries’ dear friends and sisters in Christ.

Despite knowing it was wrong, A gave in to pressure to blame them for the death. When they held “court” the following day, the missionaries stood to remind the Maliyali that the two women believed the gospel and are SAVED. Then they read from God’s Word about how believers cannot have both the Holy Spirit and an evil spirit.

Amazingly, they agreed with God’s Word and decided to stop the court! A declared, “We are not going to spit in God’s face. We are ending this.”

—Nathan and Rachel Mueller  
Papua New Guinea



## GUAHIBO GRADUATIONS

We as a team are thankful that 63 Guahibos graduated recently from the in-home two-year Bible course. Yes, our first graduates! There were 29 couples and five singles. This semester we have 70 students studying. How thankful we are for a huge amount of good Bible study material we have in their language for this course, as well as a good, clear, understandable Bible!

Please pray that these students will want to know God deeply and apply what they are learning. Pray for all our tutors who oversee them that they will be transparent and help these students grow. We are counting on them to be our future disciples in this large people group of 120,000 people.

—Joyce Cain (Retired)  
Guahibo, Colombia



## SIMBARI BIBLE DEDICATION

The translation of the Simbari Bible was recently completed!

Before the Bible dedication ceremony, the Bibles had been hidden in a simulated “mumu,” which is a pit dug into the ground filled with hot coals and covered with banana leaves for cooking feasts. This symbolized the Word of God for the church to feed upon.

At the end of the ceremony, the missionaries removed the leaves and coverings from the hole where the spiritual feast of God’s Word had been prepared. The speaker narrated that all the work of preparing the feast had already been done, and now it was time to simply come and eat. As the boxes of Bibles were pulled out, the Simbari believers came forward, holding out their hands for the Bibles.

—David and Shari Ogg  
Papua New Guinea

## MOI BIBLE DEDICATION

January started off with a momentous day when hundreds of Bibles were flown into the Moi village! After more than 20 years of Bible translation, evangelism, discipleship, teaching literacy and more, the Moi people now have the Word of God in their heart language. God has produced a bountiful

harvest of believers who love Him and love His Word. We are humbled by their knowledge of Scripture and their ability to quote it from the heart. They are a people who once lived in fear of the spirit world around them but are now confident followers of the Lord.

—Nathan and Abby Burris  
Asia Pacific



Top: Larry on the Amazon River,  
Puraquequara Field Day, 1973

Bottom: The Sanford family (Steve in front)  
visiting Tribal Air Communications (now  
Ethnos360 Aviation) in Grant, Nebraska.  
Circa 1975

# A TALE OF TWO MKS

Consider the history of Ethnos360, even going back to the New Tribes Mission days of the 1940s. God has blessed us with a panorama of leaders coming from all different walks of life and business and even other countries. We know that when our founder, Paul Fleming, was killed in a plane crash in 1950, many assumed the mission would “go under” since the presumed leader had died. But that is not what God had in mind, is it?

And yet, as I look at our history, I find it interesting that it wasn’t until Larry M Brown took the reins in 2007 that a missionary kid (MK) from this mission had filled the role of CEO. Paul Wyma was the chairman of the Executive Committee for about four years — he is an MK from Bolivia.\* But let’s watch the progression of God’s Hand as He has now led two MKs to this position: Larry M Brown and Steve Sanford. I had the honor to interview the two during the transitional period of their leadership of Ethnos360.

## LARRY M BROWN

*How did your childhood influence your later years?*

“My parents served as support workers at Puraquequara (PQQ), the [mission] school in West Brazil. My dad set up a print shop there and printed the Nyengatu New Testament among many other booklets to help church planters. As students at PQQ, we grew very close to each other and in many cases became like brothers and sisters. Sports were a big part of our lives. Hearing the reports from different families doing church planting and seeing the spiritual needs in Brazil shaped different values for me.

“I was blessed to have a handful of excellent teachers who were great models for me, so this was very formative in my life, helping shape values that would stay with me for my life.”

*Did the life lessons you learned while at PQQ influence your leadership later in life?*

“I love to serve, and being at PQQ allowed many opportunities to help many students and missionaries. I spent much time on the Amazon River in the mission launch and made many supply trips into town to purchase items for school events and projects.

“I also ran for office for the high school student council and served as treasurer and then as president of the high school in my senior year. This initiated me into the role of leadership as I served the student body.”

*How did the Lord move you into positions of leadership that finally brought you here to Sanford, Florida?*

“Looking back, I was unaware of how God was shaping me and what He had planned for me. I grew up very much hands-on, loving to work and serve however I could help.

\*Paul said, “The term CEO was not in use back in October 2003, when I was asked by the other members of the New Tribes Mission Executive Board to accept the appointment of Chairman of NTM-USA. For several months, we used the term of Chairman of the USA Sub-Committee.”

I enjoyed building, carpentry in particular, and after our missionary training, my wife, Debbie, and I were asked to help repair the Home Office building in Sanford, Florida, after a hurricane did much damage to roofs, windows and other parts of the structure. We moved directly down from the training in Canada to be part of the team working on the original building, the former hotel.

“This ‘temporary’ move would last 13 years. During that time, I was blessed to work under some great servant leaders — Bob Meisel and Gideon Bader, for example — and learned much from them. I was about 28 years old when I was asked to serve with them as leaders. Whatever they were seeing in me, I didn’t see it. I always felt that I would step into whatever opportunities God opened up to me and trust Him with it. During that time, I was overseeing the building and maintenance team. Again, God allowed me to work with guys like Jake Toewes, Doug Caulder, Andy Kline, Dale Norton, Del McMaster and Tim Silvey. It’s important for me to mention these men because God used each of them to shape my life, and it was a great privilege to work together with them. My greatest pleasure was to build and work with a team that really loved working together.

“The Lord continued to stretch me into more responsibilities, and I teamed up with Dan Taube to build the retirement homes in Sanford. This was a huge project, but I loved it. More than that, I loved working with the over 400 volunteers that would come to help us build this center in the first year.

[Author’s note: I was blessed to come from our missionary training to be a part of the construction of the retirement homes under Larry’s leadership!]

“From there I was asked to take on the business management of the Home Office which was a very new environment for me. I am not the office type and being ‘confined’ to a desk was very difficult for me since I would rather be out doing physical work. However, God had things to teach me here too, and I appreciated being molded into administration and having the experience of working with different office teams.”

*What other doors opened up to you that would ultimately result in your taking the helm at Ethnos360?*

“After serving about four years in this role, the Executive Committee asked Debbie and me if we would move to Papua New Guinea to help them



with leadership and a rapidly expanding field. Again we accepted the opportunity, having no clue what we would actually be doing but willing to trust the Lord for each step.

“After about eight months of being there, I was asked to be the chairman of the leadership team in Papua New Guinea. Needless to say, we were way over our heads and felt there must be others who could do the job so much better than we could. Accepting that position expanded me into critical areas such as church planting, consultant work, security, team development and working with many nationalities and with other organizations. Again, God placed great men around me such as Bob Kennel, Tom Palmer, Ted Fitzgerald, Jack Douglas and Steve Bram from whom I learned so much. This was the most important and practical learning time for me.

“The next door that would be opened up to me was the Asia Regional Coordinating Team which provided encouragement and leadership to the leaders in the Asia Region. I would learn much from Larry Goring and Clark Aspinwall.



Clockwise:

1988 Larry on construction at the Home Office with Andy Kline

1972 Puraquequara (Larry far left)

1973 Amazon catfish, Puraquequara

2004 Listening to church elders as they discuss outreach efforts

The Brown family, June 2006, Sanford, Florida

**“I always felt that I would step into whatever opportunities God opened up to me and trust Him with it.”**

“The last phase of my leadership journey took place in 2006 when we were asked to return to form a US leadership team as the executive committee was dissolving itself. I became chairman of that team in January 2007. I was blessed to be onboarded by Paul Wyma who graciously worked with me to help me transition into this role. God has guided me through the ensuing years as CEO of Ethnos360 for the last 16 years.”

*What about the future of your ministry with Ethnos360?*

“Having served on the Global Ministries Agreement (GMA) Board since 2012, the board asked me in 2022 if I would serve as chair of the GMA Board. Here I was blessed to learn from many international leaders such as Oli Jacobsen, Heiko Hagemann, Dan Rabe—well, I could name all of them! Working with the team that I have served with in Ethnos360, we agreed that it was

time for Ethnos360 to recruit a new CEO. Steve Sanford has been part of the Ethnos360 Executive Leadership Team for 10 years, and as we worked through our vetting process, we unanimously agreed that the Lord was directing us to appoint Steve as new CEO.

“I will continue to serve on the Ethnos360 Executive Leadership Team but in a different role which will allow me the time I need to focus on the international side.

“It’s an honor to serve with the team of the GMA board, and it’s been so good for me to be exposed constantly to the international partnership of Global Partners. While we all subscribe to a document defining our mission statement, doctrine, values and approach to ministry, how each country works out these distinctives looks different, depending on the culture and context of the church. With the GMA board, I look forward to moving us deeper into an appreciation of the uniqueness that each entity brings and recognizing how they will contribute to reaching unreached people groups. As a board, we also want to build a stronger cohesion with all our Global Partners.

“I believe we have exciting days ahead of us as we become more proactive to work through the global Church to reach the unreached. While the context is quickly changing around us, staying rooted in our same values and purposes will continue to serve us well.”

Having worked alongside Larry Brown these last five years has given me an appreciation for his heart for the unreached. I’m thankful that God allowed me the privilege of watching Larry direct and guide Ethnos360.

But as much as I have enjoyed ministering with Larry, the second of the MKs, Steve Sanford, has already been a blessing to Ethnos360. He and Larry started out in different worlds! Let’s take a look.

### STEVE SANFORD

*How did you grow up in what was then New Tribes Mission (NTM)?*

“I was born in Jersey Shore, Pennsylvania, where my parents ministered at the NTM missionary training center. My dad was a traveling recruiter/representative for NTM. I did not live overseas while growing up. However, my dad was privileged to visit most of the works that NTM was in, and I grew up seeing his pictures and hearing



Top: Steve (in front) with his dad and two older brothers, Gary and Tim, along with Forest and John Mark Estelle at a campout, Jersey Shore training center circa 1973

Middle: Steve with his language helper, Ikyutai, helping him break down the Joti language.

Bottom: Teaching Joti believers, 2005

**“I heard stories of sacrifice and dedication. I also saw and heard the stories of the people themselves who were waiting to hear of Jesus.”**



stories of missionaries around the world. I recall stories of missionaries living on floating houses in the middle of a lake in Colombia to avoid poison darts. I remember his stories of men like Chuck Johnson who led numerous contact teams into dangerous territory where no outsiders had been. I heard stories of sacrifice and dedication. I also saw and heard the stories of the people themselves who were waiting to hear of Jesus. The Lord used those stories, and I was hooked. I knew what I wanted to do when I grew up.

“I also traveled with my father to the churches he was speaking in as often as school schedules would allow and heard him teaching from God’s Word regarding the greatness of God and His love for all peoples. I recall my father saying that he thought everyone in the world should have the opportunity to hear what Jesus did for them at least one time before others in the world hear it for the tenth time. These were formative thoughts for me that have stuck with me my entire life.

“Growing up at the training center, I was also privileged to meet many families headed out to the mission field. Hearing their testimonies of God’s faithfulness and their desire to be used in reaching unreached people groups impacted me in my childhood years.

“I met [my wife], Sharon, at NTM’s Bible Institute in Jackson, Michigan. She is an MK from Senegal. We both knew we wanted to be missionaries. She came to the Bible Institute during my final semester, and toward the end of

that semester, we began to get to know each other. After I graduated, I went to Venezuela to visit my brother Greg and [his wife], Dawn, who were missionaries to the Yanomamo people. Their house burned down shortly after I got there, and I stayed almost a year to help with the rebuild. Watching my brother teach God’s Word every evening to the Yanomamo and seeing how it impacted their lives in the midst of an incredibly violent culture amazed me as a young man. The Lord used that to confirm the direction He had for me. Sharon came to visit on her summer break from the Bible Institute, and at that time we knew we wanted to marry. I returned to the Bible Institute to work in the area while she finished her final semester, and then we were married.”

When I questioned Steve about how his experiences helped him prepare for positions of leadership, he explained that what he saw during his growing up years had given him a good understanding of the core values of the organization as they were being lived out in the lives of the missionaries as well as an understanding that personal sacrifice, faith, hard work and dedication are all necessary to complete the task.

*How did God lead you as a couple to this new position of leadership? What phases of ministry had you gone through to prepare you for being CEO of Ethnos360?*

“Sharon and I spent the first 13 years of our ministry working on a missionary team planting a church among the Joti people in an isolated location. The Lord taught us much about hard work, teamwork, communication and how to work with others. I learned much from our teammates through those years as a young missionary, things that would help me in the different roles God has put me in.

“In our earlier years as I was involved in language and culture study and then moving into discipleship and developing curriculum for the Joti believers, our three boys were reaching school age, and Sharon was their teacher. We were in an isolated location without Internet access, so homeschooling was very much a full-time role for her during those years. As we look back on the blessing of being part of the Joti church plant and seeing the Lord build His church in that valley, it is so clear to me that we could not have been



Top: Steve teaching a campfire session at Wayumi

Bottom: Family, 2021

**"He builds His church; we don't. Our desire is never to move away from our confidence that He will do that; to ask Him, and trust Him, to provide all that is needed for the task."**

there as a family without Sharon's faithful, steady service to the family and the team.

"We returned from the field in 2006 and joined the mobilization team, moving to the Wayumi campus in Pennsylvania where we served for the next 17 years. At Wayumi, the Lord used our years with the Joti and their enthusiastic response to the gospel to challenge and encourage many Wayumi attendees. Sharon's gifts of service and hospitality were perfect for our positions at Wayumi. She was responsible for having the Wayumi lodging and dining facilities cleaned and ready for each group. She coordinated volunteers from the community to help her get that done. She was able to interact with thousands of Wayumi participants over those years and share how God used her in the Joti work.

"In 2013, I was invited to join the Executive Leadership Team (ELT) and to serve as the Director of Mobilization. It has been a privilege to work with each of the members of that team over the past 10 years. I have learned much from each of them."

*How were you presented with the opportunity to become the CEO of Ethnos360?*

"The ELT began talking about CEO transition about three years ago. Larry was seeing his global responsibilities increase over time and wanted to begin the conversation. As we discussed it and my name was mentioned as a possibility, I was initially dismissive of the idea. Sharon and I were very happy in our ministry at Wayumi and had no desire to move away from that. At that point in the conversation, we really did not sense the Lord leading us in that direction.

"Over the next two years, our conversations as a team continued to come back to this possibility. I began to wonder if I was reluctant because I did not believe the Lord was leading us that way or if I was reluctant simply because I did not want to do it. Sharon and I began to pray more seriously about it. I asked the Lord that, if He was leading us in this direction, He would make it clear to us in three ways. 1) I asked him to change our hearts and make us want to do it. 2) I asked Him to lead the ELT and the Board of Directors to that conclusion unanimously. If there was any question on the part of any of the members, I would take that as from the Lord and stay where we were. 3) I asked Him to provide our replacement at Wayumi so that

we would not be leaving that ministry that we care so much about in a difficult position.

"Over the next year, I saw the Lord answer our first two requests. Over time He did change our thinking, and we found ourselves being open to, and then even being excited about, the possibility of taking the role.

"He then led the ELT and board unanimously to ask Sharon and me to make the move. At that point I became convinced that the Lord did want us to make this transition.

"Request #3 had not been answered, though I felt convinced that the Lord would answer that in His timing. We said 'yes' with that conviction of His future provision. We continue to trust Him to provide a teacher for the Wayumi program."

I think you'll agree with me that there is nothing quite like the peace that passes all understanding as we follow God's leading. I had one last question to present to Steve.

*What are your goals for yourself as well as for the organization?*

"Personally, my goal is to be faithful to the Lord in this responsibility, to walk humbly before Him and trust Him to continue to guide us as an organization.

"More than 80 years ago, the Lord gave our founders a vision of mobilizing, training and sending messengers of the gospel to unreached people groups no matter where they are located. From the beginning, those men were clear that being effective in this task would require hard work and sacrifice. It would require years of culture and language learning, careful teaching and long-term discipleship to see churches established. Over the years, our understanding has grown in how to carry out this task, but amazingly, the Lord has not allowed us to veer away from those founding principles. My heart and the heart of the ELT is that we as a sending agency remain faithful to that core focus.

"A statement repeated early and often by our founder Paul Fleming was 'God plus nothing.' We understand that phrase to mean that God is the One who sends forth the workers, that He is the One who works in the hearts and minds of the hearers to bring understanding, and that He is the One who teaches and grows new believers toward maturity. He builds His church; we don't.

Our desire is never to move away from our confidence that He will do that; to ask Him and trust Him to provide all that is needed for the task. We never want to think that we ourselves are doing it for Him, but rather to trust that He is doing what He desires through us, His servants. My prayer is that Ethnos360 will remain faithful to that task until He returns.

"My personal request to the Lord through this transition has been that He grant me humble courage. The humility never to forget who we are and who He is. The humility to treat co-workers and fellow servants the right way. But along with that humility is the need for the courage to do what is right **even when it is hard**. To do what is right when we know it will be criticized or worse. I know I speak for the entire leadership team when I say that we are asking the Lord to provide all that we need to lead the organization well. I would greatly appreciate prayers to that end."

Two distinct men; two distinct lives; one heart and mind. Though many people assumed that the mission would "go under" after our founder was killed in a plane crash, 82 years after the founding of the mission, God continues to use godly men to lead Ethnos360 in reaching the unreached, until there is a thriving church for every people.

I ask you to stand with us in prayer for these two men and their families as they take on new roles of leadership. God is building His Church, and the gates of Hell will not be able to stand against it.



Bruce Enemark was raised in Panama, the youngest of three missionary kids (MKs). He and Julie, his wife, ministered with Ethnos360 in Panama and Paraguay for 24 years before he joined Ethnos360's Advancement Team as a writer, proof-reader and now managing editor. Faith Baptist Church of Chetek, Wisconsin, is their sending church and has been behind the Enemarks since they started their ministry with Ethnos360.



## PRAY On Their Own

The Lord has been faithful! The Menya Bible teachers taught all the way through the book of Acts on their own. This is the first whole book of the New Testament that they have led the church through without us helping and guiding. Praise the Lord for these faithful teachers who trust Him to enable them to study Scripture, apply it to their lives, and then lead the church body in understanding and obeying the truths.

Pray for unity in the body of believers and strength as they share the gospel with those around them.

—Wes and Penny Chappell  
Papua New Guinea

## Volunteer at The Homes of Ethnos360!

SERVE THOSE WHO HAVE SERVED

The Homes of Ethnos360 exists to provide attractive, affordable, efficient and economical housing for retired Ethnos360 missionaries.

By volunteering regularly for just a few hours each week, you could be a blessing to those who gave their lives to the spread of the gospel.

### Volunteer and Internship Opportunities Include:

food preparation/service, housekeeping, auto mechanics, building maintenance, grounds/landscaping, welding, carpentry, electrician, painting, plumbing and drywall.

For more information and to start the application process:



Tracy Recalde  
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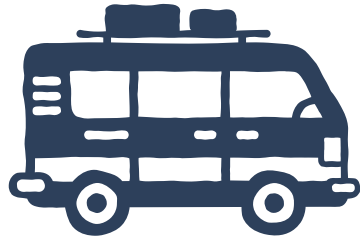


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# ENCOUNTER

## Did You Know?

Did you know that for the past 40 years Ethnos360 has been sending people on short-term trips to help them learn about missions around the world? Ethnos360's Short-Term Trips team seeks to mobilize the Church as goers and senders with Ethnos360. These trips accomplish this task through cross-cultural ministry experiences, biblical education and personal discipleship. In 2024, we have a total of 10 trips scheduled. Over 165 participants will be experiencing cross-cultural ministry in very hands-on ways. Eight of these trips are in the summer, and two are during the winter. Join us in our endeavor to bring more laborers to the fields by praying and sending.

## Please pray for

- The safety of the teams.
- The hearts of the participants.
- God to direct each participant to the role He has for them.
- The ongoing works in those fields.
- The field leaders as they prepare to share about their field.

You can help sponsor participants at [ethnos360.org/projects/short-term-trip-student-fund](https://ethnos360.org/projects/short-term-trip-student-fund)



## Megan's Encounter Trip

I never would have thought that I could have so much fun and learn so much in the short two weeks I was in Brazil. It was so cool to be among Brazilian [believers] and hear their heart for the people of their own country. They were so passionate about reaching the unreached people of Brazil, and I am so grateful for the opportunity to listen to their stories and to ask so many questions. God really showed me how big the need for missionaries is and His own heart for the lost. If I feel broken over those who don't have access to the gospel, how much more heartbreaking is it for our Creator to see people with no access to His Word? On another note, the Brazilian culture is just a lot of fun! So there was never a dull moment, whether we were cleaning toilets or hiking through the Amazon jungle.



## PRAISE R66 #2 Joins the Operational Mix

You prayed for it. You heard that it arrived into the Port of Lae in Papua New Guinea (PNG) in July 2023. But did it ever start flying?

Sometimes it's almost miraculous how fast an R66 can be reassembled and put into service. But for R66 #2, God's providential timetable proved to be different.



The inspections and paperwork seemed unending. Many of you have been praying this whole time.

Finally, December 4, 2023 — five months after it arrived in PNG — R66 #2 officially joined the "operational mix," according to Imie Mark, Maintenance Controller of Ethnos360 Aviation's fleet in PNG. Its first job? To take supplies to the team learning language among the Kovol people. Pilot Josh Verdonck posted: "Very honored to conduct the first mission."

While Josh was fulfilling already-scheduled supply runs in existing church planting locations with R66 #2, R66 #1 (serving since April 2022) was

free to break new ground. Pilot Stuart Sims flew a survey team to a location "about as far west as you can get and still be in PNG," according to Imie. He said that missionaries "are evaluating the opportunity to move out there to serve among a people group yet unreached with the true gospel who have been asking for someone to come learn their language and teach them God's Talk."

The whole team in PNG thanks you for all your prayers and investment to get R66 #2 to Papua New Guinea. Because of you, the people groups like the one in the far west of PNG will have an opportunity to hear God's Talk.

— Wonita Werley  
Ethnos360 Aviation

## PRAY Intense Interest

The church among an ethnic minority group in West Africa that we have prayed for over 30 years is growing. The gospel was first shared in their language in 2000. Since then, the believers have been discipled and taught through the Scriptures.

We were so encouraged to read about the mature believers taking the gospel to two villages of their same group that were steeped in sorcery. God opened the opportunity for them to teach chronological Bible lessons after seeking permission from the chief. Some of the older people in the group were interested, which is unusual because older people are steeped in what they believe.

These older people had heard some Bible teaching when they were younger, but the teacher never returned. They wanted to hear the entire story. The women believers encouraged everyone as they arrived. They said, “We want you to know the rest that we now have. Keep listening all the way to the end. It is a rest that you have never known before.”

The interest became so intense that the teachers taught nearly all day and night. Normally the teaching takes weeks. After three days and nights of teaching, many people came to rest in the finished work of Christ as their Savior. There was much rejoicing. Now there are believers in nine of the



approximately 35 villages of this people group. The church is not only growing but deeply encouraged at what God has done and how He used them.

Please pray for this group.

## PRAY Pawaia

It had been a while since the last missionary visited a Pawaia village. The people expressed their gratitude for the visit by dressing in traditional clothing and singing.

The next two days were spent hiking to a remote village—requiring 11 river crossings over six rivers—where the meetings were held. The leaders who attended were representing 16 different churches from the same language group. The workshop went well

and seemed to be an encouragement to those involved. One of the many blessings of these types of workshops is the time of fellowship, since most of these people are isolated from each other, and this time was no different.

Please continue to pray for the Pawaian leaders as they continue to equip the churches in a rapidly changing environment.

—William Michaud  
Papua New Guinea



## Giving from your IRA Account

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or call 407-547-2397

## PRAISE It's a Funny Story

Way back in 1997, we were often asked, “So how long do you think it will take to complete the Banwaon New Testament translation?”

Back then we were part of a three-family team in the Banwaon tribal ministry. Albert would reply, “Well, we expect it will take another six to 10 years to complete.”

Over the next few years, we were so sad when health and family reasons took our colleagues back to their homelands. We understood. We supported them. We knew the Lord was still in control. But we missed them.

We took a deep breath and, side by side with the Banwaon believers, we picked up the baton our colleagues left behind and kept moving ahead.

A few years later the same question arose. “How long do you

think it will take to complete the New Testament translation, Albert?”

Now juggling the many and varied aspects of ministry—discipleship, lesson development, literacy, medical work, community projects, field leadership plus family commitments—Albert would think for a minute and reply, “Hmm, well, we’re not sure, but we’re estimating another six to 10 years.” To which our kids, sitting in the congregation, would roll their eyes and chuckle.

And so it continued for the next decade or two. “Another six

to 10 years.” We simply couldn’t estimate accurately. There was so much to be done. Six to 10 years seemed feasible.

Well kids, we’re here to tell you: The six to 10 years is over! On 27 November 2023—more than 20 years since we first started translating the New Testament—the official check of John’s Gospel was finished. Which means the Banwaon New Testament is now formally checked and approved!

It’s still hard to believe. In our hearts we’re doing cartwheels of joy and lifting hands of praise to our wonderful Father who has enabled this. Rejoice and praise Him with us!

—Albert and Lynne Castelijns  
Philippines



# CONNECT WITH NEW MISSIONARIES



## ROHN & JOELL PALMER

Security and Teaching in Papua New Guinea  
Sent by Stafford Crossing Community Church,  
Stafford, Virginia

When Rohn and Joell Palmer's son-in-law and daughter, Hudson and Gabby, were on home assignment from Papua New Guinea (PNG) for the birth of Palmers' second grandchild, Hudson and Rohn discussed what the Palmers would do upon retirement. The plan was to move to Tennessee or Kentucky as a location central to family members.

Hudson asked Rohn what he would think of serving in a support role with Ethnos360 for a year or two. Rohn didn't think that his career within the government, in the military and as a special agent in the FBI would translate well to missions. So, Hudson explained the many roles on the team that were necessary to keep church planters ministering.

"As I sat and listened, I remembered a phrase I had heard many times, 'God does not call the equipped. He equips the called.'" Unbeknownst to Rohn, God had already well-equipped him through his career for a security

**"God does not call the equipped. He equips the called."**

role in a missions context. His experience was just what was needed on the field.

Rohn committed to pray about it and broach the subject with Joell. He wasn't sure how she would feel about leaving their other three daughters in the USA. After praying and asking God to bring Joell onboard, Rohn approached Joell about it. Without hesitation, she agreed, and they began their process of heading toward PNG.

"We felt like this was what God had in store for us as our next journey as we walk with Him."

"Since arriving in PNG, I must admit it has been exhilarating! We are enjoying getting to know everyone and have jumped into our new roles with both feet!" Joell serves as a teacher's aide at the school, and Rohn is involved in areas of both physical and personal security throughout the field.

Rohn would encourage you that "no matter how inadequate you may feel about the skills you can bring to the mission field, don't let that stop you from exploring the opportunities provided to serve in a support role. Seek God's face, and He will give you a clear direction. I think I can safely say that there are plenty of opportunities for anyone with a willing heart to serve; just take that first step of faith and let God lead the way!"

Learn where you can use your skills on the church planting team.  
[ethnos360.org/go](https://ethnos360.org/go)



## MATT & RACHELANN EARWAKER

AND DAUGHTER CHARA

Church Planting in Asia Pacific

Sent by First Baptist Church of Leesburg, Leesburg, Florida,  
and Open Door Baptist Church, Chesterfield, Virginia

Connect with Matt and RachelAnn at  
[ethnos360.org/missionaries/matthew-and-rachel-ann-earwaker](https://ethnos360.org/missionaries/matthew-and-rachel-ann-earwaker)



Matt's early childhood was difficult without his father in the picture. But Matt's wonderful Christian mother raised him and his two brothers. Matt became a believer at a young age and continued to mature in his faith. "Although life was hard without a father, God was the most loving Father I could have asked for!"

"I knew I wanted to live a life devoted to the Lord! The church I grew up in was very missions focused and was always talking about people overseas who need Jesus."

Matt began researching unreached people groups. As a result, he said, "It broke my heart, knowing in English we have over 100 translations of the Bible, yet there are groups of people who don't have a single translation of God's Word in their language and have no access to hear about His perfect love."

RachelAnn was raised in a Christian home and, likewise, came to know the Lord at an early age.

"My home church was heavily involved in missions, and so all throughout my younger years, I was exposed to the fact that there were many people around the world who existed without access to the gospel or the Bible in their language." Additionally, her brother and his family became missionaries when RachelAnn was 11.

Despite this, RachelAnn thought that being a missionary would be too hard.

"When I was 13 years old, the Lord used the lyrics of a song to convict me and break my heart to be willing to serve Him, wherever He wanted me to go. The song said, 'I want to be your hands, I want to be your feet, I will go where you send me, go where you send me.' As I sang along to the

lyrics, I realized I couldn't sing this song if I wasn't going to obey Him and go where I knew He was leading me."

Matt and RachelAnn met and married during their time in Ethnos360's training. RachelAnn was a year ahead of Matt and was planning on heading to Asia Pacific. "After we married, we prayed about where the Lord would have us serve Him, and we both kept coming back to Asia Pacific."

In June 2023, they arrived there and began culture and language study.

"Our hope and plan is one day to plant a mature church amongst one of the 241 unreached people groups out here. We know the journey will be hard, but we have seen the Lord's faithfulness to get us here. In Him, we have hope and are excited that He's allowed us the privilege to be a light here."

**"Instead of asking, 'Why go?' my perspective changed to, 'Why not go?'"**

## Triumph and Heartbreak in Reaching the Unreached

*It's easier said than done, as the saying goes. And there is certainly nothing easy about making inroads to an unreached people group living unbelievably far into the jungle. The following is a compilation of accounts from missionaries who risk life and limb as they navigate their way through rugged terrain, swollen rivers and deep woods to reach those who need to hear the Truth of God.*

### Out of reach or simply unreached?

Out there—in the middle of nowhere—there is a tiny village—and another—and another—and still another. Each made up of only a handful of houses, these villages are sprinkled across hundreds or even thousands of square miles. These people are spread far and wide. They live extremely isolated, tucked into valleys, on the steep inclines of mountains and along ambling riverbeds.

After hours of research, combing through old records and studying (almost) every pixel of known satellite imagery, we found at least 30 villages in this people group. A co-worker and I hopped aboard an airplane and then a helicopter to confirm as many of these village locations as possible.

In April 2023, I visited this people group for the first time. The purpose of that survey was mainly to determine the people's interest for missionaries, find out some details of the language divisions and get feet on the ground. Our survey team was very positively received, and a great desire for missionaries was communicated.

On the heels of such a successful survey, I planned and studied for a second survey to answer questions raised from the last visit. Planning for this survey involved staging fuel, an airplane and a helicopter—all within tight time constraints. We needed to map out specific flight paths to locate villages from the

air, and we planned to land the helicopter in locations it had never been before.

The villages we visited were nestled into valleys with rolling mountains rising up on every side. The climate was a gentle tropical heat, but the rivers were cool and refreshing.

My heart was burdened once again by the isolation and lostness of these people. It is sobering to see their faces, hear their desire for something—anything—more than what they have. This people group is large and yet so spread out that it makes determining a strategy for reaching them very difficult. Getting supplies, traveling and planning out a trajectory to bring them the gospel will all be difficult.

### Is that thing going to capsize when I step in?

This was running through my head as I was urged forward. The skipper was telling us to climb aboard his dugout canoe, about 30 feet long but only about as wide, at its widest, as my hips and the 4-foot, 10-inch-tall man who squeezed in next to me.

A 15-horsepower engine was strapped to this hollowed-out tree. There was no keel or other such method of keeping the boat from turning over.

These jungle-dwelling people groups do live deep in the jungles—further away than you can imagine from cities, stores or real medical care—but they are people just like you and me. They have hopes and dreams, likes and dislikes, and beliefs to which they hold very strongly. They think just as deeply as you do and need just as desperately to understand that the One true Creator God once came as a Man named Jesus and died in another faraway land to pay the sin penalty we all deserve.

And that right there is the reason I had flown more than an hour in a Cessna 208 Caravan to a grass airstrip out in the middle of nowhere and stepped into that seemingly very unstable floating tree-boat that bright morning, with plans of going even further into the “nowhere.”

The sun was hot, the day was long, and after three coats of sunscreen, six hours of river travel, and 17 times of clambering out and back into the canoe to push it over shallow, fast-moving, rocky riverbeds, we arrived at our first destination—only to discover we

hadn't actually arrived. We were close, but the sun was setting, and all the knowledgeable information told us the river gets too shallow to navigate with a motor beyond this point. So, we stopped at this much smaller village with a few families living there and proceeded to ask questions, set up our mosquito nets in one of their thatched roof garden houses, and retired for the night.

The following morning revealed that these people, who we were so certain had requested us to come, were not convinced they wanted Bible translating and teaching missionaries to come live with them and learn their language. They want education, sure, and medical care, government representation, an airstrip, and on and on. But Bible teachers? They had one of those come through years ago.

You see, the reality is that years upon years of poorly conducted so-called evangelistic efforts have divided this nation of 800+ languages into varying labels of Christian, even though the majority of these different language groups—the majority of these PEOPLE—have never heard the gospel shared clearly in a way they understand, whether because it wasn't shared in their heart language and with their cultural worldview taken into consideration, or perhaps it wasn't shared at all, and instead they were given a list of dos and don'ts to please this god-overlord they have never heard of and do not understand.

And so it was with heavy hearts that my companions and I got back into the canoe to head back down river just a day after we had come up it. Sitting in that boat, my heart was breaking for those people who have no idea how desperately they need a Savior for their souls, not one who merely brings them stuff.

But that's not the end of the story, because just around a different river bend, it turns out the fields are more ripened for the harvest. Over the next two days we spent time in other villages within the same language group as the first, but these people are thirsty for the rich wealth of information stored between the pages of the Bible shared in their heart language.

And so, we press on.

—Jacob and Charis Doerr, Papua New Guinea



### Building an Airstrip in the Middle of the Jungle

Getting there is only the beginning.

The flight was the easy part: just an hour and a half to a remote airstrip. My fellow pilot shut down the airplane engine, and we unloaded our cargo: pickaxes, shovels, a chainsaw, a wheelbarrow and a couple of hiking backpacks. Looking comically like a turtle, one of the local church elders strapped the green wheelbarrow bucket to his back and tested the feel of it; the trails to a new airstrip site are so rugged that the only way to deliver any supplies is on your back.

Pretty soon the group was off on foot, and I took the controls of the plane and flew home, passing their destination in just 10 minutes. My co-workers wouldn't arrive for another 50 hours, after fording multiple rivers and sleeping in the jungle.

And then the hard work would begin. So many measurements must be taken: length of the airstrip, the slope (lengthways and sideways), the angle of obstacles over the departure path, the firmness of the ground, the orientation of the runway and so much more. After verifying that the location will work for an airstrip, the heavy lifting starts: preparing a sample section of runway for the villagers to follow as a pattern.

Digging drainage ditches is crucial in a tropical rainforest, as well as making a crown so water flows sideways off the airstrip. Any soft areas must be hardened with rock or gravel, but the surface still must be smooth—potholes and airplanes don't mix.

Why can't we just use a helicopter? It would be much simpler, but a helicopter lacks range, meaning it would run out of fuel long before it ever got close. This location is just too far away to be served by helicopter.

The site is one of our gospel outreach locations, with many people eager to hear the Word of God, but few missionaries can visit due to the rugged terrain.

—Jamin and Elizabeth Peck, Asia Pacific

Bottom Left: Isolated in Papua New Guinea

Top Right: The hiking trail and new gospel outreach location

*What mountain is God asking you to cross or what river to ford to reach someone who needs to hear the gospel? It may just be next door or across the street, but are you willing to challenge the limits of YOUR mental, physical and emotional abilities? Let's fly, sail or walk until the last one hears.*

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