

Destination World: The Call

Are you ready to take your next step in mission? DW: The Call is a mission conference especially prepared to engage those with an emerging mission interest and propel them forward in their mission journey.

Learn from experienced missionaries how they have obeyed God's call to reach the nations with the gospel. Experience the reality of slum living in a simulated overnight sleep out! Take your learning to the streets and visit mosques, Buddhist temples, homeless shelters and find out how to be effective in today's world.

DW: The Call will include daily Bible teaching, plenty of downtime to connect in between activities, a hands-on practicum day, and a host of equipping workshops. With so many options to choose from it'll be possible to almost create your own tailor-made conference. For instance, workshop topics include:

- Short-term Mission: Important issues and principles
- Why Mission Agencies? Tough questions and answers.
- Business as Mission: Fundamentals and how to's
- Developing a NZ business to Support Mission
- Creative Arts in Indigenous Context
- Principles of Missional Art
- Listen To Them: Using story to connect to culture
- Indigenous Translation: A PNG Encounter
- Crossing Cultures Here: Engaging internationals in NZ
- Serving The Least: Ministry to the marginalised
- Community Development: A NZ Maori perspective
- Kiwi Mission & The Treaty: Cross-cultural implications
- Personality, Psychology & Mission
- Hearing God: Divine guidance & the prophetic

- Maximising You For Mission: What have you to offer?
- How to reach Muslims, Hindus, Buddhists and Communists
- Destination World: be prepared to be challenged!

Dates: 1-4 Sept 2010. Manukau City Baptist Church
 Details: www.destinationworld.net



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Divine Opportunity in Diversity

It used to be true for most New Zealanders that to encounter people from very different cultures we had to move and base ourselves in a new country. The skills and attitudes necessary for cultural adaptation used to be only for missionaries, diplomats and the like.

This is no longer the case. In 2010 New Zealand cultural awareness and cultural skills are more vital than ever before. Unprecedented worldwide migration patterns have blurred national borders and distinctions. God is moving the nations around. Particularly since the mid-80's the DNA of a typical "Kiwi" has been undergoing a rapid cultural shift as a result. While no place is totally immune, the larger centres have noticed the most dramatic change.

At the last census (2006) Auckland's residents were ethnically 44% non-European, with 37% of its inhabitants born overseas. That's one of the

highest figures in the world for a city of its size. New Zealand's third largest ethnic background is now "Asian," up 50% from the previous census and numbering one in five Aucklanders. To paraphrase an eminent statistician, if worldwide trends continue, "we ain't seen nothing yet."

In the wake of increasing cultural and religious diversity the New Zealand church faces an incredible, if not divine opportunity. With geographical distance removed cross-cultural encounters and relationships are open doors to share Christ.

How can we learn from other country's experiences and position ourselves to respond better? What does the world of missions have to say to us on these cultural complexities? Some might suggest that missionaries have been the destroyers of culture and have very little to contribute...think again.

This edition looks at how Christ, alive in modern day missionaries, communicates through and even revives culture. We see how his love prompts action that reaches out across awkward and uncomfortable boundaries. We will also be confronted with the realisation that cultural understanding often begins with us. Let's read on, be challenged but ultimately get moving across cultures.



▼ inside

Gospel Revives Amazonian Culture

“At first we loved talking with outsiders. We taught them our language, shared our knowledge of the land, plants and animals, and debated important issues. But soon we came to realize that they only wanted to rob us of something: knowledge, language, territory, traditional medicine or dignity. We become suspicious and with good reason.”

These could be the words of numerous Amazonians. We have heard many stories of how outside influences have destroyed language and culture in the Amazon. We, however, are experiencing quite a different trend. When tribes follow Jesus they are placing a higher value on their own language and culture. They are finding good ways to interact with the non-indigenous world without losing their identity, and they are focusing on issues that are really important for their society.

A few months ago we had a wonderful meeting with 1251 people from 47 different tribes gathering



together to praise God. For two weeks we heard amazing testimonies. Some tribes had rescued their own language after receiving the Gospel. Others had left alcoholism or discovered the value of human beings in God's sight, ending evil practices like infanticide.

Celebrating the Lord's Supper was a wonderful time. One member from each tribe came to present the elements: beiju – a typical food from cassava – and acai – a red juice from a fruit of the Amazon. We all sang together in several languages, the same message, Jesus is our Lord.

The WEC Amazon team currently has 39 missionaries, 10 of whom are indigenous, working in 12 tribes. By God's grace we have seen four churches established and many opportunities for sharing the Gospel. The challenge in the Amazon is huge - to convey the gospel to thousands of villages in many different languages, some of which have no Bible translation. We constantly feel we are not ready for the work but the power of the Holy Spirit is with us. This is no time to turn back or rethink our strength. It's time to overcome barriers and follow in Jesus' footsteps until the end.

Ronaldo Lidorio leads the WEC team in the Amazon region of Brazil. He and his wife Rossana previously saw many indigenous churches planted in the unreached areas of Ghana.



Ronaldo Lidorio

Missionaries as Cannibals!

It's funny how easily we notice *another* person's accent without grasping the reality of our own. As long as we live immersed in our own culture, we're pretty much unaware of it. When we do encounter new cultures however, it quickly becomes clear that other people can be vastly different to ourselves.

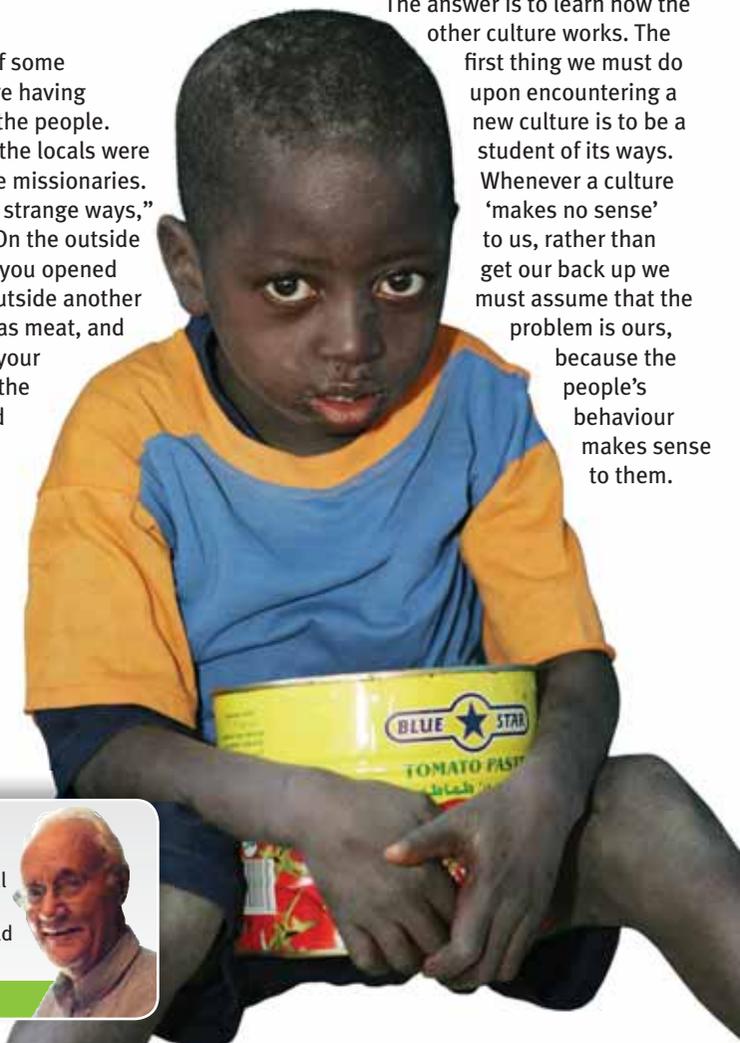
We invariably see (and judge) the “outward” differences first. How they dress, what they eat, how they talk and behave quickly grab our attention. Later we might start to get that there are deeper layers driving these behaviours, like differences in beliefs and values. Finally, we may begin to realise that there are fundamental differences in worldviews.

An old but true story tells the tale of some missionaries in rural Africa who were having trouble building relationships with the people. Finally, one old man explained why the locals were reluctant to become friends with the missionaries. “When you came, you brought your strange ways,” he said. “You brought tins of food. On the outside of one was a picture of corn. When you opened it, inside was corn and you ate it. Outside another was a picture of meat, and inside was meat, and you ate it. And then when you had your baby, you brought in small tins. On the outside was a picture of babies, and you opened it and fed the inside to your child!” The people's confusion might sound crazy from our standpoint, but it is all too logical from theirs.

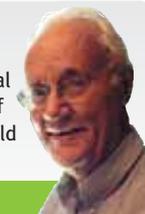
Without any other information, the people must figure out their own conclusions about our actions. We do the same about theirs. We may think they have no sense of time when, by our culture, they show

up late. We accuse them of lying, when they tell us things to please us rather than as they really are. Ironically, we have no trouble saying “Just fine!” when someone asks “How are you?” Our cultural ignorance and misunderstandings lead to poor communication and poor relationships.

The answer is to learn how the other culture works. The first thing we must do upon encountering a new culture is to be a student of its ways. Whenever a culture ‘makes no sense’ to us, rather than get our back up we must assume that the problem is ours, because the people's behaviour makes sense to them.



Paul G. Hiebert is an ex-missionary and cultural anthropologist. The article has been adapted from, Cultural Differences and the Communication of the Gospel in Perspectives on the World Christian Movement (1999).



Paul G. Hiebert

Packing a Surprise Punch

A young Kiwi guy has taken a beating and is sitting dazed by the kerb. It's easy to walk past. After all, everyone else is. I look at my watch. I haven't got time anyway. I'm already running late. Besides, what am I going to do for him? Surely no one would expect me to go so far as to take him to a doctor or the hospital. I'm sure it's not as bad as it looks. It seldom is. I'll look silly if I approach him and it turns out he's actually fine.

I wonder if I can see a policeman. They help out at times like this. Perhaps I could get them to fix the guy up. I must admit that I feel like I should be doing something, especially as a Christian and all. But there are limits, and putting myself out there like that, well it just isn't me. Anyhow, I live out my faith in other ways. My gifts fit better in other contexts. I reckon God must have someone else in the wings for this guy here.

Hang on, who's that? What's that random passer-by doing? He's bending down and trying to talk to the guy, asking if he's alright, how he can help? He's not from around here. With dark skin like that and such short frizzy hair he looks kind of African, from Somalia maybe. Wow, why is he getting involved? What's it to him? He's helping the guy up now, and calling on his phone. I can only guess he's summoning some help. It looks like they're waiting together for a taxi. Here comes one now. That's not gonna be cheap. This guy's really sticking his neck out for a stranger. Hang on, is it a stranger, or is it a neighbour?

So what would the Good Samaritan story look like today? And what character would you and I play? In the original parable the story packed a decent punch because of its surprise element. No-one expected the Samaritan to be a neighbour to a stranger, least of all a stranger of different ethnicity. What would such a surprise activity look like in our lives? What initiative could we take that would mirror the Samaritan's? What actions, that no one except God expects,

would reach across awkward and uncomfortable boundaries of culture and prejudice for the sake of love?



GO GLO-CAL!

"Where partnering with God is both local and global"

WEC NZ offers a range of church-based 'Glo-cal' workshops to equip you for local cross-cultural outreach to the "too - hard - box" peoples of the world.

Contact the mobilising team for details:
0800 GO INTO • mobiliser@wecnz.org

MY NEIGHBOURS ARE WEIRD

WEC EASTWEST COLLEGE

My Neighbours are Weird

Jesus wrapped up all of God's law in two simple statements. Firstly, love the Lord your God with all your heart, mind and strength. Secondly, and here's why crossing cultures is so important, love your neighbour as yourself. Ever since the time of Abraham we as the people of God have been blessed to be a blessing - to all peoples. The last part is what we tend to forget most easily. Who then is our neighbour?

We believe that this is a crucial time in New Zealand's history, one in which God's people are incredibly positioned. Sadly some churches feel ill equipped or fearful when it comes to building relationships and sharing across cultures. Others continue to tweak the tried and true, hopeful that a "one size fits all" approach will attract all the cultural flavours of its community. We believe however, that for churches to effectively reach their changing communities a whole new understanding and skill set is needed.

This is where we come in. WEC International wants to make its cross-cultural resources and experience available - to serve, equip and mobilise local churches in reaching the lost. One way we can do this is by offering church-based training through what we call "Glocal Workshops."

These equipping workshops are termed 'glocal', in that they blend both a global and local perspective. It's more than cheeky wordplay though. A glocal approach better reflects God's heart, as he has always been vitally interested in both the big picture (all peoples) and the transformation of our local community. The word glocal also describes a key aspect of how he desires to partner with us in mission. His church is more global than ever before, resulting in a web of cross-cultural relationships and

dynamic partnerships in mission. In a world where mission has become from anywhere to everywhere, God's people need to understand the principles of relating and communicating across cultures.

One Glocal Workshop that helps the local church explore these issues is, *My Neighbours are Weird*. It has 4 possible modules that are shaped out of discussions to suit the church and its particular vision. We've summarised the sections below.

1. 'Exploring Culture & Worldview': What does culture and worldview look like in NZ, and beyond? How do forms (the outward stuff) and meanings (the interpretations) change across cultures?
2. 'Beyond Mars & Venus | Worldview Comparisons': Exploring 6 key differences between Eastern and Western cultures, and seeing where we fall on the spectrum.
3. 'Culture and the Gospel': What issues and principles are involved with sharing the gospel across cultures? This includes an activity looking at "tribes" and subcultures in NZ.
4. 'Beginnings & Beliefs': Exploring the origins, teachings and worldview of Islam, Hinduism, or Buddhism.

Let us know if you'd like to discuss what hosting a Glocal Workshop could look like for you and your church.

SITsvacant

Albania - Trainer for Church Leaders

Minimum period: 2 years
Location: Shkodra or Tirana
Description: Our vision is to see Albanian led churches planted among the least-reached. The leaders of these new emerging churches need to be trained - can you help with that?
Qualification: Gifts which will help to empower a new generation of Albanian Christian leaders. Ability to work in a multi-national team, reach Albanians in their heart language, persevere through difficulties, take initiative, keep motivated and be flexible.

North Africa - English Language Teacher

Minimum period: 1 year
Description: Several options are available for native English speakers. There are international English schools, English language centres and universities in major cities. The hours are more flexible in language centres and 15-18 hours per week in universities. There is a team on the ground that will help with obtaining suitable housing, guidance in ministry, and accountability and member care. There are opportunities to learn Arabic part time all year and intensively in the summer.
Qualification: Requires TEFL diploma, certificate, or some similar qualification, native English speaker, and at least a Bachelors degree.

Germany - Missionary/Church planter

Description: As WEC-Germany we seek to cooperate with local churches in reaching unevangelised Germans and foreigners in East or North Germany. The missionary would work under the supervision of an experienced German WECer and/or in partnership with a local church. The outreach would be mainly to secularized or atheistic Germans. It seems to be easier for foreigners to share the gospel to East Germans than it is for West Germans.
Qualification: Experience in evangelism and church-planting. A good knowledge of the German language. Willingness to work in a team.

WEC is serving in a huge variety of church planting focused ministries and professions in over 70 countries. These are just a few random examples among numerous other possibilities. Visit www.wecnz.org and click on Opportunities to search out more. Better yet, pick up the phone, call 0800 GO INTO, and get the full picture.

More Info

NZoutlook

Matthew and I have just returned from our International Leaders conference. One of the great pleasures of our time together was worshipping in numerous languages with leaders from many different cultures. WEC has not always been this way.

It started out in 1913 as a British mission, but God has been leading us to become an increasingly multi-cultural fellowship. Today we come from roughly 50 different nations. Being truly multi-cultural is usually hard work, sometimes traumatic and occasionally fantastic. So why bother? We've discovered many good reasons.



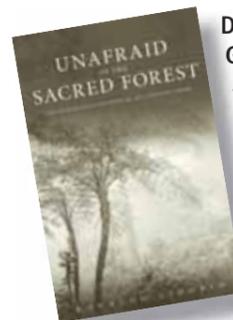
A mono-cultural team is more likely to impose its own homegrown way of doing things in a field situation but a multicultural team can protect against this danger. Members from any one cultural background often bring complementary strengths to a team, and gospel access or effectiveness may be enhanced. Some nationalities may gain visas for restricted countries where others cannot. Multicultural teams also demonstrate oneness across cultural divides and are a convincing message to unbelievers. It's also good practice for heaven!

Yes, we are convinced God wants us this way. With our shared core values and objectives as the key to unity God draws us together and onward.

Flavoured by a few years in the Middle East, Matthew and Andrea now serve as National Directors of WEC New Zealand. When not caught up in the adventures of their 3 sons they enjoy expertly crafted coffee and a thought-provoking read.

Matthew & Andrea

Book Review – Unafraid of the Sacred Forest



Do you ever think that some people, cultures or places are just too hard for God to reach? This is the story of such a people.

The Konkomba people of Ghana view a foreigner as someone from a village five kilometers away. There are only six days in their week and no years or ages. They consider polygamy a virtue and marriages are based on the common practice of swapping sisters. Tribal warfare and human sacrifice still exist. Here witchdoctors are more powerful than tribal chiefs and incredibly, here God builds his church.

Read the fascinating way in which WEC church planters Ronaldo and Rossana Lidorio use their understanding of the Konkomba language and culture to communicate Christ. See the Holy Spirit moving to bring freedom from fear in a place where the forest has been held sacred for generations and where to be afraid is good for your chances of survival. You will be thrilled and inspired! Order your copy from WEC NZ today for \$11.00 + p & p.

Walk like a Man!



"...I'm living on the *wrong* side of a 10 lane motorway with no medium strips or pedestrian crossings. This means I pray hard every morning as I cross this street to get to work. The drivers' first instinct here is to honk rather than brake or swerve.

My first attempt at doing this saw me running in a terrified zigzag before diving onto the opposing pavement, unfortunately leaving my left jandal still out in the middle of the road. This provided much amusement to a group of soldiers looking on."

"I'm learning that Arabs think very little of you if you show any fear. Your walk must ooze with a bravado that borders on stupidity. Men do not run, ever. Girls run. I've watched many locals making the crossing and have tried to model them. I'm proud to say that my daily adrenaline rush has evolved into a slow, carefree, and masculine stroll in a diagonal direction. The soldiers have become more respectful too. Today they even invited me over for tea. Fortunately they can't see what's going through my mind as I skirt within centimetres of speeding traffic – because actually, I'm terrified!"

Alan is an engineering graduate who recently arrived home from four months in the Middle East on a WEC Trek. He was involved in English teaching and friendship evangelism. To find out more about our short-term options see: www.wecnz.org

30 Days 2010

August 11th through September 9th

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