

# **Voices of the Movement**

## **World Christian Fellowship Newsletter**



April 2009

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Andaman Sea, Koh Kho Khao Islands, Thailand

## STRATEGICALLY TEACHING THIRD CULTURE KIDS

by Michelle S.

Both originally from the San Francisco Bay Area, Michelle and her husband Randy have worked as public high school science teachers for about 10 years. They married in 2006 and are now parents of a less than one-year old son. Currently serving as SIM (Serving in Mission) Missionary Appointees to Chiang Mai, Thailand, they are planning to launch out in service as missionary kid teachers at an international school this summer 2009. In this article, Michelle shares how she and her husband came to this juncture in their World Christian journey.



Chiang Mai, Thailand

**Faith in the Lord** → We are more than slightly daunted that there are less than five months before our projected leave date. In our hearts, we trust in God's sovereign will, but in our heads, we keep thinking about what we should be "doing." We're holding on to the words of Proverbs 3:5-6 (New Living Translation): *"Trust in the Lord with all your heart; do not depend on your own understanding. Seek His will in all you do, and He will show you which path to take."*

As teachers with tenure, it seems crazy to leave our secure jobs during this economic time. As first-time parents, it's difficult to leave the help and comfort of grandparents, aunts, uncles, and friends. As missionary appointees, it has been challenging to find time to communicate our vision and raise supporters. Yet, we are still convicted that God is in control and leading us onward with divine appointments, encouraging conversations, and humbling sharing opportunities at churches and small groups.

**Serving third culture kids (TCK)** → Before getting married, we had intended on launching out to the field. Although we were not sure that God was calling us to a certain place, we were always sure he was calling us to a people group – namely children and youth. We considered opportunities to work in orphanages, camping ministries, or house building,

but did not give a second thought to the education of missionary kids (MKs) or third culture kids (TCKs). We thought it did not qualify as "real" missions work since it lacked working directly with the native population.

Over time, however, God revealed that we could contribute strategically by being teachers because it allowed missionaries gifted in areas (that we were not gifted in) such as medical work, church planting, community development, or micro enterprise projects to continue their ministries. When TCK ministries are overlooked, missionary families often return home because of their children's educational needs. In order to help keep families on the field, TCK teachers are critically needed.

**Friend raising** → Support raising isn't easy. From being financially independent, we will now be dependent on others. It would be "easier" (more logical and practical) to go as salaried international school teachers, but this is not the route God has directed us. By having to raise 100% of our financial support, we permit ourselves to be vulnerable, accountable, and humbled while allowing God to show His providence through the generosity of others. In awe of God, each of our presentations ignites new fervor within us. We are made aware that in our weaknesses and insecurities, God is strong.

In sharing our passion for working with kids, our plans to teach at an international school, and the challenge of and need for serving third culture kids, we are beginning to understand the privilege of inviting others to journey with us and play a part in God's global mission through a ministry to TCKs.

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***"When third culture kid ministries are overlooked, missionary families often return home because of their children's educational needs. In order to help keep families on the field, third culture kid teachers are critically needed."***

### Michelle's Favorite "Chopstick" Analogy

*Missions is like a pair of chopsticks. One moves while the other is stationary. It takes two to be effective. Missions requires goers ("movers") and senders ("stayers"). Each time you pick up a pair of chopsticks the one that moves may be the one that had stayed still previously. Likewise, when missionaries aren't always moving, they may serve as senders for others, working together on a common goal.*



Thai coconut juice and spicy basil pork

## THE BIRTH OF A PRAYER GROUP

by Su T.

**Joining the Board of Directors of World Christian Fellowship in 2008, Su shares her amazement at how God sowed the seeds, revived her heart, rearranged her job schedule, and provided task team members to enable her to begin coordinating and hosting a prayer group. The new mid-peninsula prayer group plans to have regular monthly meetings in San Mateo, California, a city located south of San Francisco.**



The like-minded and hearted gather to pray

The birth of the Mid-peninsula Prayer Fellowship in March 2009 is a testament to God's faithfulness, timing, and love. The seed was planted more than 10 years ago when I joined my first WCF prayer fellowship in Arcadia, Calif. During those meetings, He cultivated this desire in my heart: that He would use me and all that He had blessed me with for His glory. That silent prayer – more than 10 years ago – was to begin such a prayer fellowship one day.

**He is the gardener** ☞ God's timing is often not the same as our own because He plans for eternity, a perspective we can't really see. Looking back, I realize that God's preparation work, including pruning, began the moment He placed that seed of desire in my heart. In the last 10 years, He has reconstructed and repurposed my life, my plans, my vision, even my circle of friends. He changed me from the inside out to prepare me for His work. I learned that I am nothing

apart from Him, but instead, "through Him I can do all things through Christ who strengthens me (Phil. 4:13)."

God's new role for me became clearer last year in 2008 when He brought me back to WCC and rekindled my desire to serve in the WCF movement. Responding in faith, He realigned my work schedule for His purpose. A new position reduced my traveling commitment from nearly 80 percent to a manageable 10-20 percent. For the first time in more than 10 years of my traveling career, I have been experiencing the joy of staying closer to my friends and community of believers.

**All things possible** ☞ With this "local" time, I have deepened my friendships with Vivien and Ching Ying, sisters who have become my co-laborers. Both prayer warriors, one is gifted in music, evangelism, and faith while the other is gifted in administration, teaching, and wisdom. Their skill set will help me facilitate the upcoming Mid-peninsula WCF Prayer Meetings. Indeed our God is faithful to raise His own team for His task!

**Testimony of love** ☞ The birth of the Mid-peninsula Prayer Fellowship has shown me more of God's patience and love. He takes His time to develop our character and maturity for the task ahead. God always provides for our inadequacies, including forming His own task team. Therefore, there shall be no room for fear as we do His will, knowing that "His strength is made perfect in our weakness (2 Cor. 12:9)." I eagerly look forward to this new chapter of my world Christian journey as I trust in His provisions for service in this WCF prayer fellowship and for the blessing of witnessing His love and power among His faithful ones in the fields!



## INAUGURAL MID-PENINSULA PRAYER GATHERING

by Vivien T.

Despite a late start, people had a great time mingling. About 14 people came, including two teenagers! By God's grace, we borrowed a church projector at the last minute so that Maria could effectively present her story.

People showed great interest in Maria's personal background and her work for Charis, an organization operating in a southwestern province of China. Charis is a for-profit business that shares the love of Jesus Christ through community development services such as giving small loans to local farmers, delivering children's books to villages through a "Mobile Library", and providing knowledge in water sanitation.

**Maria shared that one of the school principals once said to her, 'I don't believe in your God, but I do see Jesus through you.' And that is all that truly matters; all the sacrifice and hardship are worthwhile for the name of Jesus.**



The first mid-peninsula prayer gathering

## PRAYER: THE FUEL OF THE MOVEMENT

### REGIONAL WORLD CHRISTIAN FELLOWSHIP PRAYER GROUPS

The prayer groups listed below meet monthly. For more information e-mail [prayer@wcfellowship.org](mailto:prayer@wcfellowship.org)

- **Seattle (Tukwila, WA)**

Contact: [Seattle-prayer@wcfellowship.org](mailto:Seattle-prayer@wcfellowship.org)

- **L.A. (Temple City, CA)**

Contact: [LA-prayer@wcfellowship.org](mailto:LA-prayer@wcfellowship.org)

- **Mid-peninsula NorCal (San Mateo, CA)**

Contact: [midpeninsula-prayer@wcfellowship.org](mailto:midpeninsula-prayer@wcfellowship.org)

- **S.F. Monthly Missions Meeting (San Francisco, CA)**

Contact: [SF-prayer@wcfellowship.org](mailto:SF-prayer@wcfellowship.org)

- **East/South Bay NorCal (Fremont, CA)**

Contact: [SouthBay-prayer@wcfellowship.org](mailto:SouthBay-prayer@wcfellowship.org)

- **South Bay NorCal (Mountain View, CA)**

[sbay-mtview-prayer@wcfellowship.org](mailto:sbay-mtview-prayer@wcfellowship.org)

**“Prayer does not fit us for the greater work, prayer *is* the greater work.” – Oswald Chambers**

## STRATEGICALLY TEACHING THIRD CULTURE KIDS

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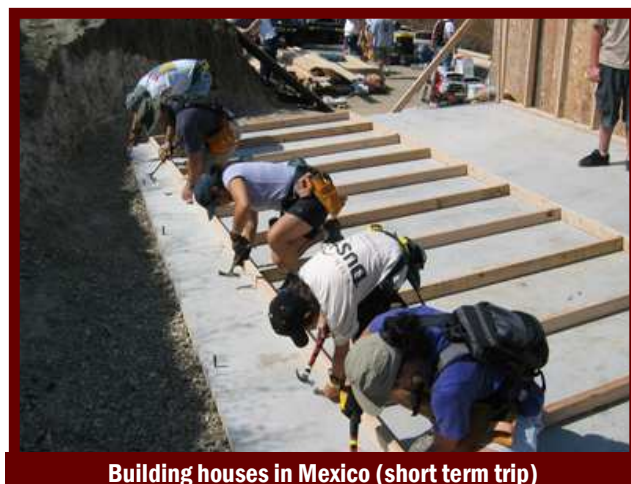
**Matching core values** → While we were praying for an organization to pursue, an SIM (Serving in Mission) magazine with the words “Let the Children Come” on the cover arrived in the mail. The articles described how SIM specifically chose children as one of its priority ministries. As we looked more into SIM, we found its core values resonated with us, particularly being a gospel community that is dependent on God through prayer and continually evaluating and adapting its ministries to meet the needs of the times.

**Journey markers** → Along the way, our missions flame was fueled by several divine contacts and resources. For me, I attended and served in World Christian Conference (WCC), an annual missions conference usually held in northern California, since 1997. At my first WCC, I recall Dick Dowsett challenging the conferees to live life as though you were “planning to go, but willing to stay.” This was a radical thought to me since, logically speaking, after college graduation most people want to find a good job, a nice home, get married, have kids, and basically settle down. The conferees were instructed to nail commitments to a cross. I remember writing, “God, you can have my summer to do whatever you want with me.” God took that summer and revealed His heart and passion for children. After that summer, my renewed commitment became, “God, take my life to do what you want.”

In the Perspectives course, the concept of “blessed to be a blessing” struck a chord in both Randy and me. As we

looked at our lives, we realized that God had indeed blessed us immensely with education, family, friends, careers, travel experiences, and community. In response, we desired to be a blessing to others wherever God was leading.

Another journey marker was Pastor John Lo’s challenge that Asian Americans are a strategic group because we are generally viewed as a “safe minority.” After the tragedy of 9/11, Caucasian Americans might not be welcomed in many parts of the world as much as they were previously. God has opened doors of opportunity “for such a time as this.” Not knowing how long this access will remain open, let us examine how we can join God in spreading a passion for His glory to the ends of the earth.



**Building houses in Mexico (short term trip)**

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## MORE WCC 2009 GLIMPSES AND VOICES

Held annually in February over the Presidents' Day weekend, the World Christian Conference 2009 was the 24th missions conference hosted by World Christian Fellowship that aims to challenge Asian-Americans and those who closely identify with the Asian-American worldview to realign their lives and careers with God's global purposes in mind. A sampling of conferee testimonials from WCC 2009 is offered below.



◀▶ “WCC has done a tremendous work of healing in my heart since my very first conference. God had tailored this healing journey for me every time I showed up at the conference, in the most surprising and amazing ways. Hence I could tangibly see the realness of God and this has helped to build a more intimate relationship with Him. I love Him!”

◀▶ “WCC opened my eyes to the importance of missions. The speakers were truly inspirational. Their testimonies were unique and awesome.”



◀▶ “Thank God for reminding me at WCC that He always has enough resources for us to do His work and that we don't need to worry! He'll provide all we need: Himself. Also, God reminded me that I don't have to worry about how others think about me, all I need to worry about is if I've given all my best to Him. Since I am a dead man, but given life by Jesus, I am His man!”



◀▶ “At WCC I've learned to recommit some areas of my life to the Lord. There are and have been a few things I felt I could handle on my own, but now I realize that I need the Lord's help.”

◀▶ “At WCC, the speakers were great. God really blessed them with sensitivity to His calling and the ability to communicate the calling to the congregation. Beyond the general sessions, I was really encouraged by the providential meetings and conversations that I had with other conferees. God really made Himself known through these encounters and reminded me, yet again, of how present and active He is in my life. He really listens!”

◀▶ “At WCC I was encouraged when Sebastian talked about bringing the gospel cross-culturally. It's been my desire to bring the good news to those who are different than I am.”

◀▶ “It was 11 or 12 years ago when I was still in college, that I first came to WCC. I was very anxious about my 'calling' and career at the time and WCC helped me to see God's love and patience so that I no longer felt anxious. I didn't feel called into full-time ministry, so I began teaching high school and God showed me how I could be a witness for Him there. Now in my 30's I feel God is affirming my calling to stay in N. America and use my gifts here. However, I need to focus my ministry more so that I'm more effective. I'm still open to being sent in the future.”



◀▶ “This is my 2nd year at WCC. I was very happy and blessed that every year I experience growth in God because of this conference. I am growing with WCC, I am glad when I notice this wonderful fact. I lifted my burden and sins to God so He forgave me and told me that He loves me — a life-changing moment. I can't express how appreciative I am to have to joined WCC this year. I look forward to the path planned by God and being on my way to experience it.”

◀▶ “The first night of the conference God tested me to share with my cabin mate one of my two jackets I had prepared for the rain. Although I hesitated, the next morning's message introduction was a story of the jacket the speaker struggled to give up! God used this to reveal to me how much more I love myself than my neighbor. I did not give the best, but gave the extra, the convenient, the comfortable, what benefits me rather than others. I served not because I was compelled by Christ's love, but just so I could do something for Jesus. Oh how I need to return to the love of Jesus and learn what LOVE IS in order to truly serve with Jesus' love for people!”

## SEMINAR COORDINATORS

**Vision and purposes** ■ The purposes of the World Christian Fellowship (WCF) include equipping, activating, networking, and partnering with individual Asian-American World Christians and those who identify closely with the Asian-American worldview, and their churches. To this aim, WCF hopes to host more regional one-day seminars with relevant workshop content throughout the year, not just at the annual World Christian Conference (WCC).

**Seminar coordinators wanted** ■ WCF is looking for regional seminar coordinators in both Northern and Southern California. If you are looking for an opportunity to serve God through the WCF movement and have gifts and talents in the areas of event planning, marketing, and networking please contact us at [info@wcfellowship.org](mailto:info@wcfellowship.org).



## WCC 25TH ANNIVERSARY

**Vision and purposes** ▲ World Christian Fellowship (WCF) is beginning to make plans to celebrate World Christian Conference's (WCC) 25th anniversary during the *February 2010* WCC. During that WCC and throughout the following year, WCF would like to celebrate the past 25 years by thanking God for what He has already done through the WCF movement; reconnecting with past WCF alumni; recasting WCF's vision; and looking forward towards the future in anticipation of what God might continue to do through the WCF movement.

**Celebration preparations: help wanted** ▲ If you are interested in contributing to the anniversary celebration, please contact WCF at [25thAnniversary@wcfellowship.org](mailto:25thAnniversary@wcfellowship.org). We are especially looking for people who can and are willing to reach out to previous WCF alumni and be project coordinators/implementers.



## VOICES OF THE MOVEMENT

**Vision and purposes** ✨ The monthly WCF Newsletter serves a few purposes. The first is to function as a regular official communication vehicle from the World Christian Fellowship (WCF) to the WCF community at large. The second purpose is to capture the voices of World Christian journeys and articles that describe how God is realigning hearts and lives for his global purposes, and then sharing these with the WCF community for encouragement and inspiration. Finally, the WCF newsletter serves to archive the history of what God is doing through the WCF movement in order to inform future generations of Asian Americans who are interested in continuing the spiritual legacy of WCF.

**Joining the team, contributions wanted** ✨ If you are interested in contributing a testimony or article, or want to help serve on the WCF Newsletter Team, please contact us at [newsletter@wcfellowship.org](mailto:newsletter@wcfellowship.org). We have needs for a graphic layout person, editors, and both regular and one-time contributors.



## DONATIONS



**Donations** ► If you would like to make a charitable contribution, please send checks payable to *World Christian Fellowship* and mail to P.O. Box 256, Mountain View, CA, 94042-0256. Make sure you include a valid address so that we can send you a tax-deductible receipt.

**Amazon.com affiliate link** ► If you already do some of your shopping at **Amazon.com**, you can help WCF receive a small percentage back by **clicking through our affiliate link** at [wcfellowship.org/contact.html](http://wcfellowship.org/contact.html) and making a purchase during the same session.

