

# ONE AMBITION

"It has always been my ambition to preach the gospel where Christ was not known" *Romans 15:20a*



## BOLDLY STAYING HERE

By Stephen Somers

**I've always been captivated by Missionaries. As a young Canadian boy growing up in a Christian home, something intrigued me about those unique people who would leave family, country, and all that was Canadian (yes...Maple Syrup too)... for the sole purpose of carrying the message of Jesus to other people in distant lands.**

Braving deep dark jungles.  
Crossing crocodile infested rivers.  
Traversing rugged, snow capped mountains.

Willing to "Boldly Go where no man, woman or family has gone before!"

Ahhh...to leave Canada and be a Missionary! That was my boyhood dream. So...I did just that. This Canadian boy packed up and left "Our Home and Native Land."

For almost 9 years I lived among a mix of cultures, stumbled my way around various languages, chowed down on a smorgasbord of cultural foods... all the while privileged to share the "Good News" with young and old

alike; The Saviour's command to "Make Disciples of All Nations" ever ringing in my ears.

"Out here is where the Nations are!" I reminded myself. I was on Mission. And indeed I was... for a time.

Then...in what seems to be a common event in the life of many a Missionary, God directed my paths back home. Back to the place that I had so longed to leave in order to be a "Real" Cross Cultural Servant of God.

Back to the Land of ice and snow, Toonies, Loonies, Tim Horton's and Maple Syrup. Back to Canada.

Was I disappointed? Kind of.

Part of my fear was sliding back into just being "Canadian" again. The thoughts of returning to a mono-cultural Canada got on my multi-cultural nerves! (Hey I grew up in "the middle of nowhere," New Brunswick) But there was something that I didn't anticipate when I moved back home.

I had changed. In fact...Canada had changed. Well...at least my perspective of it.

God had opened my Canadian eyes to the "NATIONS" while being a stranger in a Foreign land, but what was so amazingly surprising about my return back to Canada was that God had opened my Canadian eyes to the "NATIONS" who were Foreigners in MY homeland.

Canadian statistics were more multi-ethnic in numbers than ever before. 1 out of 5 people in Canada are born outside of this country. **1 out of 5!**

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Canadian cities were now a brilliant display of culture and colour and religious collectivity. Even in “middle of nowhere,” New Brunswick.

What seemed before to be a mono-cultural atmosphere became a place rich in Native, Scottish, Irish and Acadian history; a mélange of people groups all in need of an eternity changing Gospel.

“Right here...in Canada...is where the Nations are!” Jesus reminded me.

“Go and make Disciples.”

So here I am. Alone in my geographical location, but standing and fighting in the Canadian trenches, side by side with Brothers and Sisters throughout the country who are sharing Jesus with Canada’s diverse ethnic population.

We are CALLED by JESUS.

COMMISSIONED by the CHURCH.

CONNECTED through PIONEERS.

CONSIDERED ICM (In-Canada-Missionaries)

And COMMITTED to the task of “Boldly Staying HERE” so that every ethnic group, every forgotten people, every unengaged Canadian within this country’s borders hears about our Saviour!

First Nations or All Nations. East Coast, West Coast, or everywhere in between. Urban or Rural. Habs Fan...or...Leafs Fan.

It’s our prayer that Jesus continue to build His Church here.

In our backyards.

In our communities.

In our towns and cities.

In our country.

In our Canada. ■



## Directors Message

About a year ago, I met a woman from China who is now living in Toronto. Coming from a particular minority people group within China, she believes that she may be the only Christian among the 18,000 of her people group in Toronto. So far we have found no churches working among them, nor any other Christian ministry; with the exception of one missionary couple who came from Korea! In essence, these 18,000 immigrants are unreached, just like their counterparts in China, except they are right here in one of our own mega-cities.

It was just a decade ago that Pioneers Canada sent out the first “In Canada Missionaries (ICM)” to engage with migrant peoples to Canada. Today, we find the need to expand this work is greater than ever.

This issue of One Ambition focuses on “In Canada Missions”. While Pioneers continues to send workers to the unreached all over the world, we are also “sending” workers to the unreached next door. We hope that you will be inspired and challenged by this issue. Challenged, to be involved in direct ministry to immigrants; and inspired, to better care for and support the missionaries who are “boldly staying here”. As you read these short articles, please pray with us that the Lord of the Harvest will raise up more workers among the unreached who are in Canada.

Because of His Mercy,

James Kim,  
Executive Director ■



# when the world comes to us

## REACHING OUR IMMIGRANT NEIGHBOURS WITH THE LOVE OF JESUS

By Rev. Dr. Harold Minor, Area Leader for In Canada Missions teams

Never before in human history have so many people been on the move. The total number of international migrants for 2013 is estimated at 232 million, or 3.2% of the world's population.<sup>1</sup> Every nation has been impacted in some way by this phenomenon of population movement, and Canada is no exception.

Canada has become the new home to hundreds of thousands of refugees and asylum seekers, international students and immigrants seeking a better way of life. According to recent statistics, **1.6 million international migrants settled in Canada** in the previous decade.<sup>2</sup> As a result, the demographic make up of our nation, particularly our cities, is changing dramatically.

What in the world is God doing? **What can this phenomenon teach the Canadian church about global mission?** We recognize that we must continue to go to the nations, but at the same time, we must recognize that **the nations have come to us**. As Canadian believers, we have a window of opportunity to reach out to our new neighbours with love and compassion. The love of Christ compels us to do this.

Pioneers is endeavouring to meet the challenge of missions on our doorstep. Currently, we have an increasing

number of workers engaged in a variety of missions strategies, stretching from New Brunswick to B.C., all designed to engage immigrants and unreached people groups with the good news of Jesus. These ministries include...

- » ESL classes
- » Friendship evangelism
- » International potlucks
- » Church planting initiatives
- » Sports clubs
- » Discovery Bible Studies
- » Hosting refugees and welcoming newcomers
- » International student outreach
- » Internet ministries (blogs, websites, etc)

Really, the sky is the limit. Every believer in Christ can get involved in this kind of missions outreach. You don't need a passport or a visa. Afraid of flying? You don't need to get on an airplane! The mission field is as close as your Syrian neighbours across the hall or your Pakistani college roommate.

"Lift up your eyes and look on the fields, for they are ripe for harvest."  
John 4:35

Would you like a partner in reaching your immigrant neighbours? Does your church have a heart for embracing the nations on your doorstep? We can do this together!

The world has come to us. These new Canadians are waiting for us to tell them about the love of Christ. Can't you picture yourself involved in some way?

 Send us an email at [connect@pioneers.ca](mailto:connect@pioneers.ca) and we can talk about getting you connected with a team in your area.

 Partner with us financially by filling out the enclosed response card with a gift to our Strategic Priorities Fund. ■

1. United Nations Report Sept 2013 [esa.un.org/unmigration/.../The\\_number\\_of\\_international\\_migrants.pdf](http://esa.un.org/unmigration/.../The_number_of_international_migrants.pdf)  
2. J.D. Payne, *Strangers Next Door*, p.39

# { divine. } { appointments }

Today, knowing our neighbours means something much different than it did for past generations. Our neighbours today could be from anywhere: Asia, Africa, the Middle East or South America. A conversation about faith could be based on Buddhism, Catholicism, Islam or Animism.

Over the next few pages you will find stories of Pioneers In Canada missionaries who have felt God saying that no longer is missions just about “over there”, now it’s also about “right here”. These missionaries have sensed God leading them to invest here in Canada: in their cities, in their neighbourhoods, right next door. And God is orchestrating meetings so those previously unreached people groups can be reached right here in our cities and towns of Canada.

## { Start With Hello

*By an ICM missionary in Manitoba*

We met at a party a few days after she arrived in Canada. Although the only word she knew in English was “hello”, I began visiting her at her home. Amal, a young mom, is pretty much housebound due to a debilitating disease. Not being an ESL teacher, it wasn’t easy for me to help Amal with English, but I plunged in. After learning some of the basics, we began reading from **101 Bible Stories for Toddlers** (by Carolyn Larsen) then graduated to **The Young Reader’s Bible** (Standard Publishing) storybook. Eventually I gave Amal a Bible in her language although she wouldn’t read from it for a year because she was afraid. But once she got the nerve up she couldn’t stop reading.

As our relationship deepened, I began praying for her at the end of our visits. One day she asked, “Me pray?” I wasn’t sure how to respond. She hadn’t become a Christian but she was eager to pray. This was a woman who truly was spiritually inclined, rather than preoccupied with fulfilling religious requirements. She knelt on her rug with hands held out the Islamic way and prayed from her heart in her language. I was

shocked. It was no memorized prescribed prayer. After that, every time we met, she prayed.

I cannot tell you at which moment she decided to switch allegiance from Mohammed to Jesus. She lost interest in the Qur’an as the Bible was captivating her deeply. Some days her husband would come home from work early and would observe us reading and praying. I was convinced he would protest but he didn’t. He was disillusioned with Islam but certainly was not ready to investigate another religion. Nevertheless, he allowed the Bible teaching and prayer with his wife to continue. One day he announced they were moving to another province. Concern for Amal’s spiritual well-being gripped me. How would she survive? She was just a baby Christian.

For one year I prayed that somebody would be able to follow up with this sweet godly woman. But it just wouldn’t fall into place. Somebody would have to take the initiative and go to her. Finally I made a trip to visit her and took her to an ethnic fellowship. What a joy to see about seventy five Muslim background believers gathered together singing worship to Christ! I was able to connect her with three women believers there and introduced

her to the pastor. Although she cannot go to the church due to her physical limitations, those three women continue to call her and pray for her.

Also, in a miraculous way that only God could design, I met a Canadian believer who, although eager to befriend Amal, felt some fear at actually meeting her. Although it took about two months for her to rise above her fear, she rose victorious and now they are meeting every week, studying the Word and praying together.

None of this would have happened without taking initiative. I had to take initiative. The ethnic women believers had to take initiative. The Canadian believer had to take initiative. We take the initiative because Christ took the initiative to reach us. It all starts with saying “hello”.

 Is there someone that you’ve met that God is nudging you to connect with on a deeper level? Will you take the initiative? As you pray about how you can get involved, will you pray for our In Canada Missionaries who continue to develop and deepen relationships with those who have yet to hear the Good News of Christ?



## { Letting go of Fear

by a church worker in Ontario

**“I didn’t care or even think of them, until one day they came walking in the door.”**

Leanne\* works in a Christian church in one of Canada’s many Muslim neighbourhoods. She tells this story of two Muslim women who walked in off the street one day and asked, **“How do we become followers of Jesus?”** Before this day, Leanne had not thought much of the Muslims in the neighbourhood – truthfully she had been a bit scared and leery of them, especially the women in their traditional headscarves and long dresses. But here they were, right in the church lobby.

By God’s grace, these women became Christians through the ministry of this church, though they need to be discreet as to their weekly worship. Leanne stopped thinking of her neighbours as “them” and started thinking of them as people who need to hear the Good News.

Now this church is seeking ways to reach out to more of their neighbours. They are learning to let go of their fears and to reach their neighbours with the Gospel.

Is fear holding you back? Are you willing to let go of that fear and trust Jesus to guide you as you begin to reach out?



## { Show Up, Speak Up and Be Ready

by Art Klassen, ICM missionary and Pioneers mobilizer

We often visit a university in our area to share with the young people there. There are many students from different countries so the challenge for us is to find a way to connect with them. A few words of greeting in their language often break the ice and open the initial dialogue. About two years ago we noticed a large increase of Asian students, mainly from China. So we purchased some Mandarin/English new Testaments and a booklet that explains the gospel in Mandarin and then advertised (in Mandarin) free Bibles to the students. We mounted a large map of China on our display and encouraged the students to place a blue dot on the map to indicate their home city. As they were doing this we would ask them some questions about the Mandarin characters in the gospel booklet we’d given them. One day I shared this booklet with R, and when we got to the prayer of salvation, he expressed his desire to accept Jesus. He is now a growing Christian, was baptized and is sharing his faith with others. Several other have also become believers.

So our ministry continues. Each time we go on campus we ask God for divine appointments. Our responsibility is to show up, boldly speak up and be ready with materials to give them. The rest is up to God, who works in their lives by the Holy Spirit.

Are you showing up? Are you ready?



## { The Process

By a Pioneers ICM Missionary

30 years ago in Algeria, a Muslim man received a New Testament. While the book was not read much, it was also never thrown away. Over time the man got married, had kids and eventually immigrated to Canada. The New Testament was packed and put into storage with the rest of the things that remained behind in his home country.

Over time, a desire began to grow in his heart to know more about God and so he started to watch El Hayatt, a Christian TV station. Then, last summer he returned to his home country. While there, he decided to unpack his New Testament and take it back with him to Canada so that he could read it more. He also contacted the TV station to find out more about the book he was reading. Through a network of contacts, his name was passed onto a Pioneers worker in Montreal and they arranged to visit and discuss the way of salvation more in depth.

On that very first visit he eagerly gave his life to Christ! He also shared about his great desire for his whole family to know Jesus. Two weeks after that joyous day, he came with his wife and daughter to a local church. There they were introduced to some other Algerian believers who are living in the neighborhood.

30 years. A New Testament packed up and forgotten, then sought out. A man searching for Truth. A move to Canada. A Christian TV station. A personal visit. You may not know what God can use to bring your immigrant neighbours to Him. You may not be able to guess how He is already at work in their lives, or when He is going to connect the dots. What...or who... is He going to use next in the process?

Maybe us. Maybe you.

## { Appointment at the Airport

By an ICM missionary in Ontario

I was sitting in the departure lounge at the Calgary airport doing a crossword puzzle, waiting for my flight to be called. As the masses of people passed by, I sat there silently praying, "How many of these people know you, Jesus?"

Then my eye caught sight of a lady sitting just across and down from me and I was impressed to pray for her. Our eyes met a few times. After a little while, she stood up and walked over to where I was sitting. I asked her if she was going to Abbotsford. She replied she was on her way to Tehran, via Britain. After a few friendly questions like, "Do you have family in Iran? How long have you lived in Canada?" I asked her if she was a Muslim.

She replied she was a bit Muslim, Buddhist, and Christian. I knew she was searching. And as the Lord urged me to pray for her, I was quite bold, yet gentle in sharing with her. I simply told her I love God with all my heart and that he loves me. Then she asked me if I ever had dreams. I responded by stating, "You have, haven't you!"

She told me she saw Jesus and he beckoned her to come to Him. He had

in His hand a bowl of oil and as she stood before Him, he dipped his finger into the oil and made the sign of the cross on her forehead. This same dream was repeated several times.

I asked her if she had a Bible and she answered, "Yes! I have read 200 pages of it! But I think Jesus is quite stern, isn't He?" I responded, "He has promised, 'Peace I give to you, not as the world gives. Come to me all that labour and are heavy laden and I will give you rest.'" I told her about the woman at the well and how Jesus said, "I offer you living water so that you will never thirst again."

Then the announcement came over the PA system calling my name. The gate had been changed and the flight was waiting for me. I asked her if I could pray for her and she gladly responded, "Oh, please do!" We embraced, her face radiating excitement and she said, "This is a miracle. You are an angel sent from God!" We then parted company and I made my way to the gate, almost missing my flight. I have her name and email address and have since contacted her.

Please pray for Farah that she will not abandon her journey to know Jesus, that others will be faithful to help her in her spiritual journey to life everlasting.



Knowing our neighbours today requires intentionality. Taking the initiative to reach out, to learn about their culture, to welcome them into ours just as these ICM missionaries and churches are doing.

🔥 Do you have a story to share? We'd love to hear from you. What is God doing in your life, in your heart as you step out past the fear or uncertainty and open the door to amazing relationships with those around you? Email your story to [newsletter@pioneers.ca](mailto:newsletter@pioneers.ca) so we can celebrate together what God is doing right here in our country. ■

# How to care for your “In Canada Missions” Missionary

By Ed Loewen

While we may be familiar with “sending” missionaries overseas and supporting them with prayer and finances, what do we do with this new breed of missionary, the In Canada Missionary (ICM), who doesn’t “leave” for the field, but is a missionary in every other way?

## *Special challenges that In Canada Missionaries face*

While ICM missionaries have many of the same struggles that overseas missionaries face, they also have unique challenges because they minister within their home country.

**Difficulty raising support.** Raising support to minister overseas has been an established practice for many years. However as missionaries are raised up to serve in Canada among the newcomers and marginalized people, raising support may not be as clear cut as many people are hesitant to give to a type of ministry that they are unfamiliar with.

**Unclear identity in the church.** Are ICMers “real” missionaries? Definitely. But they are not overseas missionaries and they are not support staff working in the home offices of mission agencies. Nor are they church staff. These missionaries are in a new category.

**Loneliness.** Canada is a vast country and so many of our Pioneers ICM missionaries work alone. Although there may be others working among the same people group, often they are based in different cities or even different provinces. This makes teamwork and support more difficult.

## *Practical tips for Supporters*

So how do we care well for these ICM missionaries? If you partner with an ICM missionary, here are some practical tips for you to consider.

**Get informed.** Understand what your missionary actually does. In short, what does an overseas missionary do? He/she seeks to evangelize, disciple new believers, and get them established in a local church or fellowship. What does an In Canada Missionary do? The same. ICM missionaries are often dealing with the same kinds of people to whom overseas missionaries minister. The same language, culture and religious barriers are present resulting in the same need for cross-cultural understanding and experience. For the most part the barriers of someone coming to faith in Christ remain similar—some greater, some smaller.

**Communicate regularly with your missionary.** Encourage them to share victories and discouragements, challenges, and updates on a regular basis. Usually ICM missionaries don’t have the security limitations of workers in limited/creative access nations. For example, my wife and I send out a short prayer update bi-weekly. Our prayer partners track with us on how our relationships with individuals are developing. Our prayer partners even send us their own requests! We love this 2-way communication.

**Encourage your missionary to take regular breaks and holidays.** ICM missionaries don’t get a home leave or furlough and often get so immersed in relationships that they feel guilty about taking a break. They need to know that it’s okay to take some time off, to sit on the beach or go hiking in the forest to get re-charged and re-energized. Encourage them to take a real holiday! Also, encourage them to take advantage of seminars/conferences in their area of interest, need, or focus. My wife and I go on an annual personal prayer retreat in which we try to ascertain from the Lord what our focus and direction should be for the coming year, and when a dear friend found that out, he sent us some relevant books and tapes to take with us.

**Surprise your missionary.** Special gifts like a gift card, hamper, or money for Christmas might be very helpful to your missionary. Or if you live within driving range, you may want to take your missionary out for a meal and spend some time visiting to get a better feel of how life and ministry are going for him/her. Missionaries love these kinds of surprises!

We’re grateful for prayer and financial partners who take the time to care in these ways. If you support an In Canada missionary please know that your investment in his/her ministry is vital, and you are much appreciated. May you share in the joy of your missionary’s ministry, of living the message of Jesus among those who have the least opportunity to know Him, even here in Canada. God bless you! ■

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**PIONEERS**   
ISSUE 10

 **PIONEERS**

51 Byron Ave.  
Dorchester, ON N0L 1G2  
t: 866-268-8778  
[info@pioneers.ca](mailto:info@pioneers.ca)

[www.pioneers.ca](http://www.pioneers.ca)