



ONE AMBITION

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

LEAVE YOUR COUNTRY

By *Jessica, a Pioneers worker

"Abraham, leave your native country ... and go to the land that I will show you."

Gen 12:1 **Abraham's story is also mine.** Over twenty years ago, God impressed those same words on my heart. **I left Canada and went to the land that God showed me** – at first, it felt like I had landed on another planet, but **soon fell in love with the land and the people.** I settled down and learned the language and the culture. I served as a teacher and found friends. I looked for women hungry to know God, but most seemed content to follow a rigid set of rules, believing it gave them comfort and security, yet they weren't ever sure if God would accept them at the end of the age. After a while, when I stopped trying so hard, **God brought me ones**

and twos. We studied the Word together. The light didn't always penetrate their darkness, but I stayed; I persevered.

Then about **two years ago, our world fell apart.** One prophet said this would actually happen: *"I will shake all the nations and the treasures of all the nations will be brought to this Temple."* Haggai 2:7 I had thought like many others – *"No, it won't come here, not to our country."* Today, this "shaking" is still happening, and the suffering – the fighting, the bombings, the distinct whine of the rockets, the explosions, the loss of life, the destruction, the palpable fear - is as you would expect: terrible.

One by one our team left due to the deteriorating security and escalating unrest. The pressure for me to depart also mounted. When I finally did go, **it felt like a betrayal - as if I was abandoning my family** when times got tough. Learning to cope with this loss has not been easy – **and I continue to feel as if I haven't really left yet.** The roots I put down all those years ago are still buried deep inside.

In a recent count about **sixty thousand souls have gone into eternity,** many of whom I would guess did not know the Prince of Peace who came to set them free. It still feels so surreal, and it's hard to get my head, never mind my heart, around this stark fact.

Continued on Page 3

50 YEARS LATER:

What happens when a savage tribe encounters the Gospel?

What impact is made when missionaries enter an unreached area and settle among a people group who have no understanding of God and His love for mankind? Can entire people groups accept and experience the transforming love of Jesus Christ?

For one young couple, **the call of God was to the Sawi,** a tribe of cannibalistic headhunters from Irian Jaya. In 1962, Canadian missionary Don Richardson and his wife Carol arrived in a small village with their seven-month old son, Steve, to live among the Sawi and share with them the life-giving Word.

Over the 15 years they spent among the Sawi, the Richardsons learnt the language and the culture and began to share the redemptive power of Jesus with them. Their incredible story is documented in the book "Peace Child" written by Don Richardson.

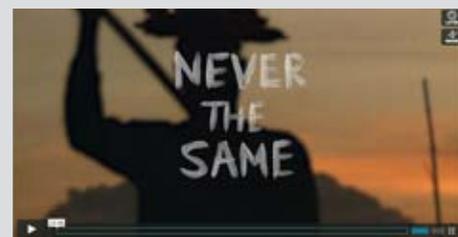
It is now 50 years later. The Richardsons have not been back for many years.

Don Richardson, his son Steve, now President of Pioneers-USA, and two other sons, Shannon and Paul, travel back to the Sawi village where they grew up. What will they find there? What has happened to the church they planted?



Journey with Don and his sons as they travel back to their Sawi home and discover the effect of the gospel on this tribe who were once unreached.

To watch the video about their trip go to www.pioneers.ca/resources



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No Matter the Cost!

History is replete with **missionaries who have persevered through suffering** to bring those outside of God's fold into His Kingdom. **The Bible is full of stories of persecution and suffering** – just read the accounts of Stephen, James, and Paul in the Book of Acts. Christians have been burned at the stakes, thrown in jails, lost spouses and children, just to name a few. Recently **I spent some time at a retreat with Pioneers missionaries** working in East Asia. Their stories are also full of suffering; rejection, beatings, loss of loved ones to death, and much more. In this issue of One Ambition, **you will meet some of these modern day pioneers who have heard God's calling in their lives and are obeying**, no matter the cost.

You will see, also, **how God orchestrated individuals, a local church, and Pioneers to come together in obedience** to engage an unreached people group. Like a symphony, we are currently hitting one of the crescendos, as noticed in the advances that have been steadily made.

And like a symphony, we will go through many different movements, but it will have a powerful ending. It is promised by the One Who wrote the score!

So, why do they do it? **Go into dangerous situations to share the Gospel**, I mean. It is because each one who is called to this ministry is injected with the same passion. The Apostle Paul put it this way in his letter to the Romans (15:20-21), "And thus I make it my ambition to preach the gospel, not where Christ has already been named, lest I build on someone else's foundation, but as it is written, 'Those who have never been told of him will see, and those who have never heard will understand.'" **It is their One Ambition! They have counted the cost**, and know that they may be imprisoned, beaten, stoned, shipwreck, or myriad of other persecutions (see 2 Corinthians 11:23-33), **and have said, "But whatever gain I had, I counted as loss for the sake of Christ.** Indeed, I count everything as loss because of the surpassing worth of

knowing Christ Jesus my Lord. For his sake I have suffered the loss of all things and count them as rubbish, in order that I may gain Christ ..." (Phil 3:8)

Paul and those like him, who can say, "For his sake I have suffered the loss of all things..." are not masochists. They are simply accepting what Jesus said would happen to those who follow Him. (See Matt 10:16-33 and others). But **we have a choice**. We can sit on the sideline and watch, or we can pray and join the battle that is waged in the "heavenly realm." (Ephesian 6:12) **Would you join us in this story of Redemption as a partner?**



Because of His Mercy,



James M. Kim
Executive Director

A Cultivated Heart

By **Jeremy, a Pioneers worker*

We all owe our stories to God's lavish abundant goodness or grace. Mine is no different. Though raised in a Christian home and in church, I somehow grew up with religion, not relationship. However, while I was studying abroad God radically transformed my life. Suddenly I was truly alive, with new passions, and in love with Jesus Christ. While I was working at a nursery growing trees, **God cultivated within my heart a passion for missions.**

My first bold step was a 10-month internship to Africa. This initial experience instilled key foundational lessons and helped confirm God's call. Upon my return, a seasoned missionary suggested **I attend seminary**. He surmised that the more of Christ and His Word you have in you, the more you will be able to share of Christ and His Word to others. The next three years proved to be a fruitful yet difficult time of training; **vital preparation for Afghanistan.**

Why Afghanistan? In March of 2007, **I started praying** for Afghanistan, a country currently in war, and a very dangerous place to be. **I was praying** for the **spiritual state of the nation**, the planting of seeds, watering of seeds, and gathering of the harvest. Then **I started praying that, "God would send forth labourers** into His harvest (Mat. 9:38)." Suddenly I froze in prayer, and the **Holy Spirit spoke ever so softly, "Will you go, will you be that labourer?"**

God was asking me to be the answer to my own prayer. I asked God to wait. After two years God had finished **the required tilling of my heart that enabled me to say, "You are my King, You can command me to go anywhere, and I will go."** Although initially fearful to work in Afghanistan, I was now impassioned to serve the broken and unreached of this war-shattered nation. **I learned that when God calls to something, He gives the delight and the enabling**

to pursue that calling. Better still, He gives the promise of both His power and presence to accompany the task (Mat. 28:18-20).

I often feel an unspoken question from people, "How can you serve in such a turbulent context?" In a word, grace. **I simply look at the cost Christ paid to pursue and redeem me. Should we not be willing to pay the same cost for the spread of His gospel and His worship?** Our only reason for being is the glory of God. Paul wrote, "So now Christ will be magnified in my body, whether by life or by death (Phi. 1:20)." **As for me, I seek to magnify Christ... by life...living in Afghanistan.**

Do you hear God calling you to go?



Perhaps He's asking you to join Jeremy in his work in Afghanistan. Contact our mobilization department at connect@pioneers.ca for more information.

**name changed for security*

LEAVE YOUR COUNTRY continued...

Therefore, this past November when the **opportunity came to return** with my one remaining teammate, I jumped at it. We talked, prayed it through and prepared. Two timely events helped us: a **conference focused on helping refugees** and displaced persons and a **two-day security awareness training**. Our purpose was to encourage our friends and help them process and talk through the different traumas they had experienced.

How we praised God for the one-month window He gave. I considered it a **miracle to be granted a visa at the border**, as the embassy in Canada was not issuing visas. As we climbed out of the taxi upon arrival, we got our "welcome reality check". A missile flew overhead, landed and exploded in a nearby town that was being systematically decimated.

Each friend we visited expressed such **joy and encouragement**, telling us, "We are so happy and excited to see you, but it is dangerous for you to be here." At one point during our visit to fellow labourers, we had to go to one of the kids' rooms, sit on the floor and engage in distracting games and conversation. The shooting outside was just too close for comfort.

But **was it worth the risk, the danger, and the uncertainty?** Absolutely. We **give glory to God for each opportunity we had to visit, to share His comfort and love**, and to experience the wonderful protection He provided.



Will you pray for those who serve in increasingly turbulent areas around the world? They, like this missionary, must "count the cost" daily.

**name changed for security*



Security Awareness Training

Missionaries have faced danger in the past, but we are now seeing violence aimed specifically at religious workers, who are seen as "soft targets" by those who aim to make their case through aggressive acts. Because of this, **Pioneers is seeking to better equip our workers to face these threats in a way that honours the Lord and preserves safety.**

The training is provided by organizations that specialize in preparing people for dangerous environments, by

helping them learn behaviours that would reduce the chances that they would become a target. It also equips our workers to know what behaviours to practice or avoid when in a threatening situation. In this way, we are better preparing our workers for the challenging environments God is calling them to.



Would you consider giving toward this security training? You can fill out the enclosed card or visit www.pioneers.ca/give-online to give.



WANT TO GET INVOLVED?

Is God stirring your heart for missions? Check out some of our top needs right now.

EASTERN EUROPE

A Church plant in Eastern Europe is seeking more teammates as they strive to reach out into the community through ESL, youth nights and children's playhouse days. Two house groups meet during the week as well.

MIDDLE EAST

Interested in Business as Mission (BAM)? A business in the Middle East is looking for those gifted in graphic design, software/web design, experience with Fair Trade practices, accounting, communication, or jewelry design. The opportunities are endless. Use your business gifts to develop meaningful relationships with those you work among and share the gift of the Good News with them.

AFRICA

A team in Northern Africa is seeking adventurous teammates to help initiate a Church Planting Movement among the Arab nomads of the eastern part of the country. Do you love the outdoors and being active? A considerable amount of this ministry will be traveling and camping with the nomads. The church itself will be more nomadic in nature. Medicine, veterinary medicine, teaching French, teaching English, well-digging and water sanitation are but a few of the opportunities open in this team.



For more information about these or other opportunities please contact our mobilization team at connect@pioneers.ca.

Kingdom Partnership

Partnership with the local church is one of Pioneers core values. Partnership is always a story about relationships over time. This is one of those stories.

For seven years Pioneers Canada and North Park Community Church have partnered together to bring the Good News to an unreached people group in Asia. Three key individuals share their reflections on how this partnership came to be.



Agency to Church

By Donnie Scarce, Lead Pastor at North Park Community Church

When the Chairman of North Park Community Church's Mission's Committee called to offer some funds toward a Pioneers project, I was thrilled. But I also asked him to consider the possibility of **reinvesting those funds into North Park's own people** by hosting a course called "Perspectives of the World Christian Movement." We considered together the potential impact of offering some scholarships to North Park's people to be able to take the course. It was an idea **to help build understanding for the average person in the pew about the state of mission in the first decade of the 21st century.** The course was launched. Eighty-nine people signed up and it helped tremendously to educate them about the needs among the unreached. And unknowingly, **it helped lay the groundwork** for the next step.

I was invited, in my role as **the Executive Director of Pioneers Canada** at the time, **to speak to the Missions Committee.** In God's sovereignty, a senior leader in Pioneers from Asia was in town at the same time. That night, **we presented a little about Pioneers, God's heart for those who had never heard the gospel, and then the specific people group that was on the Pioneers leader's heart.** We also presented that **this would be a twenty-year endeavor** and to please not take it on unless there was the stomach for long-term work. We had to be honest about what it would take. **Foreigners coming in would have to learn two languages.** And it isn't easy, even for nationals from a different ethnicity to go and live among these people. **This was a difficult task.**

We were both shocked and overwhelmed by the generosity and heart of those at the table that night. All were united: "we have to do this." As the church moved forward with this work, **Pioneers was able to provide necessary infrastructure and field connections and direction throughout.**

North Park now plays a central role in an ever-expanding partnership for prayer, encouragement, support for special projects, and almost anything that will move the work among this people group forward. **That is kingdom partnership and it has been sheer joy to see it happen.**

Now as Lead Pastor for this church, it is a challenge (because of so many "good" options in global mission) and a joy to see our global focus remain on strategic partnerships. **The fruit of focused energy and "long obedience in the same direction" is observable, and well worth the ups and downs of life-on-life partnership.**





Church to the Unreached



*By Ron Burdock, Director of
Global Outreach at North Park
Community Church*

In 2005, Pioneers Canada's presentation to North Park on the possibility of **adopting a people group in Asia sparked our unique new relationship with them.**

One couple in North Park had been praying for Asia for a number of years and we felt they were the perfect champions to take up this cause. **It is their faithful heart for this work that has kept the flame burning brightly now as we enter our eighth year.** Another **young man** felt God's call to this people group and **was the first from North Park to travel to the region** to learn the language, **to live and to serve.**

We began to hold regular meetings to pray for God to work in the people group. Then, during a trip to the region in the wake of a disaster, **we met with eight workers who were the first people in the history of the Church to enter the region** and to discern how to share the story of Jesus. In that meeting we realized that if we truly wanted to see, **"a reproducing Church planted"** among this people group, then **we would need to embrace all workers who would love this people group. It was not about North Park, or about Pioneers, or about the individuals sent by us... it was about all workers who were dedicated to reaching these people.**

Since 2008 North Park has taken a strategy that includes dedicating ourselves to encouraging any worker who serves this people group, including local national people. **In June of 2010 we hosted a gathering of twenty-five workers from different churches and organizations** for the first time ever. We now host an annual gathering for workers where we worship, pray and help one another work more strategically together.

We have had the joy of funding the beginning of the translation work on the languages among this people group. We have also been **privileged to build true gospel friendships with workers** from around the world as we stay tightly focused on what the work needs. **This past year three new people moved to the city to work together as a "Church based team" in partnership with Pioneers.** We have great hope for the future of this work, and we will persevere through the wonderful and the difficult moments in **true missionary partnership with Pioneers** to see the Church advance in this people group.

From Church to the Field

By a church member and missionary

My wife and I already had a heart for Asia. For several years we had cultivated friendships with Asian co-workers and led Bible studies with new Asian immigrants. Then **our church**, in partnership with Pioneers Canada, **decided to embrace an unreached people group in Asia.** The following spring the church sent our first missionary to that people group.

Our interest in Asia drew us to the work, and we went with the first team from our church to visit that missionary. As **we travelled and prayed through the area, God somehow touched our hearts even further for these people.**

We began to consider how we might contribute to this work. A university we knew of, founded specifically to provide educational opportunities to disadvantaged ethnic minorities, seemed like a **strategic place for outreach** to this people group, some of whom were students there. When I inquired whether it might be possible for me to teach there, the answer was "No, we don't do that at this university."

Meanwhile, back at the research centre where I worked, I was asked to be on the advisory committee of a new graduate student. When I chatted with this student one day, I learned that not only was he from Asia, **he was from the city we had just visited,** and even more remarkably **had grown up on the campus of the very university I had inquired at!** This was because his father was the director of a program there. Suddenly, I went from being a nobody in the eyes of the university to being an academic advisor to the son of a program director!



The next fall, **I returned to Asia with the second team from our church.** This time, the program director took me to the university and introduced me to the director of the International Office and a department head. After touring me around the research department, the department head said "**I would like you to come and teach my students next year!**"

We took these events as evidence that God had opened the door for us to go to Asia. So we went with Pioneers **on behalf our church** to join our missionary there. At the end of the year we returned home, with eyes set to returning to Asia after I retired from the research centre. Each year during visits to Asia on behalf of our church to encourage our workers, we deepened our relationship with the university. In the year of my retirement, **I was offered a three-year position** to work at the university as a foreign expert.

So now we are part of the Pioneers team in Asia. **We are thankful for the partnership between our church and Pioneers, which shaped the vision for the work among this people group,** and we are very excited to be part of what God is doing here.

It is stories like these that inspire us towards more **Kingdom Partnerships** with local churches. For that reason, on **April 16th to 18th** Pioneers Canada will host the **First Annual Church Partners Forum.** Church Leaders from 15 churches have been invited to attend this forum to dialogue together and forge a better path forward to see the Gospel spread to the ends of the earth.



If you feel led to give to this exciting event, please fill out the enclosed card or visit our online giving page at www.pioneers.ca.

Let Us Go – Phase 2

Just two years ago we stepped out in faith, recognizing that God was asking us to trust Him to do something BIG. He has been faithful, and we now work from a beautiful new building, provided through your prayers and generosity. **Your donations for the new building have enabled us to accommodate more workers in our office and more missionary appointees in our orientation programs.** Thank you for partnering with us to make this possible.

But there is more to this story! Last autumn, as we looked around our new office building, we saw something we weren't expecting to see for several years; **every workspace was filled!** Not only did God provide the finances to build this facility, but He also worked in the hearts of several people, largely part-time volunteers, to make Pioneers their place of ministry.

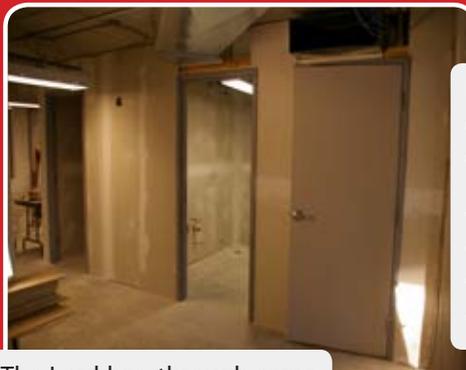
In the article "A Cultivated Heart" Jeremy, one of our newly appointed missionaries, tells how God gave him a passion for missions. **We are thrilled to see individuals respond to God's call in their lives.** We are amazed to see the Lord's hand on this organization, to watch the steady growth He has provided throughout the years. And we are excited to see Him provide for further expansion of our office space.

As you may recall, the Pioneers Canada board members wisely made the decision to include a sizable unfinished lower level in the building's construction plans. A deep foundation was dug to provide for high ceilings and large windows in an area that could be finished when needed. That need has come, and thanks to you, our supporters, construction is well under way.



Every day we hear a rumble or a tapping of some sort, and we know that progress is being made beneath us. Through the faithful work of Jim Vincent, Ron Harris, and others, the space is quickly taking shape!

Want to get involved? You can! If you feel the Lord moving you in this direction, you can give towards the remaining 50%. **You can help provide for the equipment that our workers will be using in the new workspaces and meeting room.** To donate, you can **call us, give online through our website, or fill out the reply form** included with this mailing.



The Lord has, through some key partners, already brought in 50% of the \$60,000 needed for this project. That 50% covers the costs of finishing the construction of the area. The other 50% will go towards equipping the area with furniture, phones, and a PA system.



With our increased office staff, our workers on the field are getting better support than ever before, and those God has called to missionary service have more opportunity to connect with one of our mobilizers.

Our contractor, Jim Vincent (*left*), labours with compelling joy. He says, "Charlie Wight* was very influential in leading me to the Lord. I couldn't think of a better way to honour Charlie than by working on this building. Also, Ron Harris* is a mentor to me, so it's a privilege to work with him." To read more of Jim's story, visit our blog at Pioneers.ca/blog.

**Charlie Wight founded World Outreach Fellowship, which became Pioneers Canada.*

**Ron Harris is a board member of Pioneers Canada, and the project manager for the building construction.*

We invite you to **check out the blog at pioneers.ca to view pictures and updates on the progress.** You can also view reports on the activities that will take place in the new meeting room, such as the Church Partners Forum.

And **please be in prayer for our workers, and for the dedication of this new space.** If the pace keeps up, we will see the new workspaces filled as quickly as those in the upper level. To God be the glory!

By finishing this lower level, we are effectively doubling the amount of space currently available. The lower level provides:

- at least 10 additional work spaces
- two additional bathrooms
- a large meeting room that can accommodate 60 people



Prayer is the fuel for missions

by a Pioneers staff member

We, at Pioneers, are serious about prayer. That is why we gather together every Tuesday and Thursday in our Prayer Room to pray for our missionaries before we start the day. On the second Monday of each month, a half day is set aside for corporate prayer –the office is shut down so that we can undergird our ministry in prayer. We have also hosted several inter-agency prayer events and plan to continue this in the future. **Prayer is important to us, because the work of initiating church planting movements among the Unreached is too difficult for us.** But we serve a God who is the Author of all things, including the work of redemption.

J. Oswald Sanders, in his seminal book *Spiritual Leadership* wrote, **“Prayer is the most ancient, most universal, and most intensive expression of the religious instinct.”** This same thought is echoed not only by Christians of every denomination, but by every religion. We all know the importance of prayer.

However, Sanders goes on to say, “Strange paradox, most of us find it hard to pray.” **If you are like me, when I go to pray, my mind is filled with a million things that need to be done the moment I finish praying.** This, inevitably, causes me to lose focus while I am praying, which leads me to cut the prayer time short, and find ways to justify my “drive-by prayer” by saying things like, “It’s more important for me to be ‘always’ in God’s presence than wasting an hour trying to focus.” Or “I think God would rather have me give him ‘quality’ time rather than ‘quantity’ time.” It doesn’t take a spiritual giant or a genius to figure out that there are huge holes in my logic.

This is why so many of us find it easier to pray with someone. This shouldn’t come as a surprise to us since God has made us to be in community. Therefore, we, at Pioneers, would like to introduce a few initiatives to help us pray better.

1. **Praying for the churches:** On Monday, March 4, we began focusing our prayer for a specific partnering church each week. We contacted several churches ahead of time to gather prayer requests and distribute them to our staff, both home and field staff, to lift them up during both the personal and corporate times of prayer.
2. **Praying for our constituency:** We are currently in the process of building a team of prayer warriors to call all areas of our constituency (missionaries, prospective missionaries, donors, churches, partnering organizations, to name a few) simply to pray with them. Please let us know if you’d like to join us in this sooner than later. Also, please remember that when we call to pray with you, we only want to pray with you, nothing more.

Prayer is the fuel for missions. Passion and strategies may get us going in our engagement to God’s great work of redemption, but it is the prayer that fuels and sustains the obedience of this difficult work. **Please join us in this important and hard work.**

Want to connect with Pioneers?

Here’s where we are:

March 22–24

Jesus to the Nations ,Halifax, NS

April 11–13

MissionFest Toronto, Toronto, ON

April 21

World Mission Conference, Bramalea Baptist Church, Toronto, ON

June 6–9

Pioneers Candidate Orientation Program, Dorchester, ON

Come chat with us and see how you can get involved!

For more information about these events please contact newsletter@pioneers.ca.

Events Happening at Pioneers Canada

March 18–22

Latin American Mobilization Gathering

April 16–18

Church Partners Forum



51 Byron Ave.
Dorchester, ON N0L 1G2

t: 866-268-8778

info@pioneers.ca

www.pioneers.ca