

one ambition

"It has always been my ambition to preach the gospel where Christ was not known..." ROMANS 15:20

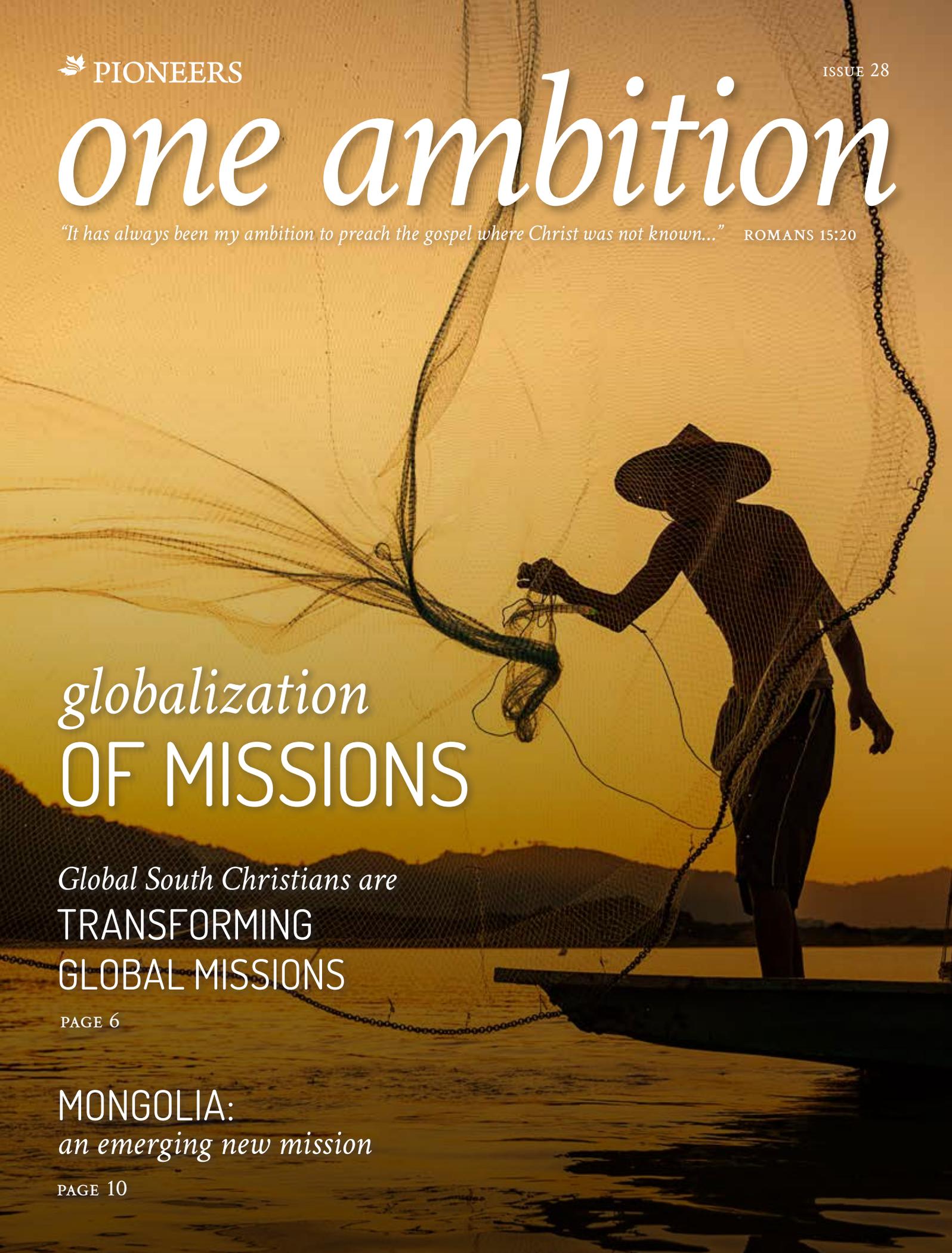
globalization OF MISSIONS

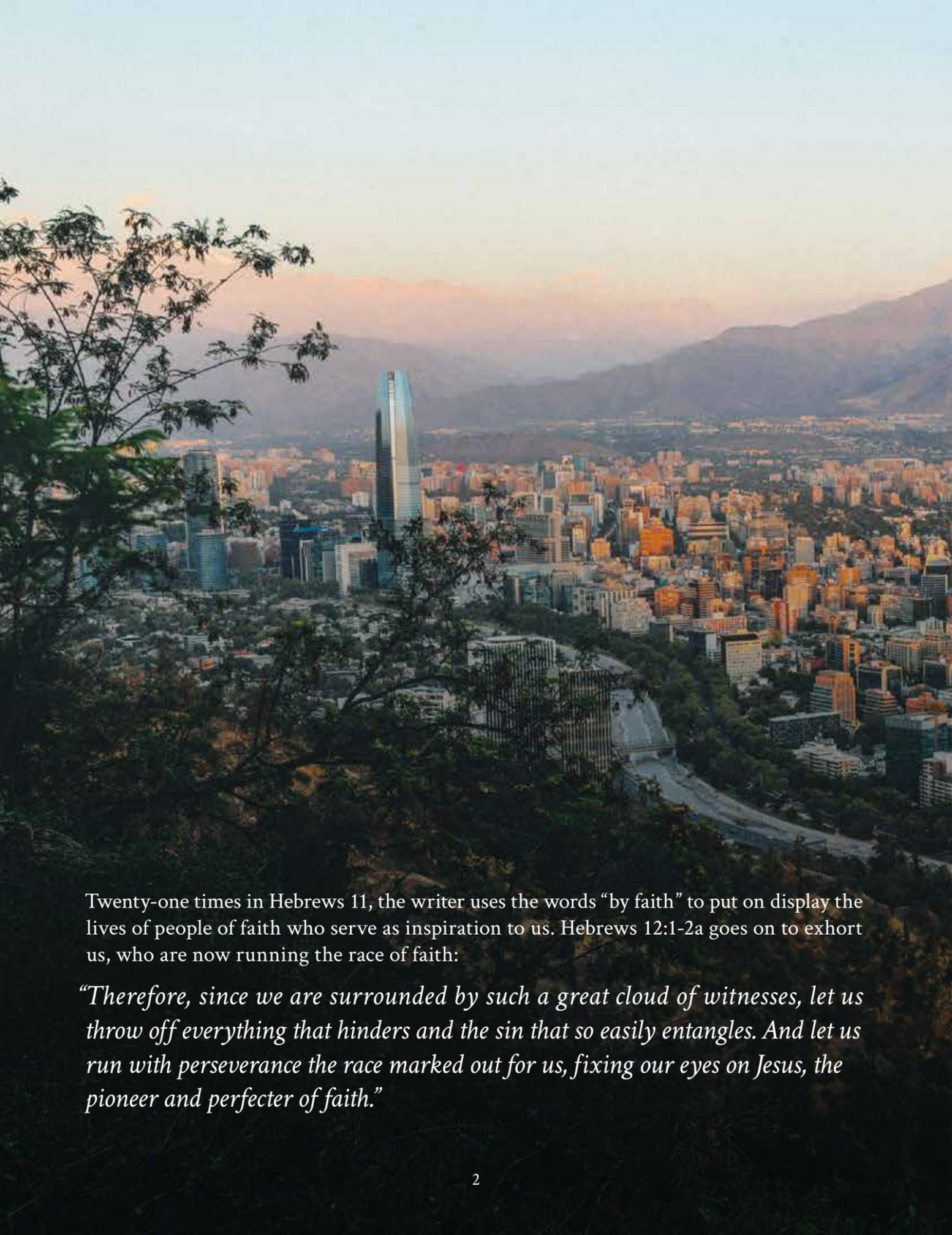
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Twenty-one times in Hebrews 11, the writer uses the words “by faith” to put on display the lives of people of faith who serve as inspiration to us. Hebrews 12:1-2a goes on to exhort us, who are now running the race of faith:

“Therefore, since we are surrounded by such a great cloud of witnesses, let us throw off everything that hinders and the sin that so easily entangles. And let us run with perseverance the race marked out for us, fixing our eyes on Jesus, the pioneer and perfecter of faith.”

by faith...

WHAT IS THE LEGACY OF A LIFE?

In June, our Pioneers family mourned the loss of a dear brother in Christ and co-labourer in the harvest, Donnie Scarce. He had been the President of Pioneers Canada for twelve and a half years, and many of our Pioneers global family knew him personally. Others regularly read his reflections in this magazine. Donnie was one of our earliest and most influential leaders serving on our first International Leadership Team and in many other roles - most notably in various mobilization roles.

Our African brother - and founder of Pioneers Africa - Dr Solomon Aryeetey wrote:

For many years, we all hailed Donnie as the mobilization guru. He was, in our estimation, a major reason for the uncommon growth of Pioneers as a mission body. Donnie was a firebrand, a man of action. Very innovative and full of fun and exciting to talk to... [He was] very creative, intelligent, AND HE LOVED THE LORD PASSIONATELY.”

As news began to trickle out to our global movement of Donnie’s going to glory, as the International Director, I was honoured to hear many of the reflections and memories people had of his life, honouring a man who was sold out for the sake of the gospel, with a special passion for the unreached.

Donnie’s life was an example to us: he was a strategic thinker, an outstanding leader and a man through whom you would sense the compassion and kindness of the Lord. As one leader said, “I’ve always considered Donnie to be one of those faithful men whose life I wanted to imitate.” There were many others who shared this sentiment.

In the book, *The Imitation of Christ*, by Thomas à Kempis, we read:

Jesus has always many who love His heavenly kingdom, but few who bear his cross... All desire to be happy with Him; few wish to suffer anything for Him.

For some years, Donnie was burdened by ailments in his body - and perhaps this is why he had a deep understanding of the grace of the Lord that few others share. We miss Donnie. May Donnie’s life inspire us to live our lives for eternal purposes and to bring the gospel to the unreached.

This edition of *One Ambition* is dedicated to Donnie’s memory. He was passionately engaged in what the Lord was doing in many parts of the world and led the Pioneers Canada family in supporting new missions movements all around the world (what we sometimes call the Global South).

Donnie is survived by his wife Beth, his sons Josh and Caleb, and their families. We extend our love to them in this season of loss.



Dr Mark Syn
International Director
Pioneers

a tribute to DONNIE

Written by Eric Peters
Pioneers Ministry Mentor-at-Large

There are some special people in the world whose presence makes life richer, deeper, and more meaningful for all those whose lives they touch. Donnie Scarce was one of those people. Donnie loved God and his family deeply; that love overflowed in kindness and thoughtfulness toward all.

Donnie was also a man of deep faith. At the centre of his life, Donnie pursued an ever-deepening relationship with his Saviour, which impacted everything he did and everyone he met. His faith journey was authentic and realistic, lived with a depth of purpose and thoughtful reflection, with an embrace of every adventure, and with a lightness of heart that found humour in any situation. In every encounter with Donnie, it was possible to experience his genuine and unhidden exploration of life's big questions as an invitation to discover the God he loved and served.

From his days at Columbia International University in South Carolina, right until his final ministry trip to the UK as the President of Pioneers Canada, Donnie was devoted to seeing the church take root and grow among every tongue, tribe and nation on earth. He and Beth originally assumed they would live among an unreached people group bringing the Good News to those who had little or no opportunity to hear the good news of Jesus Christ.

But God had a multiplied scope of responsibility for Donnie, a perfectly designed role of mentoring and mobilizing hundreds of others into long-term and short-term missionary service. God granted Donnie the gift of truly seeing people, uplifting everyone by believing in them and calling out the possibilities he saw in each one.



Donald Lynn Scarce, fondly known as Donnie, passed away unexpectedly on June 4, 2023, while on a ministry trip with Pioneers in Manchester, UK. Donnie dedicated his life to serving Jesus in missions leadership with Pioneers, beginning in 1989. He was a man of unyielding love, gentleness, and passion, with an infectious laugh and exceptionally kind heart. His loss is deeply felt by all who knew him.

Throughout Donnie's ministry life, his eyes and heart were increasingly turned toward engaging the global body of Christ in global missions. In his role as Pioneers International Mobilization Director, Donnie was tasked with supporting and coaching emerging mobilization efforts in Africa, Asia and around the world. In every ministry role he held, his high value for the diverse global Body of Christ influenced others and carried a meaningful role in the internationalization of the whole Pioneers organization.

In my own life, part of Donnie's lasting legacy is the depth of rich wisdom I gained through his teaching of God's Word. I can still remember his message

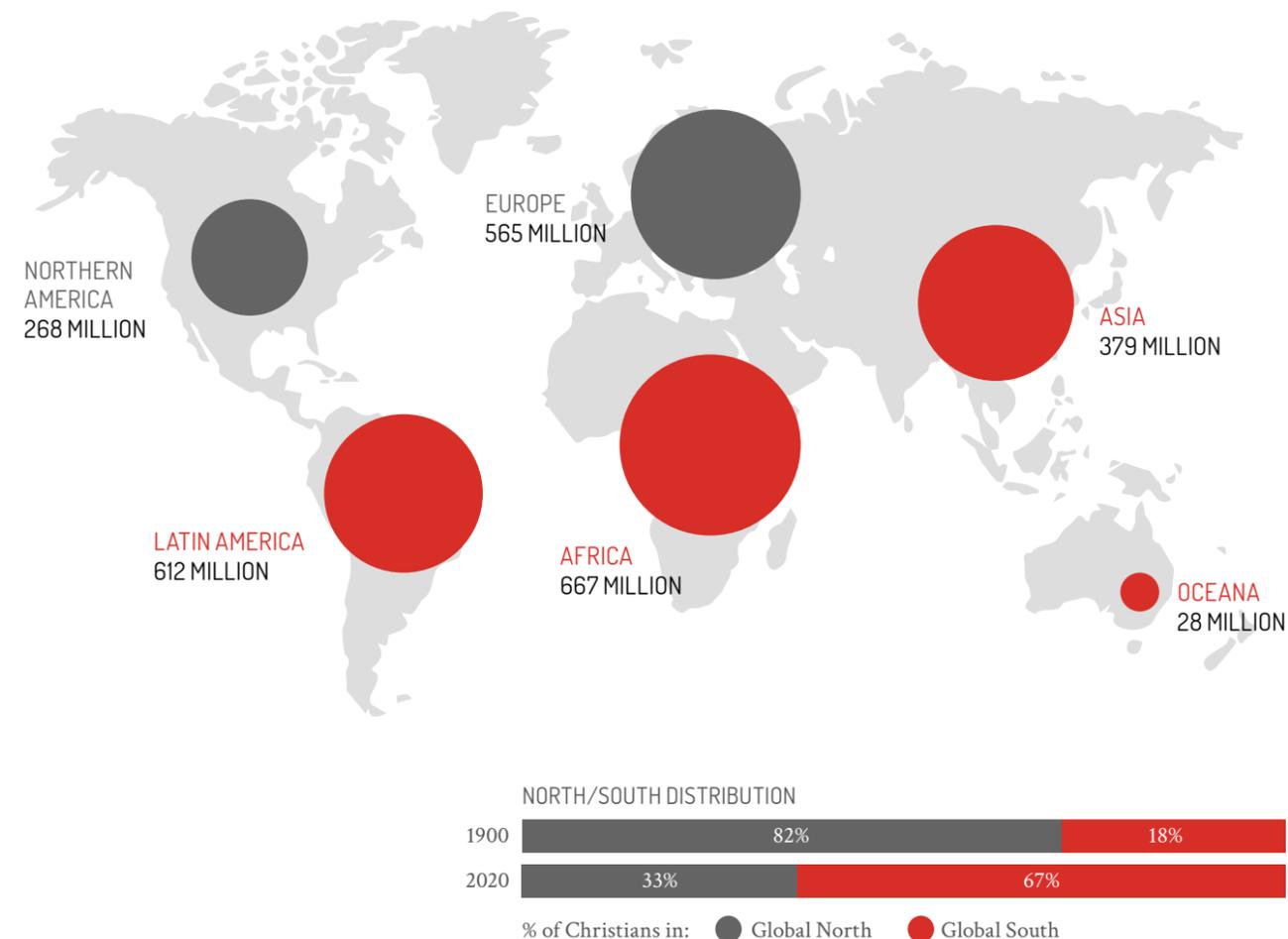
from Psalm 131 about learning to 'quieten our souls before God.' The teaching was profound, but the deeper impact Donnie left in my life was his own example of having a 'quietened soul' even through difficult health issues, ministry challenges, and the daily trials of life on this side of eternity.

Even in Donnie's absence, my life continues to be richer and more meaningful because of his influence. I'll continue to pray for Beth and the boys as they grieve deepest. And until I see him again, I will miss my friend Donnie's playful smile, his thoughtful questions, his tender heart, and his unshakable devotion to the God who rescued him and carried him each step of the way.

Global South Christians are TRANSFORMING GLOBAL MISSIONS

by Don Little, Pioneers' Missiologist-at-Large

There has been an astonishing shift in our lifetime. Eighty-two percent of all Christians in 1900 lived in Europe and North America; by 2020 this figure had dropped dramatically to 33 percent (Chart from Gina A. Zurlo & Todd M. Johnson's "Is Christianity Shrinking or Growing?" Lausanne, 2021).



During the summer of 1979, I led an Operation Mobilization (OM) team reaching out to immigrants from South Asia in two cities in England. One team member was a Korean woman in her 30s, the daughter of a pastor. She was one of the first Koreans to serve with OM. Her life of prayer and spiritual discernment deeply challenged all of us on the team. In India I served with two brothers from Singapore and with many Indian brothers and sisters. And on my first summer team with OM in '77 there were five Jordanians serving with us in London. From the earliest days of my missionary experience, there were always a few team members from the Global South.

But a lot has changed in the last 45 years! Now missionaries from the Global South often outnumber missionaries from the Western world.

Terms like "two-thirds world", "the developing world versus the developed world", and "The Majority World" have been used to categorize the nations of the world. The term "Global South" is often used, perhaps because it doesn't contain as many negative political or economic undertones. The Cambridge Dictionary defines Global South simply as: "the group of countries that are in Africa, Latin America, and the developing parts of Asia" (dictionary.cambridge.org/global-south). In my parents' generation, missions was thought of as Christians taking the gospel "from the West to the rest". Today, missions has increasingly become "from the nations to the nations."

The dynamic centre of missionary activity is shifting away from the West to the Global South.

Since 2015 I have been privileged to visit churches to teach and help train Christians from a dozen African countries. The passion, depth of conviction and radical discipleship I have seen among African Christians are deeply challenging and inspiring!

My encounters with Christians from Latin America, Africa and Asia suggest that most Christians in the Global South are godly people with deep theology and impressive ministry experience and capacity. The mission leaders whom I respect and admire the most today are all Global South leaders.



Here are some practical things you can do to build your understanding of the Global Church.

- Do a Google search for immigrant churches in your area, visit one and get to know some of these amazing brothers and sisters.
- Participate in global prayer ministries like: prayercast.com, operationworld.org, or joshuaproject.net.
- Get involved with the Global Mission Mobilization Initiative: globalmmi.net
- Pioneers podcast podcasts.pioneers.org/podcast-series/relentless-pursuit

Let me give you two examples.

About seven years ago I met Peter, a Kenyan who heads an informal network of local church planters and missionaries reaching unreached Muslim tribes along the coastal regions of Kenya and Tanzania. Peter, a father with young children, is passionate about his ministry. He lives very simply and pours his heart and all of his resources into equipping frontline Kenyan workers. He often has several people living with his family for extended periods of time so he can mentor them. He exemplifies the truth that leadership is better caught than taught. He has a fierce hunger to learn, study and grow to be more effective and equip those God has called him to influence and lead.

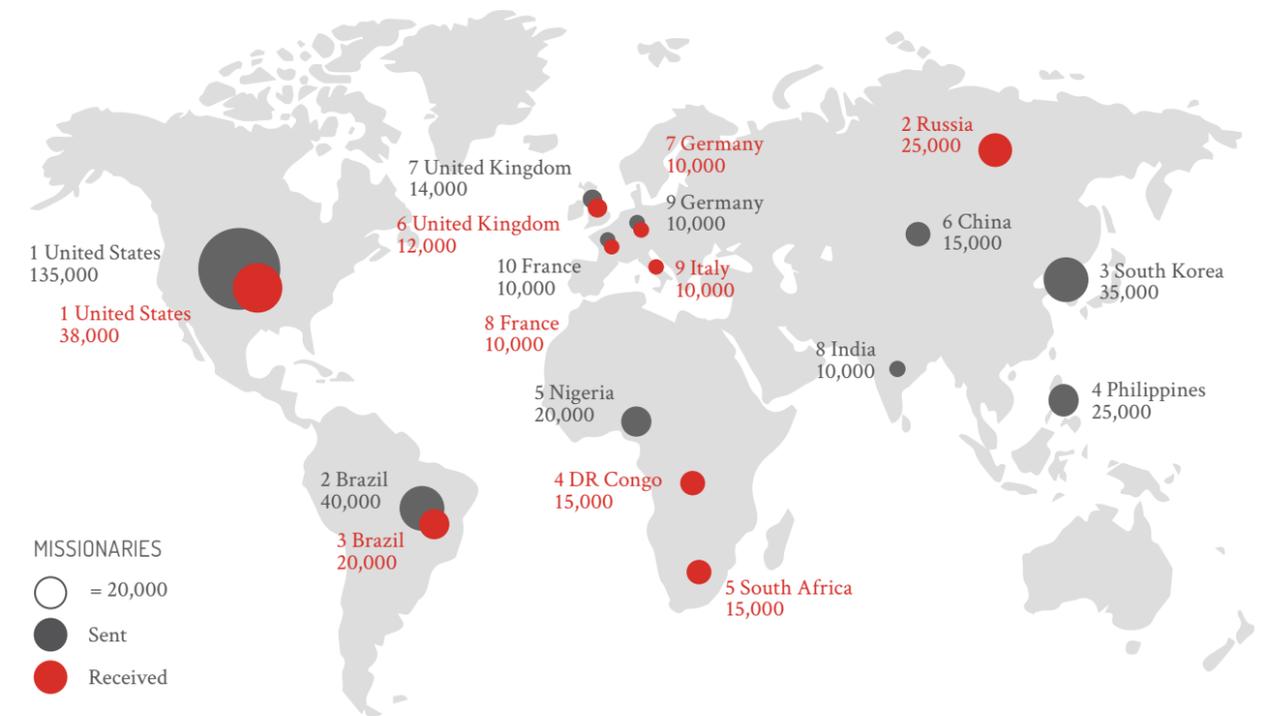
Another example, from the other side of Africa, is Nigerian Abu Nasser. Having encountered Christ in a powerful way as a young man, he was called to be a missionary to Muslims in the Arab world. I met him and his family when he was serving in the Arabian

Peninsula in a very unreached city. He had previously been a church planter in Sudan for almost a decade. Later, he was asked to return home and help mobilize workers from across Nigeria. He is a very dynamic and anointed speaker. After a decade of helping recruit and train dozens and dozens of new workers in Nigeria, he resigned from his position in order to return to the Arab world.

Now serving in one of the largest cities in the Middle East, Abu Nasser equips local pastors, mobilizing locals into reaching unreached Muslim majority and unreached local tribes. He speaks Arabic fluently and preaches and ministers in Arabic. Not only does Abu Nasser have incredible levels of energy and a deep sense of calling that empowers him to levels of activity that most of us can barely imagine, but he also has a deep commitment to nurturing his inner life with God. His passion, discipline and anointed ministry bring great glory to God!



ONGOING SHIFT TO THE GLOBAL SOUTH



“Go North” movement, taking Christ from the nations to the nations. (Graphic from “World Christianity and Mission 2020: Ongoing Shift to the Global South”, by Zurlo, Johnson & Crossing, IBMR 2020). This is a representation of the largest missionary sending and receiving countries.

Yet this encouraging move of God in raising up thousands of Africans, Latin Americans, and Asians is not without major challenges for this first generation of Global Church missionaries. Some of these challenges are:

- + African church planters in Europe often do not reach many Europeans – they are full of Africans.
- + There are major challenges in funding Global South missionaries working in the Global North.
- + Many Global South missionaries don't feel comfortable in missions run by Westerners.
- + We Westerners sometimes harbour attitudes of superiority towards our Global South colleagues.
- + Children of Global South missionaries often face enormous identity challenges as adults since they do their education in English on the field and don't learn their mother tongues well.

The integration of these amazing Global South colleagues into our church planting teams around the world is an exciting new challenge.

Even though Pioneers is committed to growing the number of Global Church members, some of the ways we operate as a global family must change if we are going to truly reflect the tremendous variety of cultures and expressions of evangelical faith across the globe. We need to appoint more Global South members to key leadership roles. As we grow to become a ministry in which Global South members are empowered, released and esteemed, we will be transformed. From a Western mission with Global South members, into a global ministry that has well-integrated members from more and more Christian communities across the globe flourishing in our international family.

Though there is much happening in our world that is heart-breaking and tragic, when we look beyond Canada and see what God is doing through his people around the world, there is much to rejoice in.

God is up to something new that almost no one saw coming 50 years ago. It is hard to imagine a more exciting time in the 2000-year history of the church to be alive and a part of the Global Church!



MONGOLIA: *an emerging new mission*

By Eddie Namnan



Eddie and his wife Idree work in our Pioneers office in East Asia mobilizing and equipping Mongolians to the nations.

The history of Christianity in Mongolia is complex. In the 1920's Mongolia claimed independence from China and many of its emerging leaders looked to Soviet socialism as a model for their society. For more than 70 years we practiced socialism. I grew up with no understanding of Christianity. Then, when the Soviet Union began to collapse, everything changed. Christianity was openly talked about in the cities, social settings and the universities.

My wife and I are first-generation believers. I became a believer in my 20s, my wife in her teens. As children and teens, we were immersed in socialism. But then, around 1990, as Mongolia became more ideologically and religiously free from the Soviet Union, we heard the gospel and became believers. Our parents are still on a journey to become believers and accept Jesus as their Saviour.

- Pray for:**
- + Growth and maturity in the Mongolian church
 - + Understanding among church leaders of cross-cultural ministries
 - + Increased financial provision for those already waiting to be sent from our East Asia office
 - + Pioneers to continue to grow and adjust as more Global South workers join this important Kingdom work

We have a great team and we are praying that we will be able to mobilize and send 30 – 40 Mongolians each year. This is an aggressive goal for our small church. But our God is a big God!

My first experience with North American believers began as a university student in Idaho. I had good leaders and I experienced cross-cultural missions, but I didn't really understand the concept of what Americans called "missions."

I felt a strong calling to go back to my people and share the gospel. When I met my wife, a strong Christian, she shared how God had called her to reach Chinese and Tibetan people. We both have a heart for our people. We were married in 2016 and we began earnestly praying about missions and how we could serve God together.

In 2019, a Pioneers missionary invited us to get involved, first as a translator, then as a part of Pioneers' team. As Mongolians, we have advantages as missionaries to surrounding nations. Even though Mongolia has changed, our people have a nomadic mindset, so moving and adapting to new cultures and settings is not hard for us. Also, our language and culture is similar to our neighbouring countries, allowing for easier adjustments than for missionaries from the West.

Our prayer is that we can prepare Mongolians for missions. The Christian church in Mongolia is still young, just 30 years old. There are 400 churches, but they are immature and financially weak. We have limited infrastructure or resources backing us. We do not have the financial capacity of the Western church. Many young people leave our country to pursue a vocation, but few go because of their spiritual calling. That is still new to us.

Our leaders and pastors have not experienced cross-cultural missions. They don't understand why a young Christian would leave the Mongolian church when there is so much to do, so few people who know Jesus in our own country. But we believe that our work is about God's Kingdom, not just about Mongolia.

I enjoy studying the history of the Christian people. God has shown me that Europeans dominated the church in the 18th and 19th century. But that is changing. In the next decades, the Global South will be the key player in God's global Kingdom.

But there are challenges.

There are men and women willing to go but they do not have the funds to go. Paying for our children's education and for our family's medical care is challenging for us.

Most of the mission organizations are western and speak English. Many of our people speak several languages, but not English. This separates us and makes it difficult to work together. We are eager to see how God will continue to bring us together as a more united global ministry.



As a Mongolian, I have a connection to Canada. Our country has a cold winter and all of the boys want to be hockey players. They play hockey on the roads and dream of playing hockey for the national team.



a view from a **NIGERIAN PASTOR**

By Kefas Tang'an

I admit it was with some arrogance and most certainly a lot of misunderstanding that I arrived in London, England as a missionary to the unreached Brits more than 10 years ago. I was sent by the Nigerian church that understood the shifting populations of Christians. We believed we had a responsibility to send missionaries to the West.

After 10 years, I continue to believe I am called to England, but my response has changed. Let me explain.

I was earnest in my commitment and response to God's call. But I was unprepared and unequipped for the cultural and spiritual climate in the UK.

I arrived in London as a pastor, teacher and trained leader. In Nigeria I had been a part of a denomination and strong team. It was my homeland and I understood the church, the people and the culture. I came to the UK with no preparation for the culture, no local support and no mentors to help me navigate the strange land.

Painfully, I had to figure out things myself and I learned the hard way by making mistakes. I didn't know how to open a bank account, where to find an apartment, and how to deal with the extremely high cost of living in a new country and city. It was a difficult adjustment but over time we were able to settle down.

I began to evangelize, but my ideas of mission were challenged. In Nigeria we went into communities that had no church, the people were literally unreached. They had never heard the message of Jesus. We met in the open and preached of Jesus – often to an eager crowd.

The city of London was filled with churches. Yes, many were empty with only a few grey-haired men and women still worshipping. How did one do evangelism in a city that was filled with churches?

In Africa, even if people didn't believe, they listened politely. In England, one of the first challenges I faced was proving the existence of God to a secular Brit. I was flummoxed. I had never been asked that before. Clearly, I needed to understand this strange culture.

We started attending different churches. We were startled by the lack of interest the people in the church had when meeting us. They didn't talk to us or even sit beside us. We left feeling discouraged and empty.

Kefas was ordained in Nigeria. He was sent as a missionary to London, England to bring the good news of Jesus to a fallen nation.

One Sunday, we couldn't force ourselves to leave our home to go to another cold, unfriendly church. We decided to stay home and have church in our living room. One of our friends called and she asked if she could join us.

Person by person our little church grew. Soon we outgrew our living room and had to find a space to meet. We saw people sleeping on the streets and invited them to join us. They were drug addicts and the possibility of a meal after the worship service gave them the incentive to come. We grew more as the drug addicts accepted Christ and became Christians.

Then Covid happened – which changed everything.

During that time, I analyzed my work and my mission. Yes, I had planted a church but very few people in the church were British. As a Nigerian pastor, I had attracted a community of Nigerians living in London. I had planted a Nigerian church in the middle of London. One day I was talking to a local man and he referred to the church as a church for Nigerians.

I realized I was not achieving my mission. As long as the church is populated by Nigerians the local people will not come. The church became a cultural hub for Nigerians.

The Lord started to reveal a new way to me. A way that would present a gospel free of cultural or ethnic bonds, able to minister to anyone and everyone we meet.

Cultural separations were weakening the church, not strengthening it. If I go to the streets alone, I am a Nigerian Christian. If I go with British and American brothers and sisters, I am a Christian and present a picture of the gospel that breaks barriers of culture.

It is not easy. We are not always welcome in British churches. Our culture worships differently. When I come with the zeal of my Nigerian culture, local church leaders are threatened.

I have learned that I must take time to build trust and to show the local Christian leaders that I am a man of faith and I love the Lord. I have come to their city, into their culture. I need to respect that.

I think of the missionaries from North America that came to Nigeria. They did not always patiently listen to our people or learn our culture. The Lord showed me that I needed to step back, to listen and to learn. He made me aware of the challenges of cross-cultural missions.

We are not called to plant a denomination—we are called to plant churches of Jesus Christ in the country to which we are sent. I have seen that I am sent to be a blessing to the church in England. I learned that starting a Nigerian church in London was not my calling. I am here to build the Church of Jesus Christ in a community that is highly diverse and cross-cultural. While my Christian brothers and sisters in Nigeria saw the darkness in London, I see that the church of Jesus Christ is active within the city; it just looks different than Nigeria. While Brits struggle to talk to people on the street, they are quietly working in the community, fighting poverty, giving food and showing compassion to the vulnerable. It's a lie that the church here is dead.

I discovered Christian leaders through the Pioneers UK office. While they helped me get my visa many years ago, I did not know they could provide a community of support around me. Now I am working as a part of the team.

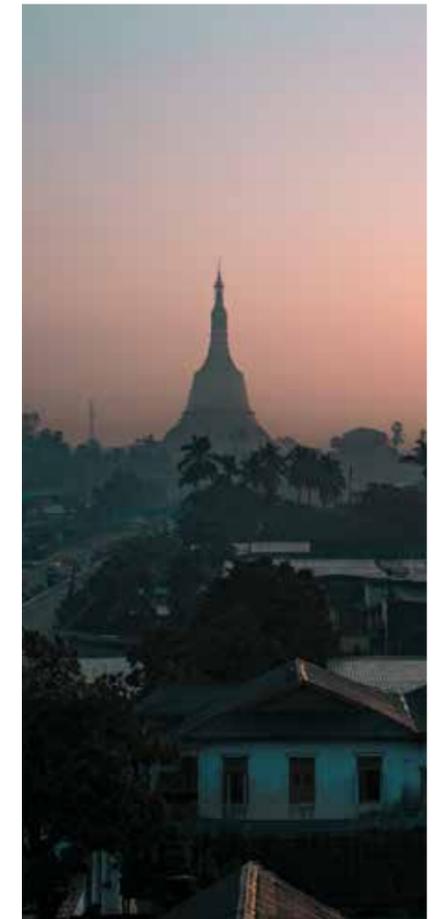
I am not sure about my future. We are praying for guidance. The Nigerian church struggles to support me. The cost of living is high in London and they sent me to plant a specific church. As God has spoken to me, I see that it is better if I come alongside a church that is already here, using the gifts God has given me to strengthen the church.

God works cross-culturally. We are on a journey to understand what that means. It's difficult when we don't understand each other's culture. Yet when we do, there is much strength.

Continue to pray for Global South missionaries and for the Church worldwide. We are living in a new time. The impact of colonial evangelism lingers, but the Global South is changing and new leaders are emerging. We are in an exciting time as God moves among the nations.

PRAY

- + Pray for God's guidance, growth and provision for the thousands of Africans, Latin Americans and Asians God is raising up. Pray for His creativity and unity as we at Pioneers desire to become a global ministry in which the Global South members are empowered, released and esteemed.
- + Pray with us, Eddie and the Mongolian church, that we would be able to equip well, mobilize and send 30 – 40 Mongolians each year. Pray too for us to be led by Jesus, that He would build the best infrastructure and resources, that He in His sovereignty knows is best to mobilize and grow Mongolian workers.
- + Pray for Kefas as he follows God's guidance for his future and ministry with Pioneers UK. Pray for wisdom, provision and a sensitivity to the Holy Spirit's leading for him, his team and his support network.
- + Please pray for Peter in Kenya as he continues to grow in Jesus, lead and equip those God has called him to come alongside. Pray for Abu Nasser in the Middle East as he equips local pastors, mobilizing locals to reach unreached Muslims. Pray that they would both bring glory to God and that the Lord would bless their families.



GIVE

In loving memory of Donnie we have created the President's Memorial Fund which is designated to support the ministry of our Global South family. Please prayerfully consider if God is leading you to contribute to this cause.

To give now go to www.pioneers.ca/donnie-memorial

GO

Do you feel God's calling to missions?

We have opportunities in many locations around the world. We are looking for technologists, designers, church planters, health care workers, health care teachers and administrators, software engineers, project managers, English teachers, sports trainers and many more. God can use you!

Please contact our office to inquire: go@pioneers.ca or 519-268-8778

Not sure about long-term? Try a short-term Edge Trip.

Cornerstone Summer Edge Trip for young adults - Spend 10 weeks in rural North Asia in May-July 2024. Come serve alongside the local team and help fill the need for more English classes and sports and fitness training. The harvest is abundant but the workers are few. Experience life overseas and what it takes to reach unreached peoples by partnering with the established ministry of the long-term team among this relational people group. Apply by March 1, 2024.

<https://edge.pioneers.org/trips>



“How, then, can they call on the one they have not believed in? And how can they believe in the one of whom they have not heard? And how can they hear without someone preaching to them? And how can anyone preach unless they are sent? As it is written: ‘How beautiful are the feet of those who bring good news!’”

Romans 10:14-15

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