



INTERSERVE CANADA

OCTOBER - DECEMBER 2015



THE HARVEST

A LETTER FROM RICHARD PIET - NATIONAL DIRECTOR

"The Kingdom of heaven is like a mustard seed that someone planted in a field. It's one of the smallest seeds. However, when it has grown, it is taller than the garden plants. It becomes a tree that is large enough for birds to nest in its branches." – Matthew 13

One of the good things about getting older is being able to look back over the years and see how God works. While in the moment we may not notice or understand what God is doing, with the passage of time we see His Kingdom grow. One thing you realize is that God does not seem to be in a rush.

Through Interserve's long history of working in the 10/40 Window I see how God is growing His Kingdom from a small mustard seed into something much more substantial. He uses our workers in different ways to build His Kingdom. Some are called to plant the seed, and others to water it, but God is the One who makes it grow (1 Corinthians 3:6). We at Interserve are privileged to be able to look back and see God's amazing work in these hard to reach places.

The patience and perseverance of those that served long-term is being rewarded today by seeing the Kingdom grow and expand. God is at work saving people and we at Interserve are privileged to be part of this amazing, cutting-edge Kingdom work.

There are many stories of God at work in the Asian and the Arab World. I'd like to share with you some of our overseas workers' experiences that demonstrate how God is accomplishing His Kingdom purposes. I want to assure you that your support, both financially and prayerfully, has made it possible for our workers to do God's work, and we are seeing small mustard seeds growing into larger plants.

Please join with us in God's Kingdom work. It is God, and only God who makes things grow. We are mere servants in the Kingdom and invite you to be a part of this. We need people to go in obedience to God's call, to give generously and sacrificially, and to pray that the Lord of the Harvest will do His work, call His people and provide His resources.

STORIES OF THE HARVEST

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Kyrgyzstan

When Interserve began working in Kyrgyzstan in the 1994 the church was very small. During that time, Interserve saw God at work as many came to know Jesus. It is wonderful to know that there are now tens of thousands of believers and the work Interserve pioneered in 1994 has continued to flourish.

The following is written by a former Partner who now is Interserve's Regional Director for East Asia and South Pacific.

I was placed in a community development project, which gave me the opportunity to work in a small team that did health screening and trained village health workers.

Initially, we would see patients in the morning, then move on to teaching the local health workers how to prevent and treat common problems. After some time, I decided I was called solely to train and raise up local leaders so that the community could be more self-sufficient. We taught lessons covered many topics, such as physical health, income generation, agriculture, emotional issues and moral values like honesty and forgiveness.

Sometimes we were able to incorporate stories from the Bible in our teaching. One very powerful lesson on forgiveness was taught by using the story of the prodigal son, but adapting it to 'the prodigal daughter-in-law'. This seems to be the relationship with the most strain here. Wives go to live with their husband's family, and the wife has to do the bidding of the family matriarch – her mother-in-law. Most women are not free from this until they become mothers-in-law themselves. We saw many people recognize the destructiveness of unforgiveness after this lesson, and many were willing to do the homework we set them, which was to forgive someone!

Most of the communities we worked with knew we were followers of Jesus, and through years of interaction they developed a more positive understanding of Christianity. We do this work not as a means to evangelize or plant churches, but because it is good in itself and demonstrates the love of Jesus to broken people. However, the natural consequence of such holistic community development is that, over time, churches are planted.



Interserve was among the first to enter Mongolia after the former regime collapsed in 1990. Since then, the church has grown from a few believers to 40,000 followers of Christ in more than 600 churches. Praise God! He is still calling Interserve to Mongolia where we continue to work in cooperation with several missions agencies to be the most effective for God.

The following is written by a Partner, a psychologist who recently served OnTrack in Asia.

Sarah* is a mother to a nine-year-old boy with a physical disability. He is unable to walk steadily on his own without a walking frame, which Sarah is reluctant to let him use as it would mark him as a 'crippled' person. As a result, Sarah carries him in her arms wherever they go, causing her stress and exhaustion.

Sarah and her son live alone in the city with no connection to family or friends. There is negligible government assistance available, and schools can refuse a child's enrolment because of their disability. Sarah is ostracized by those who were once friends and by strangers who throw insults when they see her son struggling to walk. There were days when Sarah would lock herself and her son at home, avoiding any contact with the outside world.

By chance, Sarah heard about a group of local Christians who had set up a resource centre specifically to support children with disabilities and their parents. This group is supported by the work of Interserve Partners. Sarah reluctantly attended one event. She was overwhelmed by the support, love and understanding shown to her. For the first time she didn't feel despised or discriminated against. Gradually Sarah started to smile more, chat with other parents and, most importantly, enjoy her relationship with her son. As Jesus' love surrounded her, she began to see her son for his strengths rather than his disabilities.

Sarah will need to continue to struggle against society's discrimination as well as her own fears but through Christ's strength and the support of the local Christians Sarah is able to persevere. I feel privileged to have had a chance to share, in a very small way, a part of Sarah's life and the lives of those who continue to minister to her.



When Nepal opened in the 1950s, Interserve joined with other missions to work in health care and education. In 50 years the church has grown from only a handful of believers to over 800,000 followers of Christ! Interserve continues to work in Nepal, helping rebuild and give support to the Nepali people after the 7.3 magnitude earthquake hit earlier this year.

The following is written by a Partner living in Nepal, who is working with ITEEN to bring relief to the people most affected by the earthquake.

The institute for Theological Education by Extension in Nepal (ITEEN), supported by Interserve's overseas workers, uses Tools to Equip and Empower (TEE) courses to support the local church in Nepal. Since the earthquake, ITEEN along with Interserve Partners, have been heavily involved in the practical response to the country's devastation.

The group immediately swung into action, delivering food, tarpaulins and chlorine tablets to 500 families; establishing water purification plants to more than 100 locations with Water Missions International; and building semi-permanent housing for 1000 families and 200 churches. Because of the relief work that ITEEN is doing, their daily work, such as tutor training, had to be put on hold. Now, some regular work has been able to get started again, even though they are operating from temporary offices and working under a tent. Executive Director Tanka Subedi: "we are planning to be heavily involved in rescue for one more month, then probably two years in rebuilding work."

Tanka has seen with his own eyes how practical, social and health care can lead people to Christ. As a young boy, he recalls meeting a young man suffering from leprosy at a mission hospital where his mother worked. His name was Shyam, and despite losing his finger and toes, he was treated and eventually cured. While he has little education, he started to read the Bible, became a Christian and started taking courses about Jesus through ITEEN. Shyam's story is just one of many. Since TEE first came to Nepal 20 years ago, 20,000 people have completed ITEEN courses and there are currently 7,000 active participants with whom they have contact.

WHAT'S NEW

1

Interserve Invites You to Start a Prayer Group!

Is God calling you to pray for the 10/40 Window? Why not start a prayer group with friends from your church or community? Interserve would love to send you a Prayer Group Starter Kit that will help you pray for our Partners and the work that is ongoing in the Asian and Arab World.



2

Partner Home Assignment Update

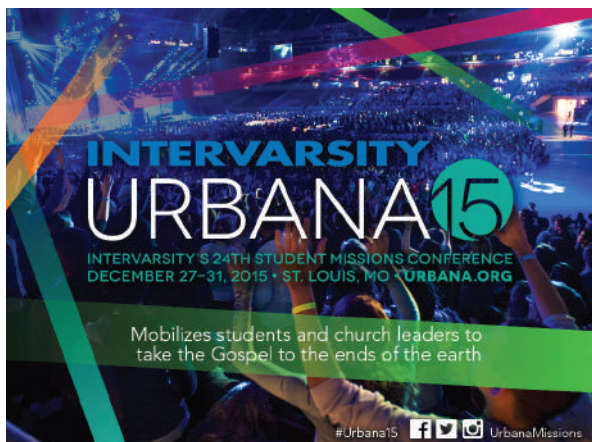
Interserve is thrilled to welcome Partners who are on home assignment this Fall. Partners coming home are: Sam and Anne who work in Mongolia, Anne who works in Cambodia and Joel and Margaret who work in South Asia. If your church or prayer group would like to hear from any of these Partners please call Interserve, (416) 499-7511, to find out their availability!

UPCOMING EVENTS



Interserve is attending P2C+!

If you've never heard of Power to Change Plus (P2C+), imagine taking all the components of a vision-filled weekly gathering, expanding it into four days, and filling it with hundreds of students from across eastern Canada or western Canada. On top of that, imagine students being challenged by speakers, experiencing spiritual growth, and having time to spend in a community with other Christians and you might get a small glimpse of what P2C+ is all about. Register today at <http://ow.ly/Stuoz!>



Interserve is attending Urbana 2015!

Urbana is one of the largest student missions conferences in the world and is held every three years. Since 1946, Urbana has been a catalytic event that brings together a diverse mix of college and graduate students, faculty, recent graduates, pastors, church and ministry leaders, and exhibitors. This year, Urbana is being hosted in St. Louis, Missouri. Register today at <https://urbana.org/register>.