

# GPD's Partnership with Ethne to Ethne

—by Keith Carey and Liz Adleta

*Global Prayer Digest (GPD)* has been partnering with the Ethne movement's prayer initiative since 2006, paralleling their issues with the more general cyclical focus month-by-month and region-by-region. It was estimated that altogether 3-4 million believers around the world are praying along with the overall initiative, including probably more than 100,000 through the *Global Prayer Digest* tool, published in English, Spanish, Chinese, and Korean. As the prayer working group spread the word globally, and as more and more field teams caught wind of the opportunity and began to synchronize their efforts with these massive global outpourings of prayer, more and more breakthroughs emerged, closely timed to the month of prayer focus.

Prayer is meant to be linked with strategic field efforts. Why is prayer coordinated with field efforts so important? By systematically focusing on the peoples of a region, month by month field workers can be especially bold, press forward with new initiatives, or see new fruit from established efforts among these groups during this outpouring of intercession before God's throne for the peoples of their region. The testimonies so far have been amazing!

Ethne's work has been enhanced by having partnerships with Joshua Project, *Global Prayer Digest*, PrayerGuard, and Etnopedia as well as many others.

## Reported Breakthroughs

- Early in the effort, August was the month of prayer for least-reached peoples of Northeast Asia; the issue that year focused the last several days of people groups of Mongolia. A mission pastor who routinely led short term teams here again was on the ground in an outlying "aimag" or provincial capital city to do outreach, except that this time the group found that rather than handfuls of response, hundreds of people were responding to the claims of Jesus Christ. His email to me said, "It's like fish jumping in the boat! I've never seen such response here in all our previous trips!"
- One month we focused on what is often called the most unreached island in the world. This particular location is the home of 49 unreached people groups of over 25 million people. It was estimated there were only 5,000 followers of Christ! When the people groups there begin to turn to Christ, they could be instrumental in carrying Jesus throughout the rest of Indonesia and throughout their region.

Workers have labored among these groups for some time with little fruit. However, as the Ethne movement has grown, several working group facilitators began to consider what could be done to intentionally apply what we were learning together towards catalyzing movements to Christ among these 49 people groups.

In January 2010 a small group of about 20 people were continuing this discussion, just as the deadline was approaching for *GPD's* June 2010 issue. *GPD* agreed to shift their theme to the 49 unreached peoples of this island for June 2010, partnering with the field personnel who agreed to partner and see what God might do in answer to these millions of prayers with their feet on the ground.

Within a month of the release of the June 2010 *GPD* issue, the evidence was clear: several people groups that previously had had no believers had seen new believers come to faith and begin sharing their faith with others. Indications of small movements to Christ were beginning and growing. For example, one couple involved with field ministry here know a national believer who saw the first Muslim background believer among an UPG in the island come to Christ. By the end of the year there were 350 baptized believers meeting in 20 house churches that had reproduced to the 3<sup>rd</sup> generation. The practical synergy of this paralleling of extraordinary global prayer with diligent field efforts joining hands brought clear breakthroughs!

- Peoples of **Cambodia** were highlighted during July 2011 in the *GPD*. Before that time there was so little fruit among Han Chinese UPGs that one missionary team was ready to give up. (In the *GPD* we prayed for Han Chinese people groups in Cambodia every day from July 25-30). By the end of that year, however, they had baptized eight new Han Chinese believers, and their work continues. According to our field partner, this could be directly attributed to the additional prayer boost. He noted, however, that as the year wore on, they were seeing a closing of that window of opportunity once again. They were encouraging workers in other places to make the most of the opening, knowing that it might well be a brief period.
- Recently, I received a further encouragement that our prayers are making an impact. *GPD's* November 2012 featured unreached peoples of Central Asia without scriptures; our prayers focused on the need for the Word of God among all peoples in their heart languages. One of the Central Asian unreached people groups one particular organization has worked among for more than two decades is suddenly demonstrating an unprecedented interest in God's Word! In the past 13 weeks, more people have accessed and received scripture portions and interacted with the message of the Good News than has been possible in the last 10 years of combined scripture distribution! This amazing "miracle" has opened doors to "first ever" conversations and inquiries and people hearing about our Savior. You could say that this is the single greatest opportunity in recent history to reach these people with the Good News!

Over the years a significant barrier has been getting God's Word into the hands of this populous but widely spread out and remote people. Scripture portions have been hand distributed, leaving the vast majority out of reach of the good news. For years many have prayed for God to break through the barriers so that these millions of people could hear the gospel and read it in their own heart

language. Then, earlier this year, in an unexpected way that caught everyone by surprise, these Central Asians started showing up on the Internet on a scripture site—but one in a different language.

What could be done to help them find His Word in their own tongue? A link was created and a fresh website was designed in their own language, that drew viewers in with biblical answers to questions about everything from marriage and family life, to getting along with neighbors, money and wealth, and God's character. On each page is an opportunity to read related scripture passages, and at every step of the website is the option to print portions or even download the whole Bible (what is currently translated) or listen to audio files. Visitors to this website may post a question or comment which is passed on to our growing 'response team'. And many are writing in - some with earnest questions and requests, while others with hostile comments. In a way only God could arrange, this single Internet site has made it possible for thousands of people to read and/or download the good news in the last three months!

- On April 16, 2010, GPD intercessors prayed for **Persians in Berlin**, Germany. We prayed that “God will reveal Himself to the Iranians, and that they will realize that following Jesus is not part of a religious or political system...” Here is an answer to prayer from that day. According to a recent report, "It all started when a few Iranians showed up for service at a church on Sunday in 2013. We thought at the beginning it would only be a few. It is now well over 300, and they are all converts from Islam!"

- In December of 2012, GPD readers focused their prayers on the UPGs of **Algeria**. Here is an excerpt from an April 4, 2014 edition of *Charisma* Magazine. <http://www.charismanews.com/world/43406-revival-breaks-out-in-land-once-hostile-to-christianity>  
“From the shores of Casablanca in Morocco to Tripoli, Libya, experts say the growth of Christianity, especially in the last 20 years, has been unprecedented. And now that growth is also evident in the North African nation of Algeria.

“Pastor Salah leads one of the largest churches in Algeria. Some 1,200 believers attend the church, and 99 percent of the population is Muslim. “In fact we never thought the Algerian church would grow so big” says Salah. He says every new Christian in his church came from a Muslim background. Since the church opened, they have baptized on average 150-160 believers per year....Others, like Farhat who is also a former Muslim, speak of miraculous encounters. He says he was illiterate and couldn't read the Bible when he accepted the Lord, then God made a change, “Since then I've read the Bible and understood the Word of God. This is just an example of what God has done in my life and this is the case of many people here in Algeria.”...

... Qurahmane [an Algerian church leader] is seeing God open unprecedented doors, “God has given to us many opportunities to witness at the police stations, at the courts, and in fact one time I went to the police station and they gave me 45 minutes to speak about Jesus! Just imagine yourself, they are all Muslims sitting and telling me, ‘Tell us about Jesus!’ ”

- In March of 2013, GPD readers prayed for UPGs in Moscow, **Russia**, including one entry about Russian Jews, and another on Ukrainian Jews. In May of 2014, I received a report from Jews for Jesus that indicates that our prayers were answered. “Last year’s Moscow campaign was one of the most fruitful of all the 2013 *Jews for Jesus* outreaches worldwide. In just 11 days, the team of 25 (staff and volunteers) handed out over a *quarter million* tracts. Over 900 people asked for follow-up. Thirty-eight Jewish people and 33 non- Jews gave their hearts to the Lord.”

- In July of 2004, we were praying for unreached and unengaged people groups of **China**. That month we prayed for the Buddhist Baima people to “learn of Jesus Christ...” That same month a short-term mission team went to them, and some of them not only learned about Jesus, but they embraced Him as Lord! Was this a coincidence?

- Encouragement from the recent April 2014 issue on global cities and unreached peoples from **Dubai**: One of the field workers there had planned to send out extra evangelism teams looking for people of peace during the GPD’s day of prayer for Dubai, April 14, 2014. He reported that they had sent out short-term teams to make what are called *shema* statements--simply a way of talking that lets folks know that they are spiritual people and helps to identify people who are seeking truth (people of peace). Their team ran across several Muslim background folks who were not only seeking but insisting on committing their lives to become followers of Christ immediately! They had gone to a hospital and the first fellow saw open vision of Jesus and was healed in his shoulder. The next fellow also saw an open vision of Jesus and felt fire all over his body. God responds to our prayers in very amazing ways!

- December 2014 we partnered with the NAME Ephesus Team to prepare the issue focused on “Rending the Shroud” over the Arab world. God had orchestrated the completion of a special prayer assignment in the Delta region of Egypt completing an assignment over the entire continent of Africa to coincide with the 3 days of prayer for this region’s peoples. It’s early yet, but already workers have reported a sense of a heavy blanket being removed from their areas and much more spiritual openness and freedom to share the gospel.