

# Seasons of Change

past, present, and future of ABWE

*Tony Beckett Vice President of Church Relations, ABWE International*

One spring, my wife and I planted trees in a yard. We kept the little saplings watered and staked through the summer in hopes that someday perhaps they could hold a hammock, provide respite from the sun. As autumn came, we watched the tiny leaves on our newly planted trees die and drop to the ground. Then, we waited.

We knew spring would reveal if the trees had survived the winter. Most did.

When the changes of fall came again the second year, the process was the same: the leaves died and dropped to the ground. But this time, I had growing confidence that in the spring, trees would bud and continue to grow.

That is how God designed the seasons—to be a time of change and of sameness.

Sometimes we like change. A change of scenery can be refreshing. Trying new things, or visiting new places adds interest to our lives. On the other hand, we can find a great amount of security and warmth when things stay the same. There is comfort in the familiar.

Like the trees, we are in a season of change at ABWE. But we take comfort that certain things remain the same.

In June, the board of ABWE announced their intention to seek a new president for ABWE

International and ABWE Ministries, Inc.—a position previously held by Dr. Michael Loftis. We have great love and appreciation for Dr. Loftis and his wife, Jo Beth. We have no doubt that God will use Dr. Loftis greatly in the next role He opens for him.

The board has since appointed Dr. Al Cockrell to serve as Interim Executive Administrator during our presidential search. Dr. Cockrell first became a member of the Advisory Council in 1985, and joined the ABWE Ministries, Inc., Executive Board in 1995. He comes with 45 years of ministry experience. He has pastored in three churches over a span of 40 years, and has also served as a senior consultant with “Enjoy Stewardship Services,” helping churches develop leadership and direction for their future. Most recently, Dr. Cockrell served in a pastoral/consultant role with two churches, focused on assisting them to grow through a period of transition to younger leadership.

The book of Joshua begins with a leadership change when God appoints Joshua to be the leader after Moses’ death. However, in the opening verses God reassures the people of Israel that some things never change. His plan does not change—They were still to go into the land. His promise does not change—they would possess the land just as He had promised. His presence would not change—He would still be with them.

At ABWE some things are changing and some continue to stay the same.

Our commitment to God’s Word has not changed. Our determination to make disciples

among every people group on earth has not changed. Our commitment to our core values of integrity, excellence, compassion and accountability have not changed.

God has blessed the ministry of ABWE for more than 80 years. He has demonstrated His faithfulness to us again and again. Our desire is for His good hand of blessing to rest upon us, and we believe that it will as we follow through on our commitment to do what is right in His sight.

Even in these times of change, our mission

is the same. We continue to share the story of hope so others come to know Christ as their savior. We continue to build communities of faith—local churches that will strengthen those who are a part of that gathering of believers and will reach out to others. We continue to serve the world with God’s love, knowing it open doors to share the story of hope and build communities of faith.

Even in times of change, some things never change. 

## ABWE'S MINISTRY IN 2010



ABWE had **1,121** missionaries in countries across the globe in 2010, along with **371** international partner missionaries.



**4,809** churches have been planted by ABWE and its national partners to date, **4 percent** more than the total in 2009.

**293** new missionaries (short-term and career) were appointed in 2010.

**202** churches were planted in 2010.

**54** missionary candidates were appointed with ABWE in 2011.

**4,223** churches supported ABWE on a monthly basis.



**96** Bible training programs for **15,854** students were operating by ABWE working with international partners.



ABWE MISSIONARIES PRESENTED THE GOSPEL IN A CULTURALLY APPROPRIATE WAY

The average monthly gift from an individual was about **\$105 (USD)**.

The average monthly gift from a church was about **2 (USD)**.



# Enslaved

**“You shall not inflict any widow or fatherless child.” —Exodus 22:22**

Jim Cook and Leah Farr  
advised: *This article contains adult content.*

Nearly 150 years ago, it seemed that slavery had been abolished. The truth is, however, that slavery was far from over. Today, some estimate that there are more than 27 million slaves in a world—more than ever before in history.

Many are children. In fact, the U.S. Department of State reports that more than one million children are exploited and enslaved each year.

Despite the appalling numbers, seemingly small efforts make a huge difference in stopping child trafficking and bringing healing to victims.

In 2009, ABWE missionary kid Miriam Cady traveled to Cambodia to work with Agape International Missions in Svay Pak, a small village near the city of Phnom Penh. Agape works in Cambodia to combat the child sex-trafficking industry and reach out to victims through care centers, Bible studies, and outreach programs.

It didn't take long for Miriam to learn that Svay Pak is known for its young prostitutes. It is believed that nearly 85 percent of the girls being sold there are under the age of 15. Some of these children were trafficked into the village. Others were actually sold directly by their own parents to the brothel owners.

## THE CHILDREN OF CAMBODIA

Trafficking is the result of many factors. Often poor families are lured by men promising them money if they would let them take their child to the city. Instead, the child is forced to work in a human-trafficking ring, where he or she becomes a sex slave. The family never hears from their child again.

As Miriam volunteered at the Agape Center with many young children who were the victims of such tragedies, she was heartbroken by their experiences.

In the six months that I was there, I got to know so many of the girls and even boys...

I don't even begin to describe the pain that it caused me to know that my amazing, sweet, innocent, beautiful, and loving kids were being treated so badly and there was nothing I could do

about it," she said. "I wanted to be able to wrap them up in my arms and say to them, 'I am never going to let anyone hurt you and I'm going to take care of you,' but I couldn't. My heart breaks every day when I think about all the children and what they are going through right now."

Like so many others volunteering at Agape, Miriam offered what she had: love and prayers that the children would come to understand the true love of a God who sent His son to set them free forever.

## SET THE CAPTIVES FREE

Miriam hopes to someday obtain her degree in Criminal Justice and return to Cambodia to fight for change in the laws of Cambodia.

Fortunately, you don't have to go to Cambodia to help reach kids for Christ and protect them from this insidious industry. By supporting ABWE's Care for the Children fund you can be a part of the solution to combating this form of slavery.

## CARE FOR THE CHILDREN

Currently, the ABWE Care for the Children fund supports "transition homes" in Moldova, where trafficked children can live free from the pimps who were selling them.

The fund also helps support educational programs for at-risk children.

According to Dr. Michelle Rickert, an expert on child slavery, young girls need to be made self-aware and learn how to take precautions. The Care for the Children fund has partners in Moldova who do preemptive teaching in the schools, helping warn kids of the dangers of trusting strangers.

In Thailand, the Care for the Children fund supports an orphanage that is reaching out to those who have been victims of child trafficking.

In order to combat trafficking in Haiti, Care for the Children has provided 100,000 meals for Haitian orphans, keeping them off the streets and preventing them from being lured by big promises and empty bellies.

## THE CHANGE WE WANT TO SEE

While the numbers of children trafficked are overwhelming and can make a remedy seem almost unattainable, there is hope. ABWE partners with other organizations to save one child at a time. With your help, we can save many more. ■

• Human trafficking is a

**\$32 billion** industry.

• A slave can earn an owner up to

**\$67,200** per year.

• Child trafficking has increased

dramatically in **Haiti** since the 2010 earthquake.

• ABWE's **Care for the Children Fund** helps stop child trafficking around the globe by providing:

—**meals for orphans**

—**support for safe houses**

—**education for at-risk children**

Visit [www.abwe.org/give](http://www.abwe.org/give)

and designate Care for the Children (account number 0099001).

For Canadian donations, call 877.690.1009

