



MBMS International
transforming lives in mission

Vision for Mission Update

December 2008

The current global economic crisis is exposing some significant weaknesses in our profit driven and debt burdened financial system. The resulting restructuring and consolidation of companies and regulatory bodies will change the economic landscape of our world.



The impact of this crisis on the mission of the church is complex. At MBMS International we have noticed a slight decline in giving from some areas of our constituency. Our relational funding model means that missionaries, mission projects and most staff receive designated support. When support declines it has a direct impact on these recipients. It is interesting that at the same time this economic crisis is occurring we have a growing number of long term mission candidates interested in joining teams to least reached regions of the world. This will test us as a church in terms of our giving priorities.

I am reminded of my grandmother who lived on a fixed income. Her economic values were shaped by the desperate times her family faced in Russia in the 1920s and later in the Great Depression while farming in Canada. Her support for missions was astounding. She viewed each expenditure as a choice between reaching someone with the gospel and self indulgence. I wondered why she would often collect hot water for washing dishes at the tap in her basement next to the water heater. I found out later it was because she understood that drawing hot water through the pipes in her house was more expensive than collecting it at the source. The pennies she would save went to support her family in missions.

I have to confess that is quite different from the way I live my life. It does, however, remind me of the importance of stewardship. We are stewards, responsible for each dollar God has entrusted to us. Investing those funds wisely in the transformation of lives and communities has an eternal impact.

My financial adviser once asked me if I was interested in short or long term returns on an investment. I thought about his question for a minute and then confessed that I was interested in "eternal returns." I introduced him to the words of another financial adviser of mine who once said, "store up for yourselves treasures in heavenwhere thieves do not break in and

steal...for where your treasure is, your heart will be also." We had a good conversation.

There are many good conversations happening as a result of this current economic crisis. Thank you for considering eternal investments in missions as you discern your year end giving this month.

Randy Friesen

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Ministry Highlights



The Amadora church in Lisbon, Portugal recently celebrated a baptism! Pray for all the churches in the Lisbon area, in their various stages of growth. Praise God for the faithful service of Otto & Marjorie Ekk who, together with their team, serve and support all five of these church plants.

www.mbmsiVideo.com/portugal



A new church plant in N'dorola, Burkina Faso also celebrated a baptism recently - 9 believers were baptized on November 16th. Pray for Phil & Carol Bergen and their team as they continue to translate scripture, evangelize, and disciple.

www.mbmsiVideo.com/burkina-faso

Items for Prayer

- Our Operation 2nd Wave team in Phuket, Thailand, has been invited to a local school run by the government and Buddhist temple to teach about the "western custom" of celebrating Christmas. Pray that the good news of the birth of Jesus will impact the hearts and lives of those in the school, and throughout the city. www.mbmsiVideo.com/thailand
- In Japan, Laurence & Leona Hiebert have recently had many opportunities to minister to families in crisis. Pray for wisdom and discernment for the Hieberts, and that these families will find joy, hope and encouragement in Christ. www.mbmsi.org/hieberts

MBMS International is the global mission agency of the Mennonite Brethren churches in the U.S. and Canada.