

The HOPE worldwide and Benevolence Committee, May 2009 Report

Contributed by Mark Templer and John Causey
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“All they asked was that we should continue to remember the poor.” –Gal 2:10.

The brothers and sisters on the HOPE worldwide and Benevolence Committee have continued meeting together on a monthly basis, besides having extensive individual phone calls, emails and fellowship meetings between members. Since the last update (in late January) we’ve seen God bless our work in a powerful way, with the help of your prayers.

The Committee has decided to take on the “Benevolence” part of its charge, and has had several discussions on this topic. We’ve talked about how individual congregations handle benevolence. These methods range from one-off collections for special needs, to Deacons of Benevolence, to specific congregational policies for benevolence (as well as deaths of members, and deaths of relatives of members). Grief counseling was identified as a need. In addition, in today’s difficult economy several helpful ideas for members were suggested, including job fairs, trades newsletters, and career transition workshops. We have created an online “Benevolence and Bereavement Toolkit” for churches and their members:

Benevolence
& Bereavement Toolkit for Ministers & Churches

The Committee has met very consistently (10 times after LA, 7 times since Kiev) and has representation from all over the US, with over 20 people in attendance on typical calls. We recently added several active international members, and we welcome qualified members from all over the world—contact mark_templer@hopeww.org if you live outside the US and are interested in joining.

The Committee has also helped commission HOPE worldwide to encourage more united spiritual activities by its employees, with a global day of fasting for employees on October 2, 2008, and another one on April 26, 2009. In addition, HOPE worldwide employees and friends started out 2009 with a multi-nation, 7-day 24-hour prayer chain from January 1st-7th, 2009. Our next “global” spiritual activity for HOPE worldwide employees will be a day a “Love One Another Week,” from October 14-20, 2009. During that week HOPE worldwide and church leadership staff in local congregations will be encouraged to fellowship each other and discuss how we can work together even better, for the glory of God. The week will culminate in another day of fasting for HOPE worldwide employees on October 20th. We welcome your suggestions on different kinds of spiritual initiatives to draw us all closer to God and to each other. In these times of economic turmoil and trouble it is the poor who will suffer first and most, and we are all praying for God to help us to help them.

Many congregations around the world celebrated April 26th, 2009 as a "Remember the Poor" Sunday where churches can teach about the scriptural basis for helping the poor, as well as sharing about the work of HOPE worldwide. Materials for sermons, midweek classes, and even children's classes were distributed, as well as videos about HOPE worldwide's work, and one featuring powerful scriptural teaching and sharing by Robert Carrillo, Evangelist of the San Diego Church of Christ. Reports have poured in from all over the world from members who were inspired and convicted by the teaching, sharing, and activities on this special day.

A number of Committee members, as well as hundreds of volunteers and HOPE worldwide employees from around the world, took part in the "Global Summit" in Reston Virginia on May 14-17, 2009. This program featured training for US chapters as well as international affiliates; a multi-faceted program on Saturday May 16th; a golf tournament for the Cambodia Hospital featuring the LPGA Women's Golf Legends; recognition of dozens of churches as "Pillars of HOPE" for their steadfast support of HOPE worldwide at over \$50/member/year in 2008; an inspiring Saturday morning devotional led by Robert Carrillo; and a powerful Sunday service led by Dan Allison, Country Director for HOPE worldwide in Afghanistan.

The Global Summit featured very inspiring sharing by a number of HOPE worldwide partners, including Cambodia's Ambassador to the US Hem Heng; MD of US Global Leadership Campaign, Timothy Kernan; former Mayor of Philadelphia, Wilson Goode; Freddie Mac Foundation CEO, Ralph Boyd; and Special Assistant to the President (Office of Faith-Based and Neighborhood Partnerships), Mara Vanderslice. It was amazing as one speaker after another noted that they could see the difference in the attitude of HOPE worldwide's volunteers and leaders—"there is something very special about you."

Giving from the churches to HOPE worldwide has continued at 2009 levels, but has not increased as per our joint commitment at the 2009 ILC in Kiev. HOPE worldwide's church giving is well short of the \$1.4 million required for sustainability. With the recession also hitting individual giving, painful cutbacks in personnel were recently announced. These will stretch existing staff even further, without entailing any reduction in services to beneficiaries. Please pray for the finances of HOPE worldwide, that God will provide HOPE with what it needs to be the hands of Jesus touching a hurting world.

Coordinators and Church Leaders have been requested by the Committee and the Delegates to spread the word and contact churches in their regions to facilitate working together to achieve the goal of HOPE worldwide. The Committee is very thankful to the churches and all the saints for their tireless efforts on behalf of the poor. HOPE worldwide has been regularly featured in regional conferences and leadership gatherings—most recently at the ICYFM in Chicago in April. We pray that together we can achieve even greater things in the coming year. We need your help, and we need your prayers.

For the HOPE worldwide and Benevolence Committee,

Region

HOPE worldwide
US Church Coordinators

ACR

Mike Fontenot/Walter Evans

FLORIDA

John Porter/John Brush

HEARTLAND

Gregg Marutzky/Charlie Sawyer

MID-SOUTH

Frank Williams

MW

Jeff
Balsom/Tony Singh

NE

Doug Arthur

NW

Scott/Lynne Green

NY

Sheridan Wright/Sam Powell/Larry Craig

SE

JP Tynes/Tom Brown

SW

John Causey/Robert Carrillo/Bruce Williams

TEXAS

Mike Taliaferro/Herve Fleurant/Bev Ozanne/Jim Prather

OTHER churches

Antonio Boyd