

Free Methodist World Missions
PO Box 57710
Indianapolis, IN 46251
800-342-5531

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HEARTBEAT

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STATION A, P.O. BOX 54
WINDSOR, ON N9A 6J5 CANADA
EMAIL: CPCRETURNS@WDSMAIL.COM

Free Methodist World Missions makes disciples by mobilizing the global church and empowering international leaders to establish transformational churches.



HEARTBEAT

JUNE 2023

Freedom Sunday
Closed and Open Doors
Changing the World

Photo: Kevin Austin

Freedom Sunday: A New Three Streams Approach

By Rev. Dr. Kevin Austin, Set Free Movement Director

We were created for worship, and when we enter God's presence with humility, He meets us. Worship renews. It forms us, centers us on Jesus and unites us with other followers, past and present, in every tribe and language.

And worship is catalytic. We take all God gives us, and under the direction of the Spirit, we move out of our times and locations of worship into places of darkness with light, into hopeless situations with hope, and into brokenness with healing.

Freedom Sunday seeks to amplify these concepts on behalf of those in bondage; it is one Sunday a year when we invite churches to focus on vulnerable and enslaved people. But, more than anything else, we ask churches to center on Jesus. He is the One Who sets captives free. Bethany Hoang writes:

*Seeking justice doesn't begin at the door of the brothel.
Seeking justice begins by seeking the God of justice.¹*

For the past 14 years, Free Methodist churches have participated in Freedom Sunday. Together we have raised more than \$1 million for various freedom initiatives. Through these efforts, thousands of children have been protected, hundreds of churches have mobilized, teams have formed, and God has been glorified.

As awareness and education continue to grow globally, change is occurring. Because human trafficking awareness day in Europe is October 18, European churches observe Freedom Sunday in October. Asian churches observe it in the fall as well. Latin Americans are focusing on the issues in July. In the United States, human trafficking awareness day is January 11. Traditionally, we have asked all churches to focus together on one day. However, one unified Sunday is no longer working. (This is actually good news!)

Therefore, Freedom Sunday is adopting a three-streams approach: July, October and January. Our prayer is that these three streams will be one movement of God whereby:

*Justice [will] roll down like waters. And righteousness like an ever-flowing stream.
Amos 5:24*

Find out more about Freedom Sunday: setfreemovement.com/freedom-sunday

¹*Deepening the Soul for Justice, Bethany Hoang, InterVarsity Press, October 29, 2012.*



Photos: Kevin Austin



Closed and *Open* Doors

Photos: Kevin Austin

By Rev. Dr. Kevin Austin, Set Free Movement Director

I was visiting one of the famous sights in a creative-access country in Asia, a famous pagoda. Built in 1601, it has seven stories corresponding to the seven levels of enlightenment.¹ The design was originally intended to help seekers move from one level of enlightenment to the next, like other physical actions (labyrinths, body postures in worship, etc.) that correspond to spiritual ones.

But the door is closed. It is locked, and according to my guesthouse host, it is never opened. Only one person has the key, the abbot of the monastery, and he never opens the door.

I wondered, *How can one find enlightenment if the door is never opened?*

The seven stages of enlightenment are interesting. A person moves from letting ego and possessions control oneself to becoming a person of giving and loving from a place of humility. One becomes a seeker, a more spiritually oriented person. Sounds good.

The flaw is believing we can do this through our own effort.

We cannot, and anyway, the door is closed. Locked.

But Jesus opens doors (Revelation 3:7,8). Jesus is the open door through which we can find salvation, enlightenment and hope (John 10:9). We are invited to knock, and the door will be opened (Matthew 7:7-8).



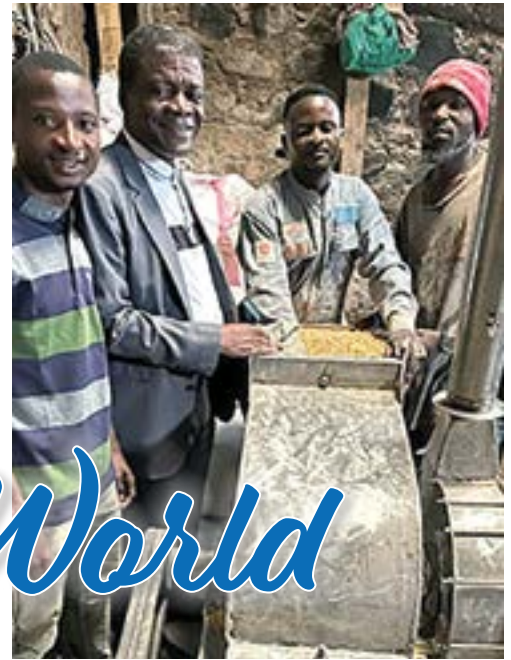
Walking through the monastery, I witnessed an interaction between a monk and a young girl. The monk was very displeased at her dancing and flitting about in the presence of the Buddha. He scolded her.

Again, the contrast is stark. Jesus loves little dancing, silly girls and boys, as well as the worst sinner and all in between (Matthew 18:1-5). The door is open for all.

The Christians I met while visiting this beautiful country are a determined, passionate, committed tribe. God is opening doors. Children are dancing, the elderly are laughing, the broken are finding healing, and salvation is being offered to all.

The Lord of open doors is at work in Asia. Pray for FMWM Asia and the Set Free Movement in Asia.

¹chopra.com/articles/the-7-stages-of-spiritual-development



ICCM Supporters *Changing the World*

By *Laura Fitzpatrick, ICCM writer**

Beyond the incredible support individual sponsorship provides, International Child Care Ministries (ICCM) oversees special funds that specifically seek to meet other unique needs.

Solar Lights

With limited, unpredictable or no access to electricity, many communities are left without any light beyond natural resources. This has an especially profound impact on young people who are in school, as they have no means of studying after the sun goes down.

In 2022, 500 Kenyan ICCM students received lights to use in their homes to remedy this problem. More than 50 solar lights were also recently provided to ICCM-sponsored students in Togo. More than 200 students in a creative-access country also received these small gifts with a life-changing impact.

Animal Fund

Communities in Malawi (MA) thrive through support from ICCM's Animal Fund. An ICCM school there has several cows and a bull, providing nutrient-dense milk for the children. Given the possibility of new calves being birthed, this is a sustainable source of nutrition and income.

In another Malawi community, ICCM operates a school

specifically for orphans. Teachers received a unique "bonus" from the fund to supplement their salaries. The teachers had a choice between receiving a pig or a goat; each animal provides additional nutrition and potential income.

The Linda Stryker School in the Democratic Republic of the Congo also receives support from the Animal Fund. Students care for goats, pigs and chickens provided by the fund. Money was also provided to build a grain mill to produce feed for the animals.

ICCM recently approved a request in a creative-access country to build coops and purchase chicks and feed to provide meat birds. In this region and most others around the world, food prices continue to increase dramatically.

Sponsoring a child changes their world. Gifts to special funds change the world for many children and their families. We celebrate the faithful support of God's people to the children.

"I will praise God's name in song and glorify Him with thanksgiving" (Psalms 69:30, NIV).

**This is an excerpt from the ICCM July 2022 Reflections*



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JUNE PRAYER GUIDE

01 > **Thursday** | Zimbabwe

Pray for the FM churches in this general conference as they seek to be agents of peace and reconciliation in an atmosphere of suffering and turmoil.

02 > **Friday** | Colombia

Missionary Shane Jewell is exploring the possibilities for a woodworking trade school in Bogota. Please pray for discernment during the research and planning stage and ask the Lord to provide divine connections as they consider land and building options.

Birthday: Shane Jewell

03 > **Saturday** | Creative Access Asia-BG

The FMC continues growing; many were baptized in 2022. Pray pastors and believers will continue to have courage and boldness to proclaim the gospel.

04 > **Sunday** | Middle East

Pray for the people of Turkey and Syria as they continue to recover and rebuild following the devastating earthquake in February.

05 > **Monday** | Asia

FMWM-Asia is reaching out to Filipino groups in Auckland, New Zealand; Kaohsiung, Taiwan; and Gothenburg, Sweden. Pray for the global Filipino community.

Birthdays: Sarah Clemente, Susan (Affiliate Missionary)

06 > **Tuesday** | Haiti

Pray the words of Psalms 29:11 for our Free Methodist brothers and sisters in Haiti. Lord, give strength to your people. Bless your people with peace.

07 > **Wednesday** | The Balkans

Pray for the new leadership team – Blagoy Dimitrov, George Georgiev, Stanimir Zahariev – appointed to oversee church-planting efforts in Bulgaria, Serbia and North Macedonia.

08 > **Thursday** | International Child Care Ministries

ICCM has several special projects – food funds, water filters, animals, Wunders (menstrual hygiene kits) and solar lights. These supplement sponsorship and provide for children and families in need. Give thanks to the Lord for those who faithfully give.

09 > **Friday** | Japan

The evangelical presence in Japan is now only 0.57% and declining. Pray for a move of the Holy Spirit, creating a tremendous spiritual awakening across Japan.

Birthday: Gene Hall

10 > **Saturday** | São Tomé and Príncipe

In April, Jacione Souza was invited to meet with the President of the Republic of São Tomé. She presented him with a Bible. Pray the power of the Word of God will impact the president and the entire nation. **Birthday: Jacione Souza (International Missionary)**

11 > **Sunday** | Egypt

Pray for young people in Egypt and ask God to increase their desire to know and serve Him.

12 > **Monday** | Europe

Pray for the newly formed African European Church Network. This group is working strategically to reach the African diaspora in Europe.

Birthday: Josh Fajardo

13 > **Tuesday** | Uruguay

Praise the Lord for the church's thriving ministry to children. Entire families are coming to Christ, and doors have opened for church planting!

14 > **Wednesday** | Hungary

Pray for peace in Europe and across the world. As Gerry and Kathy McNamara continue to respond to the needs of Hungarians and Ukrainians, pray people's hearts will be open to receive the gospel.

Birthday: Kathy McNamara (International Missionary)

15 > **Thursday** | FMWM Missionary Team

Many members of the FMWM missionary team have or will travel to the U.S. for partnership building and to attend the FMC-USA General Conference in July. Pray for good connections with partnering churches and for times of renewal and refreshment.

Birthday: Art Brown

16 > Friday | Albania

Algent and Erjona Bregu use the Discovery Bible Study method in their community. Pray for both the new and maturing believers who participate.

Birthday: Erjona Bregu (International Missionary)

17 > Saturday | Greece

Pray for evangelization among the various immigrant populations flowing through Greece. Many are open to knowing about Jesus, but language barriers make it difficult to communicate on a deeper level.

Birthday: Maria Long

18 > Sunday | Peru

Pray for wisdom and discernment from the Holy Spirit as the FMC in Peru establishes a national prayer team.

19 > Monday | Asia

Pray for initiatives being established to develop sustainable, healthy approaches to marketplace missions as an effective way to come alongside ministry leaders and support missional efforts in Asia. **Birthday: Laurie Yost**

20 > Tuesday | Angola

Fourteen FM churches in this country are under the oversight of the Brazilian General Conference. Pray for the expansion of church planting throughout Angola.

21 > Wednesday | Brazil

Pray for the continued creative ministry efforts of the Nikkei Provisional General Conference as they seek to share the gospel among people with increasingly secular ideologies.

22 > Thursday | Rwanda / South Korea

Rwanda: Ask the Father to give Rachel and Emmanuel Nzungize and other hospital staff at Kibogora wisdom and encouragement as they seek to improve care and treat patients physically and spiritually.

Birthday: Rachel Nzungize

South Korea: Some come to this country having experienced political and social persecution. Pray they will hear and receive the good news of Jesus Christ and be disciplined to reach others.

Birthday: Trevor Foley (Affiliate Missionary)

23 > Friday | Set Free Movement

In the past year, the Wunders program produced enough menstrual hygiene kits to equip girls in all ICCM schools in Kenya and employed four more women in the sewing centers. Pray for the launching of a new location and the distribution of kits in neighboring countries.

24 > Saturday | Middle East

People in the Middle East are often anxious and fearful for many reasons. Pray they will find freedom from fear as they learn to trust Jesus and turn to Him in prayer.

25 > Sunday | Australia

Pray for missionary David Clemente as he works with partners in Melbourne who lead two groups considering affiliation with the Free Methodist Church in Australia.

26 > Monday | Republic of Ireland

Pray for Pastor Abwe Mulonda and his family as they serve the Congolese community and try to reach others outside their community.

27 > Tuesday | Liberia

Pray for the newly elected superintendent, Isaac Gayne, and the continued formation of a strong, healthy church in Liberia.

28 > Wednesday | Creative Access Asia-LO

This country now has two Free Methodist churches. Pray for their outreach among those who adhere to the majority religion.

29 > Thursday | Colombia

Missionary Thad Roller is the mission district leader for Colombia. Pray God will strengthen the expanding church network there. Ask for God's guidance as some churches organize, incorporate and build. Pray buildings will not diminish their outward-focused multiplication efforts.

Birthday: Thad Roller

30 > Friday | 360 Mission District

Missionary Dennis Leon will take a three-month sabbatical this year. Pray he will hear from God during this time and find rest and refreshment for his soul.

Birthday: Dennis Leon

“My prayer is that people will see that following Jesus costs you everything you are and everything you have. And my prayer is that people will see that Jesus is worth it.”

– David Platt