



*Phil Linton
Director*

WORLD OUTREACH COMMITTEE

REPORT

37th General Assembly



*Betsy Rumer
Chairman*

Members of the World Outreach Committee are TE Brad Buescher (Great Plains), TE Kevin Cauley (Mid-Atlantic), RE Carroll Coakley (Southeast), RE Phil Castor (East), RE Phyllis Ellsworth (Midwest), RE Al Johnson (West), TE Betsy Rumer (Alleghenies), chairman; RE Pat Tucker (Central South), and Mrs. Sheryl Smith (West). The ex-officio members of the committee are Executive Associate Bill Enns (TE), WO Director, Phil Linton (TE), and WO Associate Director, Jason Dunn.

The Committee met in three stated meetings since the last General Assembly: September 15-16, 2016, December 1-2, 2016, and March 9-10, 2017. (The WOC Executive Committee met on October 13, 2016, December 21, 2016, and April 12, 2017.)

The Work of the Committee

A. Mobilization The number of prospective missionary contacts has remained steady, but raising our candidate standards, plus the effects of getting a completely new staff in Orlando up and running, has reduced our number of candidates ready for appointment and commissioning. Many inquirers approaching World Outreach have no experience or practice in personal evangelism. World Outreach is now working directly with churches to help them prepare our sons and daughters to tell the story of Jesus here, before they try it in harder places.

- For high school, we're updating the old EPC "Summer Jam" idea with a ministry to Muslims flavor. The first event will be June 26 – 29, 2018 in Dearborn/Hamtramck, Michigan; space limited to the first 100 students. Our plans include adding an east coast and west coast location, that we might see 300 EPC High School students serving alongside local EPC churches reaching out to Muslim and refugee communities.
- For college and adults, WO now offers summer internships in partnership with our co-op agencies. (5 interns this summer; we hope to double that in 2018)
- We are now working much more intentionally with EPC pastors to identify and mentor prospective missionaries. Rather than bringing prospects to Orlando for our

Encounter World Outreach recruiting events, we are now partnering with presbyteries to hold regional events in conjunction with presbytery meetings. Pastors who see someone in their congregation with missions' potential can bring that person with them to presbytery. While the presbyters do church business, their guests join a handful of EPC World Outreach folks to learn, ask questions and seriously look at why the EPC believes God has called us to be a global movement that sends its people to hard places.

B. Engage 2025. We have now reached the halfway mark of the major World Outreach initiative launched in 2010 – for each EPC presbytery to send and sustain a team of pioneer church-planters to start disciple-making movements among unreached Muslim people groups. This task has proved to be extremely difficult, as we expected it would. In the first 7 ½ years of Engage 2025, ten “units” (a missionary family, couple, or single), have been sent to five different fields of service. Seven of the ten remain on the field today and are about to be joined by three newly-appointed teammates.

- The Pacific team continues to widely sow gospel seeds in Malaysia, and to partner with national Christians (ethnically distinct from the majority population) to mobilize prayer and send workers. Our year-long prayer project for spiritual breakthrough has coincided with (and perhaps caused) increased hostility toward Christians who share their faith. We need to keep praying.
- The West team in Indonesia received a new member from the Presbyterian Church in Brazil. The team's business venture has been making steady progress, and they are actively looking for church-planter teammates who can work with the business in community development and church-planting.
- Great Plains continues to search for a team leader and team members to go to Albanian Muslims in Macedonia.
- The Gulf South/Central South team's outreach opportunities with Syrians continue to grow. They have started Bible studies with refugee women, and helped establish a refugee congregation. Starting a weekly soccer club is giving them opportunities to develop relationships with the male relatives of women who come to church. Two new team members will be commissioned at General Assembly.
- Midwest sent their Team Leader family to Moscow for language study in July 2016. They have made good progress, and are already beginning outreach to Siberian Tatars. Teammates to join them is one of our highest recruiting needs.
- Mid-Atlantic's field team in the Punjab has pushed through fear, and developed a strong network through sports clubs. These clubs are developing as centers for discipleship and evangelism.
- The Mid-Atlantic's Bihar team lost its team leader when the Finegans decided to return to the States. The presbytery is still committed to Bihar but presently has no team on site.
- The East is without a field team, but is partnering with national Christians in the Caucasus region.
- Rivers & Lakes has reaffirmed their commitment to the Uzbek people, and to rebuilding an Engage 2025 team to reach them.

- Allegheny outreach in Sierra Leone through schools is completely in the hands of gifted national Christian leaders who have successfully started several congregations.
- Florida, Mid-America, and Southeast Presbyteries are still in the discussion phase, considering their first steps in Engage 2025.

C. **ITEN** (International Theological Education Network). ITEN's staff has grown to seven World Outreach missionary families, who focus on eleven training sites (in Albania, Caucasus, Ethiopia, India, Kazakhstan, Liberia, Myanmar, Pakistan, Siberia, Sierra Leone, and Spain), and six training projects (in Brazil, Central African Republic, Guatemala, Iran, Lebanon, and among Syrian refugees). All sites and projects are committed to providing theological resources and leadership development among those with least access to the gospel.

- We expect to confirm 3-6 Memos of Understanding with partner seminaries this year.
- ITEN teachers have trained leaders and/or assessed work on site this year in Albania, Caucasus, Liberia, Myanmar, Siberia, Sierra Leone, Spain, Netherlands, Germany, Lebanon, and Guatemala.
- ITEN has growing "champion church" relationships, as EPC churches partner with ITEN in commitment to specific sites.
- ITEN now has a password protected website for expanded services to our partners.
- ITEN and E2025 are in conversation to coordinate as they grow together.
- ITEN rejoices as its national partners have sent out new missionaries among hard-to-reach peoples and seen salvations.
- ITEN has invested financially in scholarships for nationals to develop seminary faculties, as well as projects, such as translation of critical missional training materials.

D. **Personnel.** WO experienced significant personnel changes in all areas:

- 66 Missionaries (who raise their own financial support) serving in 27 countries. 5 subtractions (Burke, Egli, Finegan, Moore, Wells); 3 Additions (Greg M, Elizabeth S, Jacqy K). 14 of our missionaries carry heavy responsibilities stateside, and make up the WO US Team. 58% of our missionaries serve under co-op agreements with other agencies (Act Beyond, ELIC, Footprints Int'l, Frontiers, Greater Europe Mission, Interserve, Ministry Essentials International, OC International, OMF, Pioneers, SEND International, SIM, United World Mission, WEC International, Serge, and TeachBeyond).
- Mission Assistants (who are unpaid volunteers). 2 subtractions (Gallagher, Caldwell); 3 additions (E.J. Gibson – Security), Gill (Pre-field Training), and Huber (Mobilization)
- World Outreach Office Staff (who are salaried). 4 subtractions (Martin, Rose, Webber, and Wood) 4 additions (Dunn, Rhoden, Rutter, and Tipton). The office staff experienced 80% turnover this year, and each goodbye was difficult. The last transition happened at the end of May when our faithful and much-loved Financial Assistant, Amy Rose, completed the hand-over to her replacement, Catherine Rutter. Amy served our missionaries with excellence and grace, and she will be greatly missed.

Recommendations to the General Assembly

None

Respectfully submitted,



Betsy Rumer
Chairman



Phil Linton
Director

June 2017