



FREE METHODIST WORLD MISSIONS

2020 Annual Report

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



Empowering International Leaders

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

At the very heart of all FMWM does around the world is the development of leaders. Leaders are not the end; they are the means to the end — making disciples by establishing transformational churches, bringing about the kingdom of heaven on Earth in every community around the world. FMWM plays the critical role of serving leaders at multiple levels — the leaders of churches and those leaders planting churches.

We enter communities looking for people of peace who will open the door for the gospel. We look among those who respond to the good news to find those who will become leaders. We pour into those leaders who will, in turn, help find and develop other leaders. We train leaders to multiply. Around the world, we see consistent multiplication of disciples, leaders, groups and churches. Our missionaries focus on serving international leaders who in turn lead self-governing, self-propagating, self-supporting and self-theologizing churches.

The 2020 pandemic did not derail our efforts. We adjusted methods to meet the challenges. Online training systems, in the infancy of development, were

suddenly and effectively deployed. Church planting continued to increase. The physical needs of the poor were prioritized, and the international Free Methodist community responded.

God has a way of using adversity for the advancement of His kingdom. The early church was scattered through the great persecution that broke out at the stoning of Stephen. Those who were scattered preached the Word wherever they went. Though we would never have purposely chosen the path we have been on for the last year, we can now begin to see glimpses of what God is doing in developing international leaders through the pandemic. We take to heart the words of St. Paul to the Galatians, “Let us not become weary in doing good, for at the proper time we will reap a harvest if we do not give up” (Galatians 6:9, NIV).

Thank you for your partnership in the harvest. Thank you for standing with us in prayer and for your financial support. You are a blessing to the kingdom!

— Gerald W. Coates, Director of Global Church Advocacy

Giving to Free Methodist World Missions

Missionary Support Accounts	\$ 4,712,104.48
Church Planting and Development	\$ 941,947.81
Extra Mile Projects	\$ 938,177.09
International Child Care Ministries	\$ 5,956,025.83
Missions Resource Team	\$ 787,930.22
TOTAL	\$ 13,336,185.43



FREE METHODIST WORLD MISSIONS

1,079,570

**Free Methodist Church
Total World Membership**

[based on 2019 reports]

12

U.S. VISA TEAMS SENT

U.S. Short-Term Individuals Mobilized

171

U.S. Membership 5.9% of Total World Membership



Where are our missionaries?



USA / Canada

Membership
71,128

Countries
2

12 U.S. Teams Sent
171 U.S. Short-Term Individuals Mobilized
3 Global Missionaries



Latin America

Membership
94,927

Countries
23

Missionaries
27

International Missionaries
9

Europe

Membership
4,407

Countries
15

Missionaries
21

Affiliate Missionaries
3

International Missionaries
9

Africa

Membership
555,138

Countries
28

Missionaries
14

International Missionaries
2





Asia

Membership
323,882

Countries
22

Missionaries
36

Affiliate
Missionaries
2

International
Missionaries
1

As long as there are people with no access to the gospel, we must continue to send those who would proclaim Christ to the nations.

North American-supported missionaries serve in every corner of the globe — from high mountains to small islands, from wilderness to the megacities. But the face of missions is changing. It is no longer the West to the rest. New partnerships are developing. Free Methodists from other countries are serving cross-culturally and partnering with our North American missionary team to bring the gospel to new places and people groups. Free Methodists affiliated with other organizations are partnering with the FMWM team.

- Together we are stronger and more fruitful.

MiddleEast

Membership
30,000+

House Churches
2,685

Countries
8

Missionaries
3

International
Missionaries
9



Africa



The Apostle Paul seemed impressed by the Ephesians saying, “... ever since I heard about your faith in the Lord Jesus and your love for all God’s people, I have not stopped giving thanks for you, remembering you in my prayers.” In FMWM, we talk about “establishing transformational churches.” I envision the Ephesians were just such a church. It is just such a “love for all God’s people” we desire to bring forth and nurture. Despite the last year being memorable for unpleasant reasons, we have many things to celebrate in Africa.

The African experience of COVID-19 has been one of comparatively minor impact. Perhaps there was under-reporting or insufficient data, but our leaders confirm a relatively low number of cases. We affirm our thanks to God for a lower intensity than experienced in other parts of the world. And still, we do not forget all who have suffered the illness or its impact.

Early responses to the health crisis and social precautions led our partner ministers in Africa to mobilize their creativity! Many began new and increased use of digital media to stay in touch with members and keep Christian teaching flowing mostly uninterrupted. Some networks of ministers initiated their first meetings on Zoom, and some had their first Zoom meetings with us. This nudge toward more virtual communication has helped us in our overall awareness of each other’s ministries – and the cultivation of our “love for all God’s people.” Celebrate that with us!

We also invite you to join in celebrating two African missionaries who joined our team this year! We wait on the Lord with great anticipation for more additions to our team, both Africans and others. The initiatives of Evart Bible College and Wesley Missionary Institute both took significant steps forward. Groups and individual service trips were, of course, stalled, but we are eager to reactivate once it is possible. North American team members were in the U.S. most of the year, though actively engaged with ministry efforts in their country of service. Our African members were able to carry out more of their regular duties. All of these are points of celebration, and we are sure you’ll chime in, especially knowing much of it was possible because of your partnership. We bless you for partnering with us!

— Rev. Mike Reynen
Africa Area Director



Asia

“There is no mission without a message.”

Those were the words of the preacher I was listening to on YouTube one Sunday morning. I thought about the Father’s mission, about His message and about my life message. I thought about the message of hope in Christ repeatedly shared across Asia during the great pandemic.

The message of hope in Christ was demonstrated by more than \$150,000 in relief funds from the Bishop’s Crisis Response Fund distributed throughout Asia in 2020. Most of those funds provided food for the poor and suffering. Thousands of people were fed and encouraged by compassion. Doors were opened to the gospel. Communities watched as Christians provided food. An entire village of Muslim friends received a meal and food for weeks to come.

Leaders declared the message of hope in Christ. During one challenging lockdown period, when pastors could not leave their homes, they prayed specifically for the Holy Spirit to visit church members in unique ways. In another country, a leader had the opportunity to evacuate as infections grew but chose to stay with the people he leads. Many came to know Jesus, believers were baptized, and new churches started despite travel restrictions and lockdowns.

In 2020, leaders found innovative ways to share the message of Christ. A missionary in Japan trained pastors in Thailand via Zoom. Country leaders met together online, and Asia area leaders gathered for monthly Zoom prayer meetings. Some missionaries chose to be “stuck” in a Creative Access country to offer ministry and “see what Father might do.” Courageous leaders reflected the compassionate heart of Jesus and made the best of the situation, knowing the gospel always finds a way.

FMWM-Asia makes disciples by *crossing cultures to share Jesus, pursuing servant partnerships to reinforce national leadership, and implementing systems to cultivate flourishing Free Methodist Churches.*

This statement reflects the collective group known as Free Methodist World Missions in Asia, as well as the entire Free Methodist Church in Asia, including three general conferences – India, Japan and the Philippines. We’ve discovered we are “Better Together.”

Thank you for partnering in our mission to share the message of Jesus in Asia.

— Rev. Eric
Asia Area Director



Europe

What comes to mind when you think of Europe? The cities? The sites? The culture? What comes to our mind is spiritual poverty. Look beyond the museums, the castles, and the gilded monuments, and you will see a continent in desperate need of spiritual revival.

In Europe, spiritual poverty has many faces. It could be a Spanish businessman, a Ukrainian farmer, a Greek fisherman, an immigrant or a student. Of the 740 million people, only a small minority actively follow Christ, and the number is decreasing yearly.

Like many places around the world, the Church in Europe has faced a challenging year – a refugee crisis, ongoing migration and the global pandemic. In an increasingly fragmented global society, European Free Methodists are partnering with like-minded organizations to find common ground in bringing hope and transformation to communities across Europe. Our rich heritage in Christ and our combined call to the ministry of reconciliation is what Europeans need to witness as we model Jesus.

While there appears to be a move in Europe toward exclusivity and wall-building, we are called to build bridges and be reconcilers and peacemakers. Amid the tensions, we embrace the richness of unity in Christ and the beauty of our diversity. We also continue to deepen our understanding of and participation in the mission of God, waiting on the Holy Spirit to give us the courage and strength to take new and greater steps into the future while remaining faithful to who we are and what Christ has called us to be.

The Free Methodist Church is currently working in 14 countries on the continent. We are equipping national leaders while engaging with the gospel to transform communities, all with the end goal of establishing relevant churches and faith communities.

Thank you for partnering with us as we work together toward the task of proclaiming the mercy of God in a spiritually dark continent. Together as God's people, we can offer the hope of Christ to a broken continent.

— Rev. Josué (Josh) Fajardo
Europe Area Director

Latin America



As the coronavirus pandemic appeared on Latin America's horizon in early 2020, the Free Methodist Church responded in holistic ways, resulting in spiritual and numeric growth and creating a sound structure for continued growth.

Because many people lost their income due to quarantine laws, Free Methodist churches immediately began helping by making meals, providing groceries or giving away chickens to help feed the hungry and bring hope to communities. Caring for people's physical needs has been an effective way to share the gospel. People began attending churches, and more than 570 people accepted Christ as their Lord and Savior during the pandemic.

When governments prohibited large group meetings, several of our pastors said, "They are just asking us to do what we were already doing — start churches in homes." The area offered Community Church Planting training online — initially to 500 people in several countries. Those people trained 1,000 more people, and new virtual "houses of peace" (house churches) opened. Overall, the number of houses of peace in the region increased by 20% in 2020. At least 73 people were baptized in the third quarter — some in online services.

Travel bans created distance between us, but the implementation of new structures and adaptation to technology united us like never before! Because most Latin American countries speak the same language, and because quarantines forced churches to meet online, the area hosted united Holy Week and Advent services. People of all ages and 16 different countries participated by leading worship, reading scripture, preaching, giving children's sermons, etc. As a result of these initiatives, churches throughout the region have collaborated through online services and meetings. The sense of belonging, identity and community has increased area-wide.

The months in quarantine also enabled us to develop sustainable structures to serve the area better. We initiated new ministry teams. Under my direction, a team of six mentors or coaches began working to assist the mission district leaders and conference superintendents with implementing Community Church Planting and Pastoral Formation in their respective areas. These mentors and coaches have also helped standardize reporting structures.

The kingdom of God is expanding in Latin America, and neither the coronavirus nor the gates of hell can prevail against it!

— Dr. Ricardo Gómez
Latin America Area Director



Middle East



Thank you for partnering with Impact Middle East. Together, we empower national leaders to proclaim the grace and truth of Jesus Christ and plant reproducing house churches among the underserved.

In the Middle East, we are sending a new form of missionary. We are sending national leaders to other countries within the region as missionaries and church-planting coaches. Due to cultural and geographical situations in the region, we find this strategy more effective than deploying large numbers of North American missionaries. We plan to deploy our first full-time missionary team from the Middle East to a restricted access country in 2021.

In 2020, COVID-19 hit our team in significant ways. Eighty percent of our team has suffered from the virus, and several are still battling long-term effects. Six leaders died this year due to COVID-19.

However, the pandemic opened new opportunities for house church planting at a time when many churches were, and still are, prohibited to gather large numbers of people. We saw expansion into countries, which, for safety reasons, we are unable to name. We planted new churches, trained new leaders and disciplined new converts by Zoom and other technology. One of our leaders said: “I thank God for COVID-19 – I have had more ministry opportunities with the majority background than ever before!”

We are encouraged by all God is doing, and we rejoice in the expansion of His kingdom. In Iraq, we continue to see significant growth amid difficult situations. The refugee population continues to expand, and with this expansion, new ministry opportunities.

In Egypt, our network has become a “multiplication” network of house churches. This network is growing by hundreds each year. In Palestine, although officially shut down for most of the year, we have seen amazing one-on-one discipleship and growth.

Our work in Jordan is exploding; many refugees have become followers of Jesus Christ and are resettling around the world. Our networks continue to grow! Now our work in Jordan is shifting from refugee relief to the development of the Jordanian church.

Pray for new networks in several countries led by believers who are not Christian in their background. These networks are reaching a non-Christian-background population. Continue to pray for our courageous leaders around the Middle East!

— Dr. Dale
Middle East Area Director

 Photo Credit: Trevor Owen



Free Methodist World Missions Leadership Team

Bishops



Linda Adams
Latin America



Keith Cowart
Europe & Middle East



Matt Whitehead
Africa & Asia

Area Directors



Mike Reynen
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Eric
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Josué Fajardo
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Ricardo Gómez
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Dale
Middle East

Director of Global Church Advocacy



Gerald Coates
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To learn more about the Free Methodist Church's work in more than 97 world areas, visit FMWM.org

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