

The Antioch Partners

*A strategic alliance of Presbyterian Frontier Fellowship and
The Outreach Foundation*

December, 2009

Dear Friends of The Antioch Partners (TAP),

Greetings to you all as you prepare to celebrate the birth of the Christ-child! As we know, this “good news of great joy” is for “all the people” (Luke 2:10), but there are approximately 1.7 billion people in the world today who have never had the opportunity to hear this message in a way they can understand! Truly, there is so much to be done, right here in the US, as well as all around the world, as we seek to participate in God’s continuing mission; his mission of redeeming all creation. We all have a vitally important role to play, and we are deeply grateful for your partnership in ministry with TAP and those serving in God’s mission through TAP.

In September I was in Ethiopia and Kenya, and in November I was in West and Central Asia. In both areas of the world I had the privilege of visiting TAP Partners (Partners is the term we use for the missionaries serving through TAP). Each of these Partners has responded to God’s call to go and incarnate the good news of Jesus through both word and deed. The “incarnational” model is the model of Jesus, and it is the model for all of us serving through TAP. Our commitment to the incarnational model means all those serving through TAP learn the language and culture of the people there are serving. This in itself can be a challenge, but it is a challenge worth all the effort!

One TAP Partner serving in Central Asia is in the first year of her first term, so her primary focus is language and culture learning. As those who have learned other languages know, language learning is a humbling and challenging task. One of the essential requirements is the willingness to look silly, even foolish, because this is inevitable when you’re trying to navigate a new language. As a language learner, you have to rely on the people you are seeking to serve; you have to depend on them to help



you. This creates a beautiful and necessary dynamic which opens up relationship-building opportunities, even as the language learning process progresses. It also demonstrates humility, and creates an environment where the new missionary can truly bond to the people and place she/he has been called to serve. So, as you pray for TAP, pray specifically for the TAP Partners who are in the challenging, yet rewarding, language and culture learning phase of ministry!

In Africa I met with two TAP Partners, one of whom, Heather Haspels, is serving in Ethiopia as a nurse. Heather grew up in Africa, as her parents, John and Gwen Haspels, are long-time Presbyterian missionaries who are themselves serving in Ethiopia. The process of Heather discerning God's call to return to Africa is a beautiful story, and it demonstrates the amazing way God uses our unique life experiences to prepare us for his work. Heather's passionate love for Jesus, her language abilities, her love and respect for the Ethiopian people, her nursing skills, her cross-cultural skills ... all of these have combined to make her an effective ambassador for Christ in that context. Heather is actually here in the US now preparing to return to Ethiopia in January, 2010 for her second term of service. Pray for Heather as she connects with family, friends and supporters, raises additional support, and continues her personal and professional development during the remainder of her home assignment.



In future TAP Newsletters, we'll share about other Partners serving through TAP, but we hope the information in this Newsletter has helped give you a better idea about some of the people serving through TAP, as well as some of dynamics of cross-cultural life and ministry. We consider it a tremendous privilege to be serving local PCUSA congregations by providing another means for those being called by God to long-term, cross-cultural ministry to be where God wants them to be.

As you prepare to celebrate the greatest gift of all, know all of us here at TAP are praying for you and giving thanks for your continued partnership in ministry.

Serving together,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "W. Andrew Adair".

W. Andrew Adair
Executive Director, The Antioch Partners