

A Brief History of GCM

For 20 years, GCM's vision to reach young people has remained strong.

Though the implementation has evolved through the years, GCM's vision for spreading the gospel has remained strong. GCM first began with the purpose of mobilizing missionaries to college campuses throughout the United States. GCM's mission has since expanded to reach twenty-somethings and other unreached emerging cultures. Today, GCM seeks to serve missionaries in international, urban, and missional churches and church plants.

Heart for Church Planting

Throughout the years GCM missionaries have served students through campus ministries, leadership trainings, and conferences. Church plants and small groups are some other ways GCM missionaries reach young people who aren't students. These community groups provide much-needed, lasting spiritual fellowship for new believers.



GCM has also begun partnering with other like-minded organizations in Acts 29 and Vision 360. These ministries exist to serve church planters with a vision to reach the world for Jesus Christ.

International Ministry

In the summer of 1990, a GCM missionary family moved to Germany to plant a church in Dortmund. The ministry in Dortmund has now multiplied to four other cities in Germany, and they are prayerfully planning to expand to three more cities. Also, in 1995, GCM missionaries planted a church in Kiev, Ukraine, which



has resulted in two additional church plants.

Ukraine and Germany are two of the first countries to have a GCM presence. GCM missionaries have since travelled to Africa, Asia and South America to serve the unreached people of those continents. Today, GCM missionaries serve in 14 countries around the world.

Location, Location, Location

GCM's business office spent two years in Maryland before moving to Columbus, Ohio, where it stayed for 10 years. In 2001, GCM took an evolutionary step in ministry by moving from its humble basement offices in Columbus to the vibrant city of Orlando, Florida. Orlando has much to offer for a growing ministry, including the year-round climate and a large international airport. GCM has also been able to more greatly develop our relationships with like-minded ministries, such as Wycliffe Bible Translators, Pioneers and Campus Crusade for Christ.

Campus Crusade for Christ (CCC) first helped GCM with the initial launch of its staff program. At GCM's first New Staff Training, CCC provided GCM with training methods and materials, which have since been developed to be distinctively GCM. Wycliffe Bible Translators has blessed GCM by opening their Orlando headquarters to us for the GCM New Staff Training Conferences. Partnerships like these have been a tremendous blessing to GCM.



We are so excited to celebrate 20 years of ministry! From Maryland to Florida, from 23 missionaries to 300, God has been here through it all. As GCM continues to partner with new missionaries and ministries, we will continue to follow God's lead for the ministry. We look forward expectantly to see what God has for us next!

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THE FIRST GCM STAFF CLASS OF 1989

Twenty years ago, at GCM's first New Staff Training conference, 23 of God's kingdom workers jumped on board with GCM. Many of that first class are still serving the Lord on staff with GCM, and their passion for spreading the gospel remains strong. See what some of our veteran missionaries are doing today and what they have to say about their past 20 years with GCM!



David Baker

"I've been honored to work side-by-side with some of the very best people in the world."

David works with high school students at Heritage Christian Church in Westerville, Ohio.



John Allen

"It's been a great ride, but I ain't finished yet."

John serves with New Life Church at the University of Michigan as the Community Pastor.



John Hever

"Through GCM, God has given me opportunity to fulfill my calling from Him, alongside men and women who are passionate for Christ."

John is a member of the pastoral team with h2o Church in Orlando, Florida.



Phil Hoppersberger

"Twenty years later, the adage that got me through support-raising still rings true: 'Just like God ordering lunch in a diner, He pays for whatever He orders.'"

Phil writes for GCM from Laingsburg, Michigan.



Darryl Phillips

"Grace, blessings, grace, blessings, and more grace - always more grace!"

Darryl is the college director for Alive at The Ohio State University. He also founded and directs the Wilderness Leadership Training program.



JR Woodward

"Being on staff with GCM has allowed me to awaken people to join God in the renewal of all things, and for this I'm grateful."

JR serves as Dream Awakener at Kairos church in Los Angeles, California.



Wendy Standinger

"Over the past two decades, I have experienced many different seasons of life that have drawn me closer to Christ and increased my desire to be used by Him. I look forward to the next 20 years!"

Wendy is on staff with h2o Church at Bowling Green State University, serves in the GCM Women's Ministry and co-edits *Beauty for Ashes*.



Dave Meldrum-Green

"It has been an honor to be used by God to help build GCM into a trusted mission organization, with financial integrity, that He is using to change lives and bring the gospel to so many young people."

Dave serves in GCM's business office as the Finance Director and Treasurer.



Mark Groff

"From campus outreach to community pastoring, to overseas expansion and care, to mission coaching and church planting, our experience in ministry with GCM has been a tremendous ride of relationships and rich experiences on several campuses and cities and over 30 countries."

Mark is involved with church planting in Orlando and overseas missions.



Jim Wiebelhaus

"God has revealed Himself to us and through us to precious people all over the planet, many of whom started their walk with Jesus through this ministry God gave us. We are thankful for all the great people we have partnered with in GCM who have helped make this ministry possible."

Jim is a pastor at Harvest Community Church in Lincoln, Nebraska.

Finishing Well

Devotion by JR Woodward, Dream Awakener at Kairos Church - Los Angeles

Robert Clinton conducted a survey with participants 90 years or older. (Yes, I was a part of the first staff class twenty years ago, and no, I didn't participate in this survey.) This group of very old people were asked: "If you had your life to live over again, what would you do differently?" It was an open-ended question, but three basic responses kept coming from these elders.

They said, "If I had my life to live over again, I would reflect more, I would risk more and I would live for things that would continue on after I die." Think about that for a moment.

Near the end of his life, Paul could say, "I have fought the good fight, I have finished the race, I have kept the faith." Wouldn't it be great if we could all say that near the end of our lives? But this probably won't happen, according to Robert Clinton, who studied the lives of 900 leaders both inside and outside scripture. Through his study, he sadly discovered that only 30% finished well. He cited seven primary reasons why: the use and abuse of finances, the abuse of power, inordinate pride, illicit relationships, critical issues in family, people plateauing in their growth and emotional and psychological wounding.

So how can we enhance our chances to finish well?

Clinton discovered five things about people who finish well. First, **people who finish well had a broad perspective** by looking at life more holistically, especially in difficult times. We often underestimate what we can do in 20 years and over estimate what we can do in five. One exercise that I have found helpful is to write out my own epitaph, to be more aware of my preferable destiny. Here is what I would want to be true about my life and thus written on my epitaph: "He laughed, he loved and lived a life of joy. He embodied the good news and brought more beauty, justice, peace and joy to the world.



He awakened people to join God in the renewal of all things and looks forward to seeing Jesus face to face."

Second, **people who finish well engaged in experiences that renewed them.** I like to regularly examine my life in four areas: What am I doing to stay physically refreshed, emotionally recharged, intellectually renewed and spiritually revived?

Third, **people who finish well practiced spiritual disciplines.** Living the Christian life isn't a matter of trying, but of yielding, setting the sails of our lives to catch the wind of God's Spirit. Developing a rhythm of life where we engage in spiritual practices enable us to yield to

the power of God's spirit. I personally engage in practices that help me mend what was lost at the fall. These include practices that help me grow in my intimacy with God, love the world Christ died for (my friends and my enemies), move me toward personal wholeness, and enable me to care for creation. What do you do daily, weekly or monthly to allow the wind of God's spirit to blow freshly through your life?

People who finish well had a learning posture. I love to read. In the last ten years I have probably read on average about 75 books a year. The more I learn the more I realize how much I don't know, and my hunger to learn increases.

And finally, **people who finish well had 10 to 15 significant mentors in their lives.** We need experienced mentors in our lives, peer mentors inside our church and peer mentors outside our church. Also, we should be devoting time to mentor emerging leaders in our midst. We basically need models that inspire us, mentors that instruct us, partners that assist us and friends to support us.

Annie Dillard once shared some profound words, "How we spend our days is, of course, how we spend our lives." What are you doing today to enhance your chances of finishing well?

THE GO PROJECT Mobilizing New Missionaries In Vocational Ministry

The GO Project is our effort to mobilize full-time workers, pastors and church planters into vocational ministry as missionaries serving in their local churches. The GO Project will provide grants to cover the costs of initial training and equipping, as well as providing matching funds to begin and seed the fund-raising process.

The need for missionaries on college campuses, church plants and in reaching the next generation in cities throughout the world is greater than ever. "Twentysomethings continue to be the most spiritually independent and resistant age group in America," says Christian researcher George Barna in a recent article. Transforming the coming generations for Christ requires willing workers to respond to Matthew 28:18-20 by committing to vocational ministry as missionaries.

Our desire is to remove the startup hurdles for those who answer the call of Christ to 'Go.' Would you consider partnering with GCM in sending 100 new full-time missionaries into churches reaching the next generation through the GO Project?

www.gcmweb.org/go



BRINGING HEAVEN TO EARTH

Staff Profile on JR Woodward's Journey in Church Planting

Five minutes with JR Woodward and his passion in life is clearly seen: to genuinely live out the gospel in his community or “join God in bringing heaven to earth.” JR has devoted most of his life to ministry, joining GCM staff in 1989 with the first new staff training class. In 2000, JR and other leaders in Blacksburg, Virginia’s New Life Christian Fellowship realized it was time to plant a new church. The next few years were grueling, as with many new church plants, but God still had plans for the church and for His people.



“The best way to describe the first five years of this church is through a surfing analogy. We paddled our way out, made some progress, but then a wave hit us, again and again. We somehow made it out, but not without casualties,” recalls JR. Nearly 30 percent of the original team left the church plant for one reason or another. However, even in the midst of the paddling and wipe outs, God brought many new people to Kairos. Today, well over the majority of the people involved at Kairos are from L.A., called “Angelinos.”

The greater metro area population of L.A. boasts 17.5 million people. In order to meet the needs of such a large area, JR shares the goal to plant neighborhood churches all over the city. Each church focuses on a neighborhood area and seeks to answer the question: “If God’s reign was fully realized in this neighborhood, what would be different?”

Kairos Hollywood officially began in 2003. When the church reached 150 people, a third of them joined a team from Missouri and moved across town to plant Kairos West L.A. This September, on Kairos’ sixth anniversary, a third neighborhood church was launched, Kairos South L.A. JR continues to seek God’s leadership about new church plants in L.A.



Today JR’s role in Kairos reflects the needs of today’s culture. He says, “One thing we realize and recognize is that we live in a culture where people are skeptical of truth, power and people in power. We have to ask ourselves, ‘How do we embody truth for these people?’” The answer is a polycentric leadership group of equippers, based on Ephesians 4:11, where Paul describes the church body. These equippers serve the body of Christ in different ways. JR’s role as Dream Awakener (comparable to an apostle, little “a,” in the New Testament) is helping individuals and communities follow Jesus and live out their call.



“I’m always trying to work myself out of a job,” JR shares about his future plans. He will soon be moving from Kairos Hollywood, so that the new team of equippers can expand their wings. As JR moves on to serve at Kairos West L.A., he will also be developing a vision for his next season of life. He hopes to see Kairos multiply in

L.A. and other cities in California. For JR, the most important goal is to follow God’s leadership and join Him in bringing heaven to earth.

You can learn more about JR and his ministry by visiting his new website www.jrwoodward.com or his blog at www.jrwoodward.net.

THE NEXT TWENTY

BY TOM MAURIELLO
EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR, GCM



As we look back on the last 20 years of ministry, we see how God has brought us to an amazing place today that we could never have predicted in 1989. He has done so much more than we could have ever hoped for or imagined! While we can dream and pray, we can never predict what the next 20 years will look like. How will technology change the ways we communicate and relate to each other? What great global challenges will our children and grandchildren face? What kinds of music and art will capture the hearts of young people? Rather than try to answer these questions, we will look at our historic purpose to better understand where God is taking us. He alone is the author of our story, and we will follow where He leads.

GCM’s mission to reach the next generation through the local church is as relevant today as it was our founding. In “Twenty-Something’s Struggle to Find Their Place in Christian Churches,” researcher George Barna writes that Americans in college or in their twenties are “significantly less likely than any other group to attend church..., to be absolutely committed to Christianity, or to read the Bible.”

In Scripture we see how quickly, if ignored, an entire generation can be missed. In Judges 2:7-13 we see a people who in verse 7 “...served the LORD throughout the lifetime of Joshua and of the elders who outlived him and who had seen all the great things the LORD had done for Israel.” Yet in verse 10 we read that “... another generation grew up, who knew neither the LORD nor what he had done for Israel.”

Our call, then, for the next twenty years is the same as it always has been: to see the next generation transformed by the Good News of Jesus Christ. Those who came before us labored faithfully and sacrificially for the Kingdom. The fruits of their labor are those who serve in ministry today. We look to today’s young people, recognizing that they will be the future leaders and influencers that shape our world. They are the future missionaries and church planters destined to reach the generation that follows them.

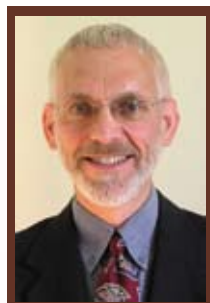
While so much has changed in our world, our purpose hasn’t changed at all. We will go to the next generation, making disciples of all nations. We will work with the local church through evangelism, discipleship and church planting. And as He promised in The Great Commission, He will be the Author of our story, our Provider, as He declared: “I am with you always, to the end of the age.” (Matthew 28:18-20 ESV)

WHEN GOD'S WILL IS BEYOND US

David Bovenmyer's journey with GCM

In 1989, I had the incredible privilege of becoming Executive Director of Great Commission Ministries for its first three years. Having been a pastor and magazine editor prior to this, I had no fund-raising experience, no business training, and no executive experience. Yet I was asked to lead an experiment to see if personal support-raising could be a means of providing finances for our campus leaders and to help revitalize our church movement's languishing campus ministry. After much prayer and advice-seeking from several other ministries, an organizational team was assembled, the first training class was announced and 23 brave and zealous souls stepped up to the plate to see whether this would work for us or not. Most of them succeeded, and a year later, our third class had over 40 in attendance. GCM continued to rapidly expand, quickly outgrowing my leadership gifts, and I went back to pastoral ministry. Yet I've been privileged to remain on the GCM board since that time.

Looking back to these beginning days and the ensuing 20 years, one of the lessons I've learned is that God loves to use those who are weak and inadequate, yet filled with faith. He took a bunch of rag-tag experimenters who were humble enough to seek advice, learn as they went, and look to Him in faith. Over these years, God has raised up a ministry that provides cutting-edge support services to over 300 missionaries in the US and abroad, and at lesser administrative fees than most! God's kingdom has been greatly advanced as a result.



A corollary lesson is that God's will for us is often, if not always, beyond us. He loves it when we are in over our heads and forced to cry out to Him so that He can deliver us. In this way, He gains glory, we are drawn to Him in dependent relationship and we are filled with gratitude. If our hearts are seeking His kingdom and glory, He will overrule our mistakes and work in spite of our inadequacies, allowing us to accomplish things that are far beyond our natural abilities.

Finally, I also learned a lesson concerning the awesome power of a humble, united, loyal team. Becoming and remaining humble and united is probably the greatest challenge of any organization. Since the beginning, GCM has had its challenges in these areas. Yet the Lord of grace has allowed us to face each challenge as it comes, bear graciously with one another, and make decisions that have led us forward into greater fruitfulness to His honor and glory.

My prayer is that what God has done through GCM and the churches and ministries it supports will be only a small beginning of what He will do. I pray that in the next 20 years, we will be even more fruitful for the kingdom as we unite and step out in faith to do things that are far beyond us.

MENTORSHIP IS PARAMOUNT

GCM veteran Darryl Phillips' discipleship has been invaluable in GCM missionary Matt Pardi's life.

Darryl Phillips, a member of the very first GCM Missionary team 20 years ago, has been the main person in my life that influences me to be a true Christ follower. Much of my walk with Christ, influence in ministry, and pastoral skills have been shaped by Darryl's patient love and discipleship.

When I was a young Christian at Bowling Green State University, Darryl came to our church and began mentoring me. I had problems with low self-esteem, unhealthy relationships, and a low view of God. Darryl told me about Christ's love for me, showed me how to have appropriate relationships with girls, and taught me God's Word.

One of the best experiences I've ever had with God was during a Wilderness Leadership Training time. Darryl led a group of men into the deep woods of Colorado to fast, pray and seek the Lord. During that week, I had a powerful encounter with God that brought peace with my father's death and healing to my life.



Darryl standing far left; Matt standing far right

I have always been impressed with Darryl because he is a man's man;

he loves to play sports, go hiking, and watch football. At the same time, his love for God, love for his family, and passion for God's Word are apparent. He is fun to be around, and his very life has challenged me to be more like Christ.



Matt and Mary Lynn Pardi with their kids

At a difficult time in my life, Darryl gave me words of hope that I remember to this day. At a time of great temptation, Darryl allowed me to live with him and his family for a year! And at one of the happiest moments in my life, marrying my wife, Darryl was my best man.

I am so thankful for Darryl's desire to help lead me closer to God. A true mark of spiritual leadership is the ability to lead people to God - not elevating oneself, but elevating God - and that is what Darryl has done for me over the years.

Much of what I do today as a pastor is patterned after what Darryl taught me. After years of watching Darryl cast vision, strategize and build churches, I am able to pass on what he taught me to others in ministry. Darryl has been the most influential mentor in my faith. With years of sacrifice and love, I'm thankful for Darryl going on staff with GCM and being a great friend to me!

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Multiplying the Kingdom of God

From the first staff class in 1989, **TEN MISSIONARIES** remain on staff with GCM today. Throughout their 20 years with GCM, those ten missionaries alone have been involved in **26 CHURCHES** across the United States. With God's help, those ten missionaries have raised nearly **\$7 MILLION**, the combined donations of nearly **2,200 GCM PARTNERS**. These 2,200 people were willing to join GCM in reaching the world for Christ. Their faithful support has blessed our 1989 staff class through the years. A tremendous thanks to all our faithful donors for your generosity throughout the years!

Prayer Requests

- Pray that the Lord would continue to raise up new missionaries to serve local churches in partnership with GCM.
- Pray for church planters like JR Woodward, ministering with GCM in the U.S. Pray that God would bless their labors with much spiritual fruit.
- Pray for GCM's international missionaries serving in Europe, Latin America and other regions. Pray that national believers would be raised up and equipped as disciples of Christ.
- Pray for the GCM missionaries on campuses across the nation. Pray that many students would encounter the life-changing gospel during these formative college years.

WAYS TO GET INVOLVED!

GCM is committed to mobilizing missionaries to take the good news of Christ's love to the ends of the earth. Would you consider giving to one or more of these life-changing ministries? It is your ongoing partnership that makes the work of GCM possible.



DOUBLE YOUR RECURRING GIFT

Consider giving a double gift to GCM toward the missionary you already support. Help them continue in faithful ministry for the next 20 years!



GO PROJECT

The GO Project will provide grants to cover the costs of missionaries being trained for the work of deputized fund raising, as well as provide matching funds to begin and seed the fund-raising process.



WHERE MOST NEEDED

Help support GCM's calling to multiply missionaries around the world. This fund is currently directed toward recruiting and training new missionaries.