

# WESLEYAN MISSIONARY ALUMNI FELLOWSHIP



# LINK

## LINKING former Wesleyan missionaries to each other and to Global Partners

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### *Rev. John Croft, Jesus Film Director*

John Croft grew up in Suriname, South America and the Cayman Islands as a MK. He received a bachelor's in Religious Education from God's Bible School and College in Cincinnati, Ohio, in 1984, and a master's in Christian Education from Indiana Wesleyan University in 1994.

John is an ordained minister in The Wesleyan Church, serving ten years as pastor of the Wesleyan church in Falmouth, KY. In 1994 John, with his wife, Shanda, and their three children, followed the Lord's leading to pioneer the work of Global Partners and The Wesleyan Church in the Czech Republic. John served as the field director and involved himself in ministries of teaching English as a second language,

building and developing the Lighthouse Ministry Center (Majak), and for ten seasons as the head football coach for the Brno Alligators (a semi-pro football team).

In 2006 John and his family returned to the states where John served as the director of Missionary Funding with Global Partners. His role was trainer and coach to missionaries in process of team building.

John assumed the position of director of the JESUS Film Partnership of Global Partners on January 1, 2013. John's vision is to equip, train, and empower national leaders for the purpose of reaching their own cultures, people groups, and nations with the transforming message of Jesus. John's wife, Shanda, is a registered nurse. They have three children: Travis, Brooke, and Rachel.

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**Rev. Richard T. Brunk**  
**1928 -- 2013**

Richard Brunk went home to be with the Lord on January 16, 2013. He was born in Newtonsville, Ohio, on June 3, 1928, to Thomas Leroy Brunk and Alma Mae Gaskins, the third child of two girls and four boys. Richard grew up in Cincinnati, Ohio, and was married to Charlotte Louise Ammerman on June 17, 1949. He is survived by Charlotte, one daughter, two sons, nine grandsons, and twenty great-grandchildren. Richard graduated from Hamline University in Minneapolis, Minnesota, in 1950 and Hamma Divinity School in 1956. He attended Asbury College and Seminary in Wilmore, Kentucky.

Richard was ordained as an elder in the Methodist Church in 1956 and pastored churches in Ohio: Reedsville, Dunkinsville, Peebles, and Lancaster; and Sauk Centre, Minnesota. In 1961 Richard and Charlotte went to Costa Rica and Honduras, Central America, as missionaries with World Gospel Mission. In 1967 they returned to the US, and Richard became professor of Missions and Philosophy at Vennard College in University Park, Iowa. In 1973 Richard became vice-president of World Gospel Mission in Marion, Indiana, and served there until 1980. He pastored Riverside Independent Church in Jackson, Mississippi, from 1980 until 1986 and Faith Wesleyan Church in Jackson from 1986 until 1988. In 1988 The Wesleyan Church sent Richard and Charlotte to Puerto Rico as missionaries, where Richard served as field director until 1993. Returning home, he pastored various Wesleyan churches from 1993 until retirement in 2002. Also in Richard's career, he taught in various colleges, universities, and seminaries around the world, preparing young people for Christian ministry. His life was dedicated to his Lord and Church. He loved his Lord, his Family and his Church.



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**Ms. Uta Lodeen Chase**  
**1922 -- 2013**



Uta Lodeen Chase, a former missionary and Kingswood University staff member, passed away at the age of 91 on February 16, 2013, in Fredericton, New Brunswick. A memorial service was held February 20 at Journey Wesleyan Church in Fredericton.

Converted in her early twenties, Uta joined the staff of Holiness Bible Institute, now known as Kingswood University. While working there, she heard a visiting missionary say, "The very sense of the need is enough to take you around the world for Christ." God used the words of this visiting missionary to challenge Uta, and she went to her room to pray. "Before my knees had touched the floor, I knew I was going to Africa!" said Chase.

To prepare for ministry, Uta studied and graduated as a registered nurse in 1950. In February 1951 the District Mission Board appointed Uta to accompany the late Nina Smith Haywood to service in South Africa.

For twenty-six years Ms. Chase served as a medical missionary in Africa, working first at Altona Mission in South Africa, then at Bethesda Mission Hospital in Zimbabwe, and lastly, as the school nurse at Choma Secondary School in Zambia. On her furloughs from missionary service, she worked at Kingswood University. Her ministry in Africa came to a conclusion in 1977 due to health concerns, and she returned to Canada where she served on staff at the college until her retirement in 1989.

During retirement, Uta willingly volunteered and spent hours in intercessory prayer. Keenly interested in young people, she prayed for them by name and for many others written in her prayer book. Uta Chase will long be remembered as a humble servant of God and woman of faith.

**--- by Mrs. Marilee Peed, Editor, Kingswood University**

## ***Mrs. Mary Faith Jennings 1921 -- 2012***

Mrs. Mary Faith Jennings passed away unexpectedly on Dec. 12, 2012. She was the widow of Dr. Lowell Jennings, who practiced medicine in Gastonia, North Carolina. Mary Faith was born December 9, 1921, in Gastonia, North Carolina.

The Jennings served in medical missions in India and Sierra Leone, Africa, from 1952 to 1954, and 1958 to 1961. Mary Faith willingly helped her husband, whether on the mission field, across the North Carolina District, at the Wesleyan headquarters in Indianapolis, or on the Southern Wesleyan University campus. She found her own special calling and ministry.

Not only was she a faithful wife and partner in ministry, Mrs. Jennings was the mother of two sons and two daughters. She was also a grandmother and great grand-mother. Her daughter Janene Bryson, serves on the North Carolina West District Board of Administration and her grandson Scott Bryson is the director of Music for Kannapolis First Wesleyan.

Her funeral service was held December 15 at Brevard Wesleyan Church, Brevard, North Carolina, with burial in Gastonia, North Carolina at Oakwood Cemetery.

***-- by Nancy Mills, North Carolina West District***

## ***Thank You, Dr. John Connor***

Dr. Connor has given ten incredible years of service to the Church through the development and care of the *JESUS* Film Partnership, an effective and extremely fruitful ministry. During those years, tens of thousands have accepted Christ as their Lord and Savior and hundreds of churches have been planted. The *JESUS* film has transformed the work of The Wesleyan Church in many of these countries that utilized the film for evangelism and church planting. I am grateful to Dr. Connor for his leadership and the wonderful work he has invested over the years. We are all appreciative of his and his wife Marge's faithful service and grateful to our Lord for His undeniable favor upon this ministry. I am humbled to be carrying the torch for this next part of the journey.

John is not retiring. He will continue to assist me with the *JESUS* film in training and other areas as he can. Dr. John and Marge will continue to serve as missionaries with Global Partners as the area director for the Pacific. They are desiring and desirous of your continued support of their ministry.

***-- by John Croft, JESUS Film Director***

## ***News From the Edge of the Earth***

Last summer, Tom led a unique mission team of Brazilians to an unreached part of Brazil. This part of the country is very resistant to evangelism. The team knew only God could open the doors. And He did! Through home Bible studies, street evangelism, and irresistible joy, 15 people came to know Jesus as their Savior. God is using the Brazilian Wesleyan Church to carry the Good News to new places.

After 51 years of The Wesleyan Church in Brazil, we see healthy signs of the church moving to become a national church. Recently, the National Advisory Council met in Fortaleza to create a new vision for a united church. One project is a unified church planting effort in a new place, Para, in the city of Belem.



***--- by Tom & Grace Ensz, GP missionaries in Brazil, South America***



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### *Euro-Trek with Dave and Dina*

Wow! We just completed our one month intensive German class. Even though we were the oldest students and the only Americans, we greatly enjoyed getting to know our classmates and even had them all over for a party. It is so helpful to get going on our language studies, too. Dina made a new friend at the supermarket who offered to help her practice when she shops on Saturdays. *Sprechen Sie Deutsch?*

We are the proud holders of primary residence permits in Vienna! We are thrilled, relieved, and so grateful for God's provision. Having our residence permits allows us to travel freely in Europe.

The first week of March we visited GP families in Sopron, Hungary, for the SHARE conference. Attending national schools in local languages is both wonderful and challenging. When returning home, missionary families may encounter educational issues with their children. Our brief time at the conference gave us insight into what families go through living cross-culturally long-term. It was great to have the opportunity to encourage this amazing group of people. We love our role here!



***Dave, Emma, Dina Horne***

***Global Partners***  
***Europe Area Director***

