

BCMWorld

An Inside Look at BCM Global Ministries



For God so loved...



Castledaly
Manor



BCM

Christian
Centre



“PAST! PRESENT! FUTURE! WHAT’S NEXT FOR BCM EUROPE?”

By: Jeanette Windle

What links a Star Trek officer’s uniform, a Celtic fiddle, Scottish bagpipes, and the babble of intermingled Russian, Spanish, German, Romanian, Dutch, Italian, and English (make that Irish, Scottish, British, and American, respectively!) raised in prayer and song? The 2015 BCM European conference, of course.

A biannual event that brings together BCM missionary personnel from across eastern and western Europe as well as Great Britain, this year’s conference was held at BCM Ireland’s picturesque Castledaly Manor Camp and Conference Centre October 20-27, 2015. More than a hundred delegates represented BCM ministry in England, Scotland, Northern Ireland, Republic of Ireland, Germany, Hungary, Romania,



Netherlands, Spain, Italy, Ukraine, Russia and USA. Field leadership unable to attend included Finland, Portugal, Poland, France, and Greece. The conference theme: “Past! Present! Future! What’s next for BCM Europe?”

Main speaker for the week was Dr. David Clemens, USA, whose international Bible teaching ministry

has encompassed 32 countries in the past 35 years. Clemens is also author of the young adult curriculum Steps to Maturity. BCM Europe director Richard Thompson and Sally McKee, BCM Ireland, chaired the conference. Other speakers included Dr. Marty Windle, president of BCM International, and Michael Leister, BCM Germany. Local pastor and chairman of Ireland’s St. Patrick Foundation Keith McCrory also taught workshops on “Understanding Conflict and Reconciliation.

BCM Scotland missionary Steve Marr wrapped up each evening with a Star Trek themed Nite Bite, humorously applying such classic trekkie lines as “resistance is futile” and “the needs of the many outweigh the needs of the few” to biblical principles of life and ministry. And, yes, he owns—and brought along—his own Enterprise officer’s uniform!

The week was not all teaching sessions. Among group outings were a visit to the monastery ruins of Clonmacnoise, one of Ireland’s earliest Christian sites founded in 544AD. An afternoon outing to Dublin included visiting Trinity College for a glimpse of Ireland’s oldest illuminated Gospel, the Book of Kell.

Saturday, October 24th, also included the 50th Anniversary celebration of BCM Ireland. A BCM Europe fair in the afternoon welcomed to Castledaly past and present campers, volunteers, and other friends of BCM from across Ireland. Each country represented created its own display. Along with artefacts and ministry information, visitors enjoyed regional delicacies brought



BCM Europe 2015 Group Shot

MISCOMMUNICATION LEADS TO LIFETIME OF SERVICE



Richard-Joan Thompson and three sons

“My involvement in BCM leadership actually began through a misunderstanding,” recently-commissioned BCM Europe regional director Richard Thompson explains. A communications lapse for which he now thanks God.

If BCM Ireland celebrated its 50th

anniversary of ministry in 2015, Richard Thompson can state honestly he remembers all fifty of those years. He was only a small boy when he attended one of the first Bible clubs held in Ireland under the ministry of American missionaries Alice Lloyd and Claire Burford. Richard jokes, “They’ve failed to get rid of me ever since!”

When BCM Ireland began summer camps, Richard was one of the first campers. When he grew too old to be a camper, he stayed on as a teen helper, then as a youth counselor. In university Richard studied architecture, taking a job in that field when he graduated. He married his wife Joan, and they had three sons of their own, now all adult. But Richard continued to be involved with BCM camp ministry every summer.

In 1992, summer camp was just finishing when Richard overheard a cousin, who also helped with BCM ministry, arranging a committee meeting schedule with BCM missionary Alice Lloyd. Assuming the committee was to deal with next summer’s camps, Richard volunteered to his cousin, “I wouldn’t mind getting involved in the background planning.”

When his cousin passed on the offer, Richard received an invitation to attend. Arriving at the meeting, Richard

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by each field team: Italian cheeses and salamis, Romanian chocolates, Spanish fruit candies, Scottish shortbread, and more. The fair ended with an open-air barbecue, its diners serenaded by a bagpiper in full regalia. For dessert, a BCM Ireland 50th commemorative cake was given its first cut by BCM Spain missionary Raquel Diaz in honor of her own fifty years of ministry with BCM.



Raquel Diaz cuts 50th Cake

BCM Ireland’s 50th Anniversary celebration culminated with a concert by Slemish, a Christian folk group from Belfast, northern Ireland, that combines traditional Irish music with Celtic reinterpretations of contemporary worship songs as “You Raise Me Up” and “Blessed Be the Name” (listen here: <https://www.reverbnation.com/slemish/songs>). How was the BCM family blessed to have one of Ireland’s finest folk music groups travel down to join its celebration?

Both Slemish founder Paul McComiskey and lead singer Albert have served as volunteers at Mullartown House [BCM Northern Ireland’s camp & conference centre] and teaching BCM Bible clubs. Paul shares, “My four sons all went to Mullartown House for camp. They loved it so much we had to organize our family holidays not to clash with their Mullartown weeks! My third son Ryan got saved at Mullartown, and my two oldest sons as well as my wife have been

counsellors there.”

Another Slemish musician, Andrew, shared during the concert, “My wife taught Bible clubs in the town of Lisburn and at Mullartown House. It was what gave her a vision for international missions. We spent twenty years as missionaries in France. I give thanks for BCM International and especially BCM Ireland for its impact on our lives, on Ireland, and across the world.”

But the core focus of the week was field reports from the individual country ministries and spending time in prayer for needs and challenges as well as a new vision for BCM Europe’s future. Outgoing BCM Europe director Dale Sigafos expressed, “We are seeing great challenges. War in the Ukraine. The seizure by Russian separatists of Donetsk Christian University [where BCM personnel were on faculty]. Floods of refugees overwhelming our countries so that there is concern as to what is going to happen to our own cultures. At the same time, these challenges offer great opportunities to reach out with the Gospel.”

Part of that new vision has been God’s raising up of new field and regional leadership.



Ivan Kotenko leads worship

One highlight of the week was meeting incoming field leadership, including Enrico and Betty Pasquini, BCM Italy, Waldemar and Katarina Muks, BCM Germany, Erik & Annelien Bolhuis, BCM Netherlands, as well as new camp leadership for Northern Ireland’s Mullertown House, Jason and Gemma Hill, and Republic of Ireland’s Castledaly Manor, Nathan and Jenna Dancey.

The final evening of the 2015 BCM European Conference included an award ceremony recognizing long-term service: Kate Macnab, England—30 years; Barbara VanValkenburg, England--40 years; Debbie Dancey, Republic of Ireland—40 years, and Raquel Diaz, Spain—50 years. The evening ended with the commissioning

of BCM Ireland director Richard Thompson as the new BCM Europe regional director.

So as BCM Europe celebrates past and present ministry, just what is its future? Current director Richard Thompson sums up: “I expect there will be changes and challenges in BCM Europe over the next few years. Many of these changes will be forced upon us through circumstances outside our control, thus bringing challenges which must be faced head on. But I believe God has much more for us to do yet, and I am really looking forward to where BCM Europe can go. While I accept it may not necessarily be easy, I am also looking forward to meeting those challenges with God’s guidance and help.”



Slemish Folk Group

(Continued from page 4)

discovered to his shock and horror that this was no planning session for camp, but the national BCM committee for all of Ireland. Though hesitant of his qualifications, Richard agreed to stay on the committee. He has been serving in BCM Ireland leadership ever since. Today that includes overseeing a team of more than 60 volunteers as well as BCM Ireland's own full time facility, Castledaly Manor Camp & Conference Centre.

In 2003, Richard left his architecture practice to become a full-time BCM missionary. In 2005, Richard took over as chair of the national committee from Mervyn Young, who had served as director for 25 years. In 2007, Richard was appointed BCM Ireland director, then in 2008 took on the added responsibility of serving on the Anchor Trust, which is the governing body for BCM in the UK. He also became involved with BCM leadership in Europe. Then in 2015, Richard was asked to take on the responsibility of BCM Europe from Dale Sigafos, who was retiring after 40 years as BCM Germany director and a decade as BCM Europe director.

"I can genuinely say," Richard shares now, "that I never had any desire on my heart to be a leader. It was just the way God led, and I followed His leading."

BCM field leadership across the UK and Europe is thankful Richard Thompson followed that leading and accepted the challenge. As to Richard's own goals for this new challenge, he shares,

"I am a pastor at heart and care more for the missionary than the mission. Workers are more important than the work, and if the worker isn't cared for, something is wrong. My prayer for each of our BCM missionaries and volunteers is the prayer Paul prayed for the Colossians: that we "may live a life worthy of the Lord and please Him in every way, while bearing fruit in every good work" (Colossian 1:10). In other words, that our lives may be ones of living ministry, rather than just doing ministry."



Pictures top to bottom: Commissioning New Europe Director; Richard Thompson Early Children's Outreach; Richard & brother during first clubs 60s

NEW LEADERSHIP FOR BCM NETHERLAND'S DE HERIKON

By: Jeanette Windle with Erik Bolhuis

When his bride of one year announced she'd become a Christian and wanted to be baptized, Erik Bolhuis feared it might be the end of their marriage. Instead it proved the beginning of a faith journey that has led to Erik's recent appointment as director of BCM Netherlands and its ministry center *Bijbel Club Centrum De Herikon*.

Erik and Annelien Bolhuis grew up in nominally Christian homes, but to both, religion was more cultural tradition than personal faith. Annelien was a piano teacher while Erik worked in the field of finance and insurance when the couple married in 1999. But to one of Annelien's students, a woman in her fifties, faith in Jesus Christ was far more than tradition. During their piano lessons, Annelien began asking questions about the Bible. The two women began studying the Bible together. Then Annelien came home to share with Erik that she'd accepted Jesus Christ as Savior.

"I was shocked," Erik relates. More so when Annelien explained her desire to be baptized. "I came from a state reformed church where babies were baptized, not adults!"

The next period of their marriage was difficult as Erik wrestled with arguments, not just with Annelien, but himself. But Erik loved his young bride and could see how her faith was changing her. To please Annelien, Erik agreed to attend a Christian conference.

"They gave us a booklet that explained the Gospel," Erik shares. "I realized that it answered the exact questions I had. It finished with the sinner's prayer. I prayed that prayer and came forward to be saved that night."

From childhood, Erik's greatest passion had been soccer, and it wasn't long before church leadership



Erik & Annelien Bolhuis & 5 sons

asked him to help with a youth outreach that coached young soccer players. Over the next decade Erik became increasingly involved in church leadership and youth outreach. By now Erik and Annelien had four boys of their own (five now) and found great joy raising their sons in their new-found faith and sharing the Gospel with others.

Then at age forty, Erik lost his job. Erik shares, "I thank Lord for that now. Then it was very difficult. But a good friend reminded me that God is not confused about what is happening. I began thinking about what I could do with the second half of my life. I am an enthusiastic person. I love to encourage people to follow Jesus and do the things Jesus asked us to do."

Could God be calling Erik and Annelien into full-time Christian ministry? One persistent thought that came to Erik was of starting a training center where people could learn to make disciples and encourage each other. At this point, Erik and Annelien knew nothing about BCM, though then-director Mark Brussel had once spoken at their church. But in 2010, a church announcement shared the need of a male volunteer to help with teen camp at De Herikon.



BCM's own involvement in the Netherlands dated to 1949 when an American missionary, Anne Punt, arrived in post-WW2 Amsterdam to work in partnership with Dutch children's ministry leader Annie Verboom. Together the "Annies", as they became known, brought healing Good News to children traumatized by war and destruction (see [A Look Back at BCM Netherlands](#)). Over following decades, their ministry grew to include 16 missionaries and many more volunteers. *Bijbel Club Centrum De Herikon* (Bible Club Center "The Lord is King") in Putten, a small town sixty kilometers from Amsterdam, has been hosting camps, retreats, and Christian training events since the 1980s.

"You should do it," Annelien urged Erik. "This is just the kind of ministry you've been wanting to do."

Erik wrote De Herikon, volunteering to participate.

That week of camp was a pivotal life moment. And not just for Erik. BCM Netherlands missionary Corine Daane remembers vividly director Mark Brussel sharing that week, "Corine, God has answered our prayer! There is a new guy [Erik], and it is good."

"God spoke to me all that week," Erik shares now. "I had wanted to establish a center that helped make disciples and encouraged people to follow Jesus, and De Herikon was doing just that."

By the end of the week, Erik knew God was indeed calling him into full-time ministry. Annelien was in agreement. "This was not just my dream," Erik amplifies, "but the Lord was calling her as well."

Over the following years, Erik and Annelien both became more and more involved in volunteer work with BCM Netherlands. At the same time, Erik accepted a position as vice-director with a sports outreach ministry. Though working full-time with the sports ministry, Erik spent weekends and camp weeks at De Herikon, serving as counselor for teens, running the sports program, and in other needs. Now juggling a household, five sons, and teaching piano, Annelien,



found time to volunteer with children's ministry and camps. In 2014, Erik and Annelien attended BCM candidate orientation at De Herikon and were appointed BCM missionaries.

"Even though I was employed with another ministry organization," Erik amplifies, "they supported completely my volunteering with De Herikon. What is most important is that you do what God wants for you, they told me. And in fact, BCM's vision of reaching children and developing the church was just the training I needed to become more effective in the other ministry."

In the summer of 2014, Erik and Annelien were both volunteering at family camp when Mark Brussel asked the couple to join him and his wife Gina for a private discussion. Erik jokes now, "I

wondered if I'd done something wrong!"

Instead, Mark and Gina Brussel shared that God had been calling them very clearly to relocate to the United States, Gina's own country of citizenship, where their oldest son was attending Bible college. Erik and Annelien's initial reaction was sadness and dismay. Not only had Mark and Gina given leadership to De Herikon for more than a decade, but they'd been mentors to Erik and Annelien, and their sons had been older brothers to the Bolhuis' own five boys. Sorrow became astonishment when Mark asked if Erik and Annelien would pray about Erik stepping into his position as director of BCM Netherlands.

"Not once had I thought of being a leader here," Erik shares. "This had been Mark and Gina's ministry. How could we take their place? Everything was different from that moment. I'd walk around and think, 'oh boy, this could be my responsibility!'"

The next week, Erik and Annelien's kept them separated, Erik at a soccer camp with their two youngest sons while Annelien and their three older sons were participating in an international walkathon

(Four Days Marches Nijmegen). But both took time to pray. While they were seeking God's will, a devotional message at camp used the biblical passage of Joshua 24:13-15: "I gave you a land on which you did not toil and cities you did not build; and you live in them and eat from vineyards and olive groves that you did not plant. Now fear the Lord and serve him with all faithfulness . . . choose for yourselves this day whom you will serve . . . But as for me and my household, we will serve the Lord."

"God showed Annelien and me both clearly this was His confirmation." Erik shares. "He was calling me and my household to step into this ministry and serve the Lord here at De Herikon."

With the blessing of his prior employers, Erik quit his job, and the entire Bolhuis family moved to Putten to work side by side over the next year with the Brussels. Summer 2015 brought a whirlwind of activity as the Brussels left for the USA, Erik and Annelien with their five sons moved into De Herikon, all as a full camp season kicked off. The summer season went smoothly with almost 400 campers in attendance.

"I am so thankful for our BCM Netherlands team," expresses Erik today, "They have given us love, helped us with everything, encourage us in everything."

While change is never easy, the BCM Netherlands team is looking forward to what God has in store. Corine Daane sums up, "We are very sad to see the Brussel family go. But we also feel a special unity as a team in realizing this has been of God and God alone. He called Mark and Gina to the States, and he called Erik and Annelien to De Herikon. We are excited to see what new things God will bring about for the future."



1. Camp sword drill
2. Kids lawn rally
3. Netherlands BCM camp 'De Herikon'
4. Craft time 'De Herikon'
5. Recreation kids camp



SINGAPORE WELCOMES LITWORLD 2015

By: Jeanette Windle



“In the end, it will be OK. If it’s not OK, it’s not the end.” Opening keynote speaker Andrew Goh’s reminder of God’s sovereignty and ultimate victory was a timely message for the 278 delegates to Littworld 2015, a global Christian publishing conference, held November 1st-6th at the YWCA Fort Canning Lodge in downtown Singapore.

Held every three years in rotating locations, Littworld is hosted by Media Associates International, an international ministry focused on developing indigenous Christian publishers and writers around the world. Attending publishers, editors, writers and designers indeed embodied an alphabet soup of nationalities from Argentina, Benin, Cambodia to Ukraine, Vietnam, Zimbabwe, a total of 50+ nationalities from six continents. Representing BCM International at Littworld were Dr. Jacob Mung, BCM Myanmar national director and CLC (Christian Literature Center) publisher for that nation as well as Jeanette Windle, BCM Communications and editor of BCM World magazine.

Many delegates arrived in Singapore facing far greater challenges than book sales or the best cover graphic. Delegates from northern Nigeria shared the impact of Boko Haram. A Lebanese publishing house has opened their doors to thousands of Syrian refugees. From Egypt, keynote speaker Randy Capp, Bible Society of Egypt, highlighted how the massacre of 21 Coptic Christians last February has inspired, not hate, but calls for forgiveness. The written word in form of a poem, “Two Rows by the Sea”, has already taken that forgiveness to more than a million Egyptian readers. (see <http://communicatingcrossboundariesblog.com/2015/02/24/a-poem-of-hope-two-rows-by-the-sea/>)

Other delegates arrived from situations of political pressure, whether anti-conversion legislation in Myanmar to government restrictions in Kyrgyzstan, Vietnam, China, Pakistan. Still others from the Ukraine to Cameroon and the Congo have endured daily dangers of open warfare. One devotional speaker from an at-risk nation shared their challenges

in the apostle Paul's own words: "We are hard pressed on every side, but not crushed; perplexed, but not in despair; persecuted, but not abandoned; struck down, but not destroyed. We always carry around in our body the death of Jesus, so that the life of Jesus may also be revealed in our body" (2 Corinthians 4:8-10).

And indeed, the atmosphere of Littworld 2015 was not somber, but the rejoicing of a family reunion. The week was filled with learning opportunities from continuing tracks and individual workshops covering practical applications from writing and editing to graphic design and marketing. BCM Communications delegate Jeanette Windle taught a workshop on creating biblically-centered, culturally relevant youth curriculum, based on BCM's own curriculums *Footsteps of Faith* and *In Step with the Master Teacher*.

One Malaysian publisher shared after the workshop, "I'd always thought writing for children was a simple matter. This workshop has shown me just how much goes into an effective curriculum."

The theme of this year's Littworld was "Reaching Your Reader". In Monday's first session, BCM Myanmar director Dr. Jacob Mung spoke on the vision this theme represented from Colossians 4:3: "And pray for us, too, that God may open a door for our message, so that we may proclaim the mystery of Christ."

Jacob amplified, "To give the message of Jesus Christ is the reason we have become writers and publishers. I come from a very small, unpopular country. In my country there are many messages. But literature has the power of God to change people."

Jacob then shared the story of two female Christian health workers he'd met in Myanmar's delta area while doing relief work after a cyclone. The only Christians in their area, the women held worship services singing and praying together. For the preaching, they were reading aloud a book that Jacob's publishing house, CLC, had printed, a collection of devotional readings entitled *Just*



Pictures left to right and top to bottom: African delegates lead worship; Jeanette Windle with Vietnamese delegate TTC; Dr. Jacob Mung speaking; Littworld Opening Session

for *Today* by well-known Bible teacher and author Dr Harold Sala. Jacob himself had become acquainted with the title when he'd received the book through the connection of MAI associate Ramon Rocha, then CEO of OMF Publishing in the Philippines, at a previous Littworld. Now that printed translation was changing lives beyond any available church or pastor.

Jacob summed up, "If it were not for Littworld, I would not have such a big vision for my country. With MAI we come together to present one clear message of Jesus Christ, which is the power of God to change lives."

As rewarding as the keynotes and teaching sessions was fellowship with brothers and sisters in Christ with similar talents and interests from all over the world. Exploring Singapore's famed Gardens by the Bay and Super-Tree Grove. Showcasing each country's national dress for an eight-course Chinese banquet. Exchanging ideas over coffee or life stories with roommates from another continent. Praying for each other's publishing houses and nations. All these built bonds that made saying goodbye difficult at the end of the week, leaving participants thankful for FaceBook, email and other 21st century global communication options.

"A small taste of heaven," summed up MAI president John Maust. And indeed, as hands of countless skin tones from Asia, Africa, eastern and western Europe, North, South, and Central America, Australia, the island states from the Pacific Ocean to the Caribbean, joined together in one big circle for the conference's final benediction, one could not but visualize that great multitude beyond count from every nation, tribe, people and language that will one day stand as one family before God's throne (Revelations 7:9).

Still, that day has not yet come, and every mountain-top experience must come to an end. As MAI-Africa Chair Wambura Kimunyu recapped in the conference's closing devotional, another Littworld has ended, and now the real work begins as each delegate heads back down the mountainside into the valley of hard work and daunting challenges. The goal carried home from Littworld 2015: to reach our readers, wherever they might reside, with a clear message of the hope to be found in every dark corner of this planet through an unambiguous vision of Jesus Christ our Lord.



BCM INTERNATIONAL HOLY LAND TOUR

Come to Israel!

You are invited to be part of a trip to the Holy Land that will provide a new and exciting understanding of the Scripture. Imagine sailing on the Sea of Galilee, visiting the city of Capernaum, walking the streets of Jerusalem, standing on the Mount of Olives or sitting by the Open Tomb. You will travel from North to South, from Dan to Beersheba. You will spend an entire day in the "West Bank", including the first places the Children of Israel walked including ancient Samaria, an area of Israel few tourists ever see. You will be in the places Jesus walked!

The tour host will be Dr. Marty Windle, President of BCM International. Dr. Bob Evans will be our tour leader. Our Bible teacher will be Dr. Homer Heater, a Bible scholar who has visited, studied, and taught in Israel many times. His practical insights and applications will make our touring come alive.

Tour Details

Depart from Newark, NJ: March 28, 2016

Return to Newark, NJ: April 9, 2016

Cost: \$3,998

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Medical Mission Heals Souls and B

By: Lisa Biegert

Five hours into an eight hour trip to the desert bush area of Sertão in northwestern Brazil, the van holding a team of BCM Brazil missionaries and American medical personnel broke down. After coaxing the van to a lone gas station in a nearby village, BCM Brazil director Maria Gusmão went looking for help. With less than five hundred population, the village had only one mechanic. After checking the van, the mechanic told the group the van's clutch was broken, but it couldn't be replaced until the next day. The ministry team stayed the night in a tiny motel, then had to wait most of the following day until a new clutch arrived from another village.

“During this time, I kept asking myself why this had happened, and what we should do in this situation,” Maria says. “Then Dr. Bill [the American doctor on the trip] gave us the idea of going to visit some houses and sharing the Gospel. The first we went to was the house of a gentleman who had helped me find the mechanic the night before. After we shared, the whole family accepted Jesus as Savior. Afterward, we went to the mechanic's parents' house. Dr. Bill always brings along medicine in case people need it. The lady from the first house brought a friend to this next house to see the doctor. Her friend ended up accepting Jesus also. Could this be why the van broke down in this place and this was what God had in mind all

along?”

For the past ten years, sometimes twice per year, the BCM Brazil team takes a break from leading camps and teaching Bible clubs in their home base of Recife, a city of about 1.5 million in northeastern Brazil, to head out into one of that country's poorest sectors for a medical missions trip. Specifically the Sertão in Paraíba State north of Recife. Sertão translated literally into English means “backwoods” or “bush”. The terrain is similar to Canadian back country or the Australian bush—barren and desert-like, covered in *caatingas*, or scrubby, upland forests. The residents are very poor and villages quite small.



Bodies in Brazil's Desolate Outback

Eight BCM missionaries are always joined by a few Christian American doctors and nurses from Pennsylvania, USA. The mission team partners ahead of time with local churches in each region of Paraiba State to which they travel. At each church, the team invites locals with health needs to be seen by the visiting American medical team. Before beginning each day, the BCM Brazil missionaries gather together those who've come to the clinic to share with them the Gospel of Jesus Christ. The medical personnel share more with each individual during their examination and treatment while simultaneously the BCM Brazil missionaries talk with those waiting their turn. During this last trip in May, 2015, the first night the team

finally reached their destination, the doctors treated forty-nine people and thirty-one received Jesus Christ as Savior.

Due to their remote location, and financial limitations, the Sertão churches receive little outside help beyond the occasional visits from the BCM Brazil mission teams. In appreciation for all the doctors and missionaries do, the churches provide what they are able by way of lodging and food. The BCM team is grateful for even a simple mattress on the floor, as they know the church is giving them the best they have to offer. As time permits, the mission team also offers courses for local church leaders such as ministry to children and how to evangelize. The BCM

Brazil missionaries do not just want to reach these communities with the Gospel, but to better prepare the churches in that area to do the same.

Maria tells how during one trip, the team had a very poor attendance at an afternoon clinic. They were holding the clinic in a school, but only one class was being held at the same time. Maria says, "I went to pray and asked the Lord what He wanted us to do. The Lord said to go to that class and preach the Gospel to those teens." It was an English class, so Maria utilized the American medical personnel. One doctor, Dr. Beck Soderberg, shared his testimony in English. When Maria then challenged the teens to give their lives to Christ, many did!



During another recent mission trip, the medical team was able to enter a Gypsy village for the first time. Gypsies have lived in Brazil for a couple hundred years, but the immigrant population grew substantially after World War One. Now there are thousands scattered throughout Brazil, though the exact number is not known. Most have given up their traditionally nomadic lifestyle, but still live simple lives. The majority do not finish their high school education, so they experience a high rate of illiteracy, exacerbated by the fact that Gypsy dialects have no written form. Even in Brazil, the Gypsy population holds to their historic cultural practices such as marriage at age 13, palm reading and other forms of fortune telling. Most Brazilian Gypsies remain unreached with the Gospel of Christ.

Maria remembers, “We felt the darkness around the place where the Gypsies lived. One Gypsy lady brought her kids to see the doctor and ended up giving her life to Jesus. She has seven kids and lives in extreme poverty. Others received the Lord as well. We have reports that from those Gypsies who accepted Christ, about twenty are now attending Bible study.”

Reaching the Gypsy people with the love of the Lord is no easy task. The BCM Brazil missionaries were excited to have this new open door. They are praying that they may continue to reach this Gypsy community during upcoming trips.

Brazilians across the Sertão indeed seem to be merely waiting for someone to come and share the hope of Christ with them. Maria Gusmao sums up, “On this last trip, we had 167 people who came to see the



doctor. Of that number, 106 adults gave their lives to Jesus. Fifty-five children also heard the gospel, and thirty-four made a decision for Jesus. Some of the people who came and heard the Gospel had already been touched by the Holy Spirit. Things went so easy that sometimes I had to ask more than once if they really understood and really wanted to give their lives to Jesus. We are so used to people saying ‘no’ to God that it’s hard to believe some people are just waiting for someone to preach the Gospel to them!”

Marie tells of one woman who came to the clinic right at the end of the day. It was late enough the team had already begun to turn people away. But they agreed to go ahead and see this woman. Immediately after hearing the Gospel presentation, she gave her life to Christ.

“It reminded me of Romans 10:14, which asks the question: ‘And how shall they believe in Him of whom they have not heard?’” recalls Maria. “God just wants us to preach, and He will work in people’s lives. This became so real to us on this trip.”



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1. Unloading BCM van 2. Treating a patient 3. Sorting out medications 4. Checking heartbeats 5. The Sertao-Outback 6. Typical Sertao home 7. Children's Outreach during Clinic



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Pray for Maria Gusmao and her team as they plan for future missions trips into Brazil's outback bush country. Pray that God will continue to prepare the hearts of the people living across the Sertão so they may come to know Him soon.

NATIONAL HOLIDAY + FAMILY FUN

MINISTRY OPPORTUNITY

By: Shantal Artieda

For Peruvians, October 8th is a national holiday in remembrance of the famous naval battle of Angamos fought in 1879 against the Chileans. Families take a break from life's daily hassles to enjoy parades, naval reenactments and other interesting activities. For the past fifteen years, BCM Peru has celebrated the holiday by inviting area churches and families to a recreational fun-filled *Feria Familiar*, or Family Fair, at BCM's Lima Campus. Every year turnout has surpassed expectations, and October 8, 2015, was no exception with nearly six hundred adults and children in attendance.

Visitors began arriving by 9 AM and headed immediately to test their skills and abilities at various carnival games set up around the grounds. Fourteen different stands included such games as the duck pond, balloon and darts, cross bow shoot, penalty kick, and the very popular "splash the clown". Families enjoyed playing together to earn points, which they could then exchange them for prizes.

Attendees were also able to enjoy some delicious meals and treats from our famous Peruvian cuisine. Among the most popular were dishes from Peru's jungle region—*juanes*, a rice and chicken cooked inside a *bijao* (jungle palm) leaf, and *tacacho con alita*, plantains and charcoal-grilled pork formed into a ball with a delicious chicken wing (*alita*). From our coastal region was served a traditional Peruvian favorite, *ceviche*, raw fish marinated in fresh-squeezed citrus juices and spices. Another hit this year was the yard sale or flea market,



which provided clothes, shoes and home goods for people to purchase at very reasonable prices.

However, the purpose of this annual *Feria Familiar* is not just to provide a recreational fun day for the entire family. Nor is it meant to be a fundraiser. The main objective for inviting area churches that work alongside BCM Peru throughout the year is to help the local Christian community recognize children as a mission field, a people group that needs to be reached. Three core beliefs of BCM Peru are:

- children can and should know Jesus as their Savior.
- children can and should live sanctified lives that glorify their heavenly Father.
- children can and should serve God with their gifts and abilities.

The purpose ultimately is to have



people realize the importance of children in the Kingdom of God. As famous author C.S. Lewis puts it: “Children are not a distraction from more important work; they are the most important work.”

In order to share this important message, BCM Peru missionaries and Bible seminary students from the Lima Campus prepare a special theatrical presentation for each Family Fair. This year’s colorfully entertaining and humorous play focused on the animals in Noah’s ark and the stress they had to go through in getting into the ark to survive the flood. Some of the bigger animals were eager to get into the ark first to ensure their own salvation, dismissing



Pictures top to bottom: Final Bow from Noah and Animals; Enjoying Carnival Games-Family Fair; Cooking up *Tacacho & Alitas*

smaller animals as less important. But all the animals soon learned that even the smallest of them, in this case the pigeon, were just as valuable and could play a significant role in the ark. In this way, children and parents attending the fair were able to learn the importance that little ones have as part of the body of Christ. They also learned that salvation comes from trusting God just as Noah and his family had to trust God to save them from the flood.

The Family Fair was also a great opportunity to showcase how BCM Peru can come alongside local churches to help them in their efforts to reach their

own communities. At a special ministry booth, pastors and families attending the fair were able to get information about eight different ministries BCM Peru has to offer. BCM missionaries manned the booth to provide information about our children's ministries, training ministries and upcoming events. Visitors were able to learn how they could receive help from BCM or how they in turn could volunteer as a way to serve God.

Live music and special mini-shows throughout the day maintained a festive atmosphere. The mini-shows demonstrated each of BCM's diverse ministries. Children and their families



were invited to participate while missionaries and volunteers showcased a little taste of what actually goes on every time they go out to do ministry.

Preparations for this exciting day began two full months in advance in order to prepare the Lima Campus for so many people, not to mention all the food, fair games, play rehearsals and other special presentations. Even some of our BCM Peru missionary kids participated. What a great blessing to have them using their talents to serve the Lord, demonstrating exactly the Bible truth the theatrical presentation was meant to teach.

In the end all the hard work paid off as objectives were fulfilled. Many children were able to learn more about God. Christian families spent a fun holiday together. Local churches from around Lima left better informed as to the aid BCM Peru could provide to their own ministries.

BCM Peru Director Jonatan Odicio sums up, "Our objective for BCM Peru is to be a family that serves the local churches and helps them be the best God wants them to be."



Ministry Booth



THE HARVEST IS WHITE! READ ABOUT THE PEOPLE OF BRAZIL WHO ARE EAGER TO HEAR THE GOSPEL AND THE MEDICAL TEAM THAT TAKES IT TO THEM.

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BCM International is a global Bible-Centered Ministry dedicated to making disciples of all age groups for the Lord Jesus Christ through evangelism, teaching, and training so that churches are established and The Church strengthened.

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