



*Doug Thompson  
Chairman*

## **World Outreach Committee Report**

32<sup>nd</sup> General Assembly



*George R. Carey  
Director*

Members of the World Outreach Committee are TE Doug Thompson, chairman; RE Carroll Coakley, RE Elsie Demarest, TE Don Elliott, Cathy Hartman, RE Ken Jones, Paulette Lambertson , RE Bob Sluka, and TE Gabe Swing. By virtue of their office, Stated Clerk Jeff Jeremiah, GA Moderator Doug Klein, and GA Moderator-Elect Bill Dudley are also members of the committee.

The Committee met in four stated meetings since the last General Assembly: June 23, 2011, September 8-10, 2011, January 5-7, 2012, and March 14-15, 2012.

### **2011 World Outreach Giving**

The year of 2011 saw a record amount of funds given to the EPC World Outreach Ministry with the following numbers representing total giving to World Outreach since 2007:

2011	\$2,454,771
2010	\$2,430,488
2009	\$2,365,880
2008	\$2,339,639
2007	\$2,364,120

EPC churches and individuals are commended for their generosity towards our missionary outreaches and projects in 26 nations of the world that at the end of 2011 included 47 EPC family units serving as field missionaries with a total of 85 adults and 80 children of college age and younger. At the end of 2011 there were 169 churches out of 312 that gave to missionary support.

### **I. THE WORK OF THE COMMITTEE:**

#### **A. Recruitment of missionaries and supporting churches**

The World Outreach Committee (WOC) realized several years ago the need to focus more intentionally upon the missionary and church recruitment process. The committee set a goal to attract more EPC churches to support the EPC missionary fields and more EPC missionaries to serve in church planting among unengaged/unreached people groups.

Thus the committee established four missionary supported positions called Associates for Mission Advancement (AMA) all EPC teaching elders with mission field experience. The Senior Associate is located in England and the other three are stateside charged with promoting World Outreach in designated areas of the USA-east, central, and west. The AMAs represent World Outreach at presbytery and church mission committee meetings, mission conferences, at General Assembly meetings, and with individuals who have expressed interest in missions. Because of the work of these Associates, World Outreach has seen significantly increasing interest in our ministry during the past year.

In addition to the AMA ministry, the WOC became convinced of the need to recruit new missionaries from the 18-30 age groups from denominational churches and colleges and set out to locate a person for that task. That person was located and will likely be announced and commissioned at this meeting of the General Assembly. He has years of both youth ministry and mission field experience and will serve to connect with youth leaders throughout the EPC to attract (but not limited to) the 18-30 year olds to affiliate with World Outreach.

The first “Encounter WO Weekend” was held this year that attracted 19 people who had interest in World Outreach ministry. These 19 gathered at the World Outreach headquarters in Michigan March 16-18. They met with WOC members, the office staff, the field staff consisting of the four AMA’s, the Member Care Coordinators, and the International Theological Education Network (ITEN) coordinator. In addition they heard the testimonies and stories of two WO missionaries who were on stateside home leave and two WO missionaries headed for the field for the first time. They also had live Skype video communication with two WO missionaries on their fields of service in Hungary and Malaysia. Of the 19 interested participants 16 of them said they want to pursue ministry with World Outreach. Since the Encounter WO Weekend, one of our presbyteries has proposed that regional WO Encounters be held across the denomination. This idea is under discussion.

Recruitment will remain a high priority for the committee in the year ahead.

#### **B. World Outreach Report on Contextualization of the Gospel in Muslim Cultures**

The WOC has developed a draft statement on Muslim contextualization for viewing and the full consideration of the denomination during the coming year. A final report will be presented to next year’s General Assembly. This report is presented with the urging of the committee for those interested, to read and respond with advice, criticism, and support. The committee relied heavily on five people to develop this report made up of a theologian, two leaders of WO missionaries to Muslims, one director of a local church missions ministry, and the World Outreach Director. This group received responses about Muslim contextualization issues with insight and opinion from five WO missionaries to Muslims currently on the field. Responses should be sent to wo@epc.org. See the document attached as WO-A.

### **C. World Outreach Staff**

The home office employs two full time employees and two part time employees. Rev. George Carey serves as Director. Patti Moore serves as the Administrative Assistant. Amy Rose serves as the part-time Finance Assistant. Former World Outreach Director, Dick Oestreicher, works part-time as an advisor to the director. The committee commends the service and dedication of each staff member.

### **D. Ministry Developments**

#### **Engage 2025-World Outreach Church Planting Teams in the Muslim World: “Going where the church isn’t.”**

- *Sierra Leone, Africa* - this field has been approved by the WOC as an Engage 2025 Initiative. A trip was taken to two Muslim tribal villages this year by EPC Moderator Doug Klein; WOC Chairman Doug Thompson; and WO Director George Carey. The trip was organized and led by EPC Pastor Dean Weaver of Memorial Park EPC in Pittsburgh and his Associate Pastor Betsy Rumer. Following the trip a unanimous recommendation was made to the WOC to adopt this field and the WOC enthusiastically approved it. Recently the Presbytery of The Alleghenies approved the Sierra Leone field to adopt as an Engage 2025 initiative in cooperation with the World Outreach Committee.
- *Presbyteries that have adopted the Engage 2025 Initiative include:*
  1. Presbytery of the West-Sumatra
  2. Presbytery of the Midwest-Siberia
  3. Presbytery of the Alleghenies-Sierra Leone, Africa
  4. Presbytery of the Central South-field under discussion
- *In addition to the above presbyteries there is significant work taking place in others. The following presbyteries have a working group of ‘champions’ in the process of recruiting churches to form a partnership:*
  1. Presbytery of the Alleghenies
  2. Presbytery of Central South
  3. Presbytery of the Southeast
  4. Presbytery of the Pacific
- *The following presbyteries have ‘champions’ stirring up interest in order to recruit a working group that will form a partnership of churches:*
  1. Presbytery of the East
  2. Presbytery of Florida
  3. Presbytery of the Mid Atlantic

The Engage 2025 Initiative is spearheaded by Rev. Dr. Greg Livingstone.

### **E. International Theological Education(ITEN)**

Bruce Anderson has developed a goals and strategy paper that is guiding this ministry. During the past year solid and sustainable response has developed in EPC churches as international theological ministries already in progress are being

networked and ground work laid to accomplish more. Bruce is seeking help for this ministry to develop as it should. If interested contact him at [bruce.anderson@epc.org](mailto:bruce.anderson@epc.org).

#### F. Missionary Member Care

Jim and Barbie Murphy began full time last September and have “hit the ground running” to keep up with the ministry of member care. This is the first time that World Outreach has had our own full-time member care coordinators. Presbytery and local church training on caring for missionaries is being accomplished and our missionaries are receiving quality “in house” counsel and support. A goal is to promote field visits for every WO missionary family by someone in the EPC at least once annually. Another goal is to provide quality counsel for all WO missionaries on home service from the field and to assist the WO Personnel Committee with matters of personal concerns by the missionaries.

#### G. Missionary Prayer Network (MPN)

Phil Thrash has developed a prayer network focused exclusively on EPC mission work around the world. At this time, there are 120 intercessors signed up to pray for World Outreach ministry and missionaries a minimum of one hour per week. To join this intercessory prayer network contact Phil at [phil.thrash@epc.org](mailto:phil.thrash@epc.org).

#### H. The World Outreach Missionary Family

The people on the front lines of implementing the World Outreach vision are the women, men and children who make up the WO missionary family. These ordinary folks, in obedience to God, have accepted an extraordinary call. Currently these are the missionaries, our missionaries, which make up the EPC World Outreach missionary family:

<u>Missionary</u>	<u>Field of Service</u>
<b>Dave and Wendy</b> Ruthie, Amber	East Asia
<b>*Anderson, Bruce and Ellie</b> David, Daniel, Samuel	US/Belarus
<b>Rob and Iris</b> Stephanie, Peter, Marissa	Central Asia
<b>Bain, Jeff and Natasha</b> A.J.	Russia
<b>^Bailey, Benjamin and Monica</b> Mary, Virginia ( <i>^pseudonym name used for security purposes.</i> )	Middle East/Arab Gulf
<b>Brake, Jeff and Amy</b>	Russia
<b>*Branch, Paul and Elizabeth</b> Linda, Joseph	Guatemala
<b>Downs, Kelly</b>	US/Muslim World Engage 2025
<b>Fain, John and Dawn</b>	SE Asia

Marie, David, Luke, Christy <b>Ken and Wendy</b> Wesley, Calvin	East Asia
<b>Fox, Mark &amp; Jennifer</b> Sarah, Caleb, Josiah, Elijah	South Asia
<b>Furr, Chris and Kirsten</b> Maren, Reece, Carlson	France
<b>Gibson, Chris and Debbie</b> Rebekah	Hungary
<b>Alison</b>	Middle East
<b>Randy and Martha</b> Joel, Rachel	SE Asia
<b>*Robert and Joyce</b> Joseph, Lydia	Middle East/Arab Gulf
<b>*Kris and Christy</b> Wesley	South Asia
<b>Joseph and Mandi</b> Joseph	South Asia
<b>Jeff and Lynne</b> Evan, Jayden, Calvin, Jenna, Darren	SE Asia
<b>*Kearby, Don and Pam</b> Austin, Elianna, Michelle	US/Western US Associate for Missions Advancement, Engage 2025
<b>Kelley, Stephen and Belinda</b>	US/Muslim World
<b>Kim, Jeff and Veronique</b> Victor	Southwest France
<b>Matt and Michelle</b> Nicole, Josiah	South Asia
<b>Lance and Lisa</b> Makayla, Natalie, Alia	Middle East/Arab Gulf
<b>Livingstone, Greg and Sally</b>	England/Muslim World, Senior Associate for Missions Advancement, Engage 2025
<b>McCaskill, Austin and Beverly</b>	Albania, Central Associate for Missions Advancement, Engage 2025
<b>John and Carlene</b> Caleb, Mackenzie, Rachel	South Asia/Muslim World
<b>McIntyre, Thomas and Jennifer</b> Ashlee	Taiwan
<b>Sean and Angie</b> Morgan, Samuel, William, Ella	SE Asia
<b>Tim and Karen</b> Abigail, Tim, Peter	US/Muslim World
<b>Tim and Kim</b> Andrew, Abigail, Peter	Central Asia
<b>Murphy, Jim and Barbie</b>	US & WO Field Missionary Member Care

<b>David and Lisa</b> Eva, Joshua and Hannah	East Asia
<b>Tim</b>	Middle East/Arab Gulf
<b>Nykamp, Jon and Kristi</b> Stephanie, Timmy, Matthew	Ethiopia
<b>*Partin, Dave and Rivers</b> Joy, Lydia, Melody, Jackson	Hungary
<b>George and Cynthia</b>	East Asia
<b>Pat</b>	East Asia
<b>Roe, Courtney and Krista</b> Alex	Germany
<b>Ryan and Kelly</b> Ella, Sophia, Juliana	Middle East/Arab Gulf
<b>Snowden, Tami</b> Tabitha	US/Unreached Overseas
<b>Jonathan</b>	East Asia
<b>April</b>	East Asia
<b>*Thrash, Phil and Diane</b> Kelsey	US/Eastern US Associate for Missions Advancement, Missionary Prayer Network Coordinator, Engage 2025
<b>Walker, Dave and Deb</b>	Singapore
<b>Brandon and Liz</b> Sam, Elijah, Asa	Middle East/Arab Gulf
<b>Jonathan and Fozia</b>	South Asia

\*Indicates a missionary serving directly under World Outreach

Included in the above list are the following new missionaries appointed since the 31<sup>st</sup> General Assembly:

- Ken and Wendy – Tabernacle EPC, Youngstown, OH in the Alleghenies Presbytery finalizing support to serve in East Asia as long term missionaries
- Kris and Christy – Ward EPC, Northville, MI in the Midwest Presbytery finalizing support to serve in South Asia as short term missionaries
- Joseph and Mandi – Second and Downtown Church, Memphis, TN in the Central South Presbytery finalizing support to serve in South Asia as long term missionaries
- Jonathan – College Church, Wheaton, IL finalizing support to serve in East Asia as shorter term missionary

Since the 31<sup>st</sup> General Assembly we have had five World Outreach member units resign:

- John and Barbara Barber – Cornerstone EPC, Brighton, MI resigned from WO
- Krista Barnett – Faith EPC, Kingstowne, VA resigned from WO
- Dan and Catherine Burns – Christ EPC, Houston, TX resigned from WO
- Dan and Jan Clark – Grace Chapel, Farmington Hills, MI resigned from WO continuing reduced time with Frontiers

- Bill and Janie Hampton – Christ EPC, Houston, TX resigned from WO

## I. Missionaries Serving Jointly with WO and Other Mission Agencies:

From our earliest days World Outreach has sought to do ministry with other like-minded partners (sometimes called “cooperative mission agencies” or co-ops). At this time, we have missionaries on the field serving under cooperative agreements with the following agencies:

English Language Institute/China (ELIC)	OMF International
Frontiers	Pioneers International
Greater Europe Mission (GEM)	SEND, International
Ministry Essentials, International (MEI)	SIM, International
Mission to Unreached Peoples (MUP)	WEC, Intl.
OC, International	

*(Other cooperative agreements are also in place under which we do not have missionaries serving at this time.)*

## II. The World Outreach Vision: Full-Cycle Church Planting “Going where the church isn’t.”

From its inception, the focus of World Outreach has been on church planting. Not long after, it was decided to pay particular attention to the Muslim world and more specifically to unreached people groups contained therein. Our church planting philosophy, as outlined in the Assembly-approved *Master Plan*, identifies four broad, interconnecting stages in ‘full cycle’ church planting (illustrated in the diagram below). In the first stage, the Gospel is sown and new believers are gathered into the Kingdom. As these believers grow in maturity and number they are gathered together in the church. As the church grows, leadership is trained and begins training others. As the new church sends out workers to carry on church planting both nationally and internationally, the cycle begins again.



As a result of this focus, the majority of World Outreach missionaries are engaged in tasks related to one or more of these broad stages of church planting. We have workers whose primary role is evangelism, others doing discipleship and providing guidance and direction to emerging churches. Some are engaged in the training of national leaders, while others are dedicating themselves to assisting nationals in sending out missionaries to the unreached peoples of the world. In the multitude of diverse tasks our missionaries are engaged in, this one passion stands out, seeing Christ glorified by the establishing and growing of His church among those who have not yet heard. We call it simply, “going where the church isn’t.”

**Recommendations to the General Assembly**

**Recommendation WO-1**

That the Assembly approve EduNations as an Approved Mission Agency. The details are presented in the attached document (WO-B).

Grounds: EduNations is a proven organization with strong ties to EPC churches. The director of World Outreach, the EPC Moderator, and the chair of the World Outreach Committee have toured schools in Sierra Leone, Africa started by EduNations and found them of high quality and worthy of EPC support, especially as Sierra Leone has been adopted as a mission field.

Satisfactory financial background was reviewed and approved by WOC.

**Recommendation WO-2:**

That the Assembly approve Rules for Assembly 10-B.1 be amended by substituting the proposed wording for the existing wording:

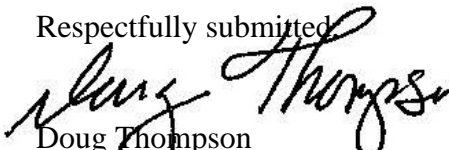
Existing Wording	Proposed Wording
<p><b><u>B. Committee on World Outreach</u></b>  <b>1.</b> To be comprised of nine members on a three-year, three class system, with the Moderator, Moderator-elect, and Stated Clerk to serve as ex-officio members. The permanent Nominating Committee will nominate replacement members from within EPC membership. Members may serve a maximum of two terms and then may not be reelected without at least one year’s break. WOC members are to include three Teaching Elders and at least four Ruling Elders. The two remaining positions may be filled by non-elders with particular expertise or experience in world missions, and who are active members of EPC churches. The WOC is to meet at least twice a year, including the</p>	<p><b><u>B. Committee on World Outreach</u></b>  <b>1.</b> <del>To be</del> The Committee on World Outreach shall be comprised of nine members on a three-year, three class system, with the Moderator, <del>Moderator-elect, and</del> Stated Clerk, <i>and Assistant Stated Clerk</i> <del>to serve</del> <i>to serve</i> serving as ex-officio members with voice and vote. <i>A quorum of the committee shall be five, excluding ex-officio members.</i> <del>The permanent Nominating Committee will nominate replacement members from within EPC membership. Members may serve a maximum of two terms and then may not be reelected without at least one year’s break. WOC members are to</del> <i>The Committee’s membership shall</i> include three Teaching Elders and at least four Ruling Elders. The two</p>

<p>General Assembly.</p>	<p>remaining positions may be filled by non-elders <i>ordained, active members</i> of EPC churches with particular expertise or experience in world missions. <del>and who are active members of EPC churches.</del> <i>Committee</i> members may serve a <del>maximum</del> <i>all or part</i> of two <i>consecutive</i> terms and then may not be reelected <del>without</del> for at least one year's <del>break.</del> <del>The WOC is to</del> <i>The Committee on World Outreach</i> shall meet at least twice a year, including the <i>week of</i> General Assembly.</p>
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Grounds: It is appropriate for both the Moderator and Stated Clerk, in light of their particular responsibilities, to serve as ex-officio members of the World Outreach Committee with both voice and vote. The Assistant Stated Clerk now has direct supervisory responsibilities for World Outreach. Having more than three ex-officio members with the privilege of voice and vote could create an unfair voting block. Since, in practice, the Moderator-elect has never exercised the privilege of ex-officio membership, it is appropriate to assign this status to the Assistant Stated Clerk. As an ex-officio member, the Assistant Stated Clerk could be assigned on subgroups such as the World Outreach Executive Committee.

Additional changes are editorial, not substantive, in order to bring consistency to this section of Rules for Assembly and to state explicitly what has been common practice.

Respectfully submitted

  
 Doug Thompson  
 World Outreach Chairman

  
 George R. Carey  
 World Outreach Director

June 2012

## **A World Outreach Report Regarding Contextualization of the Gospel in Muslim Cultures**

**Introduction and Background** – The world’s Muslim population has historically been highly resistant to the gospel. Many in the Christian community have been strategizing for more than twenty years concerning how the church should modify its approach to missions among Muslim peoples, recognizing that we need to present the gospel to Muslims in new ways – in ways that are more culturally relevant and more easily understood. The technical term for this approach is *contextualization*, by which is meant simply conveying the gospel message in ways that are more appropriate culturally and more understandable *in the context* of the culture and language of those being evangelized. A great deal of creativity has been employed by many groups in contextualizing the gospel for Muslims, and some who have done so have reported significantly larger numbers of converts.

For 20 years or more, discussions concerning this important missiological topic had been taking place rather quietly, “behind the scenes,” mainly among the missions fraternity, with various opinions being voiced regarding how much contextualization is appropriate. However, more recently it has become a much more public debate. The question being debated today by the global church is how far biblically faithful Christians should go in adapting traditional methods used in missions to make the gospel more understandable and acceptable to people in various Muslim contexts. This issue has struck a nerve with many evangelical and Reformed Christians around the world. So much so, that several denominations have felt compelled to make public statements within the past year, in which they have taken a stand on how much contextualization they believe is biblically acceptable, having felt that certain practices being used by some creative, cutting-edge missionaries have pushed the envelope too far.

The World Outreach Committee has identified the Muslim world as one of its main areas of missions emphasis. Thus, they understand very well the need to contextualize the presentation of the gospel for Muslims. We sadly acknowledge that the church has far too often neglected to contextualize its message sufficiently and has instead insisted on proclaiming the gospel in ways that are familiar to those proclaiming it but not culturally relevant to Muslim peoples. We regret that this practice has resulted far too often in new believers being extracted from their families and from their former Muslim communities.

Therefore, World Outreach encourages all its missionaries to contextualize the presentation of the gospel in their particular Muslim cultures, as they are led by the Holy Spirit. However, we require that all World Outreach personnel work faithfully and conscientiously within biblical boundaries set by the EPC’s theological standards and by the guidelines established by World Outreach. This current document is written to clarify those boundaries for all in the EPC.

**Two Significant Current Issues** – As we consider the ongoing public debate on these matters, there are two significant issues on which the World Outreach Committee wishes to clarify its stance at this time. The first has to do with Bible translations in some Muslim contexts in which the words “Father” and “Son” have been replaced with other words in

order to remove a cultural barrier to correct understanding in the minds of Muslims, since when Muslims read that Jesus is the “Son of God,” that reinforces the erroneous belief they have been taught, namely, that the Bible teaches that Jesus is God’s biological son. Thus, alternative words for Father and Son are used in some “Muslim-friendly” translations to avoid such miscommunication. So, the first major issue is whether the EPC can endorse such “Muslim-friendly” Bible translations.

The second major issue has to do with whether converts from Islam should be encouraged to remain indefinitely within Islam and whether they should continue to identify indefinitely as Muslims – a practice advocated by some missionaries and some missions organizations. The sincere desire behind this strategy has been to win more Muslims to Christ, the thought being that if converts remain as “Insiders” within the Muslim community, they will be better able to share the gospel with their families and friends. So, the second major issue is whether World Outreach can endorse such a practice as a permanent framework for churches in the Muslim world.

The EPC’s theological standards provide clear boundaries for contextualization and set certain limits to acceptable contextualization for all EPC members. In addition, “The World Outreach Master Plan,” published in 2010, clearly defines our denomination’s “big picture” approach to global missions. This current document appeals to those foundational documents and is written to clarify World Outreach’s position on the two issues identified above.

**The World Outreach Master Plan** – Our denomination’s strategic approach to global missions is described clearly and concisely in The Evangelical Presbyterian Church’s World Outreach Master Plan, which is a document that was approved and published in 2010. We have framed this current document mainly as a reaffirmation of our continuing commitment to that Master Plan, which we believe to be in full accord with Scripture as we understand it and with the EPC’s constitutional theological standards. The Master Plan and our theological standards give us clear guidance concerning how far the EPC should go in adapting its theology to accommodate Muslims. The complete master plan can be viewed on the EPC web site at <http://www.epc.org/mediafiles/wo-master-plan.pdf>.

**Commitment to Our Principal Calling** - The Master Plan states the principal calling of World Outreach as follows: “*Our principal calling is to the work of **full-cycle church planting** among unengaged/unreached people groups, with a particular focus on Muslims.*”

The Master Plan explains that full-cycle church planting includes four distinct stages: (1) GATHER IN new believers to the Kingdom; (2) GATHER TOGETHER new believers as the church; (3) TRAIN UP leaders for the new churches; and (4) SEND OUT missionaries and church planters from the new churches.

Furthermore, the World Outreach Master Plan states that our long-term vision is to “establish and develop indigenous Reformed churches which relate to one another in a connectional manner and which relate to their context in a Biblically faithful and culturally compelling way.”

We once again affirm the World Outreach Master Plan as a document that guides all our global missions initiatives according to the EPC's understanding of Scripture. It is foundational to all we do, and is a plan all World Outreach missionaries are committed to adhere to wherever they may serve. And thus we reaffirm our commitment to full-cycle church planting, as explained in the Master Plan.

**Commitment to the EPC's Constitutional Theological Documents** – As the missions arm of the Evangelical Presbyterian Church, we also affirm our continuing and ongoing commitment to the constitutional theological documents of our denomination, which are the Westminster Confession of Faith and Catechisms, the EPC Book of Order, which includes the document, “Essentials of Our Faith.” Those documents define for us systematically what the EPC, as a Reformed and evangelical church, believes the Bible teaches concerning the “faith once delivered to the saints.” We are committed to adhere to these foundational theological documents in every aspect of our missions initiatives, including everything we do and teach in every culture around the world.

Growing directly out of this theological commitment, we affirm the following regarding the Bible, the Triune God, the Person of Jesus Christ, and the Church. These articles of faith relate directly to the theological issues pertinent to the debate about Insider Movements. Thus, we affirm the following:

1. The Bible as the Infallible Word of God – We affirm our belief that the Bible (the 66 books of the Old and New Testaments as inspired by the Holy Spirit in the original languages) is the complete and unified witness to God's redemptive acts culminating in the incarnation of the Living Word, the Lord Jesus Christ. The Bible is the supreme and final authority on all matters on which it speaks.
2. The Triune Nature of God – We affirm our belief in one God, the sovereign Creator and Sustainer of all things, infinitely perfect and eternally existing in three Persons: Father, Son and Holy Spirit. We believe substituting any other words for “Father” and “Son” in any translation of the Bible fundamentally modifies essential aspects of God's self-revelation about Himself and about the Father's relationship to the Son within the Trinity.
3. Christ as the Eternal Son of God – We affirm our belief in the eternal nature of the second Person of the Godhead, Jesus Christ, who in the fullness of time came down from Heaven and was incarnated as fully man, God in the flesh, who came to live for us, to die on a cross for us, to be raised from the dead for us, and who now reigns at the right hand of the Father (His Father and our Father), and who will return to earth one day – personally, visibly and bodily – to judge the living and the dead and to consummate history.
4. The Global Church as Sharing the Essentials of Our Faith – We affirm our belief that the global church is one, and that the global church shares certain fundamental theological beliefs, which the EPC has expressed in the “Essentials” document, which is one of the theological standards of our denomination. We also affirm (as mentioned

in the Master Plan) that our goal is to “establish and develop indigenous Reformed churches” among currently unengaged peoples. That remains, and shall always remain as our ultimate, long-range goal.

We are reminded of the EPC’s motto: In essentials, unity; in non-essentials, liberty; and in all things, charity. We reaffirm our commitment to all that is included in “the Essentials,” including specifically the four items mentioned above. We affirm that this is the essential body of revealed truth we have been called to proclaim to all nations as we work to fulfill the Great Commission.

**An additional note about “The Essentials of Our Faith”** – We note that the EPC Book of Order describes the Essentials as “*an irenic statement of historic evangelicalism,....which expresses historic Christian beliefs common to all true believers and churches throughout the world.*” Thus, it is our expectation that all who claim to be “true believers” in Christ, and all churches, in whatever culture they exist (and that would include all true believers and all churches in the Muslim world), should be expected to agree with the common beliefs of all true Christians as summarized in the Essentials of Our Faith document. That includes belief in the Trinity as Father, Son and Holy Spirit; and also the other beliefs stated in the Essentials.

**Commitment to Establish New Churches** – In light of our commitment to our principal calling and to the theological standards contained in our EPC constitution (see above), we affirm that our goal in missions to unengaged peoples is not only to gather in new believers to the Kingdom from all other world religions and belief systems, but also to *gather together new believers as churches.*

Furthermore, we affirm our commitment to the definition of what a church is, as defined in the constitutional documents of the EPC. While we recognize other evangelical churches that believe the Essentials as our brothers and sisters in Christ, nevertheless, as stated in our Master Plan, the EPC’s long-range goal in missions is to gather new believers from among unengaged peoples into *Reformed* churches. This implies that those new churches will eventually subscribe not only to the Essentials, but also to other historical theological standards of the Reformed faith.

**World Outreach’s Position Regarding “Muslim-Friendly” Bible Translations** – Although we do not question the good intentions of those who advocate using “Muslim-Friendly” translations to make the gospel more easily understood by Muslims, we believe God’s self-revelation of His divine nature as Father, Son and Holy Spirit conveys divinely inspired truth that must be preserved in all Bible translations in all languages. Using words other than the literal words for “Father” and “Son” would fundamentally alter the readers’ understanding of the Trinity, as God has revealed Himself to humankind in the original biblical languages. Familial language in the Bible is admittedly offensive to Muslims because the Qur’an and their religious instruction teach them not to apply such words as “Son” and “Father” to God. However, we must, as biblically faithful followers of Christ, build relationships from which we can instruct Muslims in the truth of such familial terms from the biblical text as translated from the original languages. Footnotes and explanatory marginal

notes may be used to aid readers of the Bible to understand the meaning of the text, but the literal rendering of “Father” and “Son” must be preserved in all translations.

**World Outreach’s Regarding Converts from Islam** - Regarding those within the Muslim world who have come to saving faith in Christ, but who remain for a season as “Insiders” within Islam, we first of all thank God that they have come to saving faith in Christ. Furthermore, we thank God that they have been gathered into the Kingdom of God by the work of the Holy Spirit, that they have responded in faith to the gospel of grace; and we rejoice that they are, therefore, our brothers and sisters in Christ.

However, we believe their conversion to Jesus Christ is just the first stage of the process we are about in global missions. As long as they remain as *Insiders* within Islam, they can, at best, be considered as a church “in embryo.” Having been gathered into the Kingdom, World Outreach is committed to continuing to work patiently with Muslim background converts and to encourage them to eventually be “gathered together as legitimate churches.” Our full-cycle church planting task is not complete until this is accomplished, and furthermore, until national leaders are trained to lead the church (stage 3), and the church develops a missions vision of its own (stage 4). Reiterating what was said above, while we recognize other evangelical churches – all churches that believe the Essentials – as our brothers and sisters in Christ, our World Outreach Master Plan has as its ultimate goal to “establish and develop indigenous Reformed churches which relate to one another in a connectional manner and which relate to their context in a Biblically faithful and culturally compelling way.”

We acknowledge that in some contexts within the Muslim world, the complete process may develop very slowly and may require a rather long time. In such contexts, new converts are undoubtedly wise to not break away totally from their former Muslim identity too abruptly. We respect their wisdom and prudence in choosing to remain “under the radar” so to speak for a season and to continue to meet as “churches in embryo” for the time being. However, we must continue to work patiently with them, loving them as our brothers and sisters in Christ, but always remembering that our long-term goal is that God will eventually gather them into legitimate churches, with ordained church leaders and a missions vision of their own. That is World Outreach’s goal in full-cycle church planting.

**Summary of World Outreach on Contextualization in Muslim Contexts** – First, World Outreach affirms the need to contextualize the presentation of the gospel in appropriate ways in every culture. We encourage all our missionaries to do so in ways that will make the gospel more understandable and make worship more culturally relevant in the particular cultures in which they work. (On a related matter, we believe no missionary should become a Muslim in order to win other Muslims to Christ. We are aware of a small number of non-EPC missionaries who have gone to such extremes, but the EPC does not endorse such behavior by any of its missionaries.)

Second, because we are committed to the integrity of God’s Inspired Word and to our denomination’s constitutional theological standards, the EPC cannot endorse the use of any Bible translations that do not render “Father” and “Son” literally. We believe God’s self-revelation of His nature as Father, Son and Holy Spirit conveys essential divinely inspired

truth that must be preserved literally in all Bible translations in all languages. Our policy is “always retain the literal meaning of Father and Son in the biblical text, but add footnotes and marginal notes to explain the meaning, as necessary.”

Third, because we are committed in the long term to seeing Reformed churches develop and grow among unengaged peoples as stated in the World Outreach Master Plan, we cannot endorse the practice of encouraging new believers to remain inside their Muslim faith communities indefinitely. Although we realize it may take a very long time, we believe we should continue to instruct such new believers, with patience, to move eventually from their “churches in embryo” status to form legitimate Reformed churches.

**EduNations Report to the EPC's World Outreach Committee for the Consideration of  
"Approved Agency" Status:**

Theological Statement of Faith

EduNations adheres to the Statement of Faith of the World Evangelical Alliance (WEA) which is stated as:

***We believe***

***...in the Holy Scriptures as originally given by God, divinely inspired, infallible, entirely trustworthy; and the supreme authority in all matters of faith and conduct...***

***-One God , eternally existent in three persons, Father, Son, and Holy Spirit...***

***-Our Lord Jesus Christ , God manifest in the flesh, His virgin birth, His sinless human life, His divine miracles, His vicarious and atoning death, His bodily resurrection, His ascension, His mediatorial work, and His Personal return in power and glory...***

***-The Salvation of lost and sinful man through the shed blood of the Lord Jesus Christ by faith apart from works, and regeneration by the Holy Spirit...***

***-The Holy Spirit , by whose indwelling the believer is enabled to live a holy life, to witness and work for the Lord Jesus Christ...***

***-The Unity of the Spirit of all true believers, the Church, the Body of Christ...***

***-The Resurrection of both the saved and the lost; they that are saved unto the resurrection of life, they that are lost unto the resurrection of damnation.***

History

***Founded in 2004, EduNations is an IRS approved 501c3 nonprofit organization devoted to building schools and a future for the forgotten children across the continent of Africa, beginning in Sierra Leone. The founders of EduNations each have a personal connection to the children of Sierra Leone and a shared passion for its people. Starve children of an education, and they'll learn the hardest lessons. We want to stop the devastating cycle of poverty by helping to educate the country's children. Beginning with one primary school in the remote, rural village of Mapinda, EduNations now works with our "in country" Sierra Leone partners Compassion and Action and King of Glory Ministries to operate 7 (soon to be 8) primary and secondary schools in both Freetown and the rural communities surrounding the interior city of Makeni. Through additional partnerships with World Hope Sierra Leone and Transformation Education, EduNations has helped to build schools for the Wesleyan Church of Sierra Leone and train teachers in dozens of Christian and government schools.***

Mission:

***Motivated by compassion for “the least of these,” EduNations seeks to connect resources from affluent societies with the needs of the poorest in the world to provide education, opportunity and hope.***

Strategies:**Helping the Poorest of the Poor:**

***The tragedies of Sierra Leone, a once strong and noble country, are too numerous to mention here. For many years, this nation has been ranked among the poorest in the world and the worst place on the planet to live. Sierra Leone was utterly ravaged by civil war. The social chaos that followed has left its people devastated and the nation in shambles, faced with unbelievable poverty, hunger, AIDS, a growing sex trade, child trafficking and an ever-present fear of a rejuvenated civil war. Our hope is to help Sierra Leone restore its strength and nobility, by providing its children with the educational tools they need to have any chance at a peaceful, productive, and prosperous life.***

***In time, as models of effective outreach and education are developed in Sierra Leone, it is the hope of EduNations to expand the ministry to reach across Sub-Saharan Africa, with a focus on high concentration Muslim communities. The high degree of religious tolerance among Sub-Saharan African Muslims provides a significant outreach possibility, particularly with an initial focus on the “lost and the least of these” –the children. This is done most effectively through high quality and free Christian Education/Schools.***

**Building Schools:**

***EduNations is devoted to building schools to make education free and accessible to children who otherwise would not receive one. In Sierra Leone, many families go without food, or children are forced into prostitution or become petty thieves, to pay school fees. For just \$35,000, a school can be built to serve 250 pupils in remote areas. To sustain a school for a year it takes just \$20,000 to cover teachers’ salaries, school supplies, and one hot meal per student per day with take-home portions for their families. The building also serves as a community center, gathering place for emerging churches and places where adults can receive health services and vocational training with the goal of making the school self sustaining.***

**Partnering**

***EduNations realized early on we could not achieve our goals on our own, nor was it necessary to duplicate the work of other organizations. So, we have developed partnerships with trusted, reputable in-country allies such as World Hope, Compassion in Action Ministries, and Transformation Education, providing them the with resources they need on the ground.***

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