

# W I N D O W

The world is waiting

✦ By Pastor Richard Gunderson

**W**e are thankful to God for the many mission opportunities that have come to us as a fellowship of congregations these past years. They have been like the Macedonian Call that Paul experienced in a vision saying, “Come over and help us.” We are thankful to God for those who have responded and have gone out from among us. We are thankful to God for the prayer and financial support of those who have gone. But what about the unreached peoples of the world? Psalm 96:3 says, “Tell of His glory among the nations, His wonderful deeds among all the nations.”

In mission parlance we talk about the 10/40 Window. That term comes to us from the 1989 Lausanne II Conference, during which Luis Bush, CEO of Partners International, called attention to the region between 10 and 40 degrees north latitude in which much of the unevangelized world lives. This was not a new emphasis. Dr. Ralph Winter, a well-known missiologist and general director of Frontier Mission Fellowship, addressed this region of the world and its need for evangelism at the 1974 Lausanne Congress, calling it “the hidden frontiers.” R. Alton James, professor of theology and missionary to the Philippines, writes, “This geographical area includes much of the Muslim world, India, China, and most of Southeast Asia. This region has been called World A, which includes much of the unevangelized world.”

It has been more than 30 years from the time Dr. Winter issued a call to reach the unreached. The sad truth is that they continue to be unreached. The AFLC needs to in prayer look through the 10/40 Window to see how God could use us in that part of the world to reach the lost with the message of life in Christ.

But who will go? And where? We can also ask, to whom? Or how? Why we should go is clear in Scripture, when Jesus commanded, “And you shall receive power when the Holy Spirit comes upon you and you shall be my witnesses in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria, and even to the remotest part of the earth” (Acts 1:8).

Patrick Johnstone, in a *Missions Frontiers* article (March-April 2007), lists 15 identifiable affinity blocs (see right) or people groups throughout the world. Time and space do not permit me to give even his brief description of them, but it does give you a focus point for prayer. It is time for you to go to God’s window of prayer for these nations.

The answer of “where?” and “to whom?” was clearly communicated in a recent *Mission Marker* graphic feature titled, “God Space 08: Surveying All He Loves.” The editors listed the 10 least-evangelized countries (see right). I would suggest that we begin by asking God if He would lead us to one or more of these people groups.

Personally, it has been my prayer to reach the people of Turkey (see Turkmenistan, at right), where the Apostle Paul traveled and planted churches. In a 2007 special issue of *The Voice of the Martyrs*, Turkey is described as 99.64 percent Muslim and only 0.32 percent Christian. While there is a “constitutional guarantee of religious freedom,” according to research printed in a country summary, those rights have not been fully upheld.

I take as a possible open door the following statement from that summary: “As Turkey continues to pursue European Union (EU) membership, there appears to be an increasing openness on the part of authorities to recognize Turkey as a multicultural, multi-religious country.” It was to the church in Philadelphia, located in today’s Turkey, that the angel spoke saying, “I know your deeds. Behold, I have put before you an open door which no one can shut, because you have a little power, and have kept my word, and have not denied my name” (Revelation 3:8). Is that the open door for us today?

Once we have identified God’s direction, and to whom we are to go, then we must go. We also need to be in prayer that God would raise up those who would be willing to go. I believe God is already placing on the hearts of individuals a burden for the lost in one or more of those countries. It is important for them to be preparing and equipping themselves to go. It is important for us as congregations to catch the vision. It is time to lift up our eyes to see the regions beyond. Join in prayer for those in the 10/40 Window; plead the cause for those who have not had the opportunity to hear about Jesus and the way of salvation in Him. Let us under the direction of the Holy Spirit get ready to go to that God-appointed people group.

*Gunderson, assistant to the president of the AFLC, serves on the World Missions Committee.*

**Least-Evangelized Countries:**

Sahara, Maldives, Bhutan, Afghanistan, Mauritania, Somalia, Morocco, Turkmenistan, Azerbaijan, Yemen

**Affinity Blocs:**

East Asian, South Asian, Eurasian, Latin-Caribbean Americans, Sub-Saharan Africans, Malay, Arab World, South East Asian, North American, Turkic, Indo-Iranians, Horn of Africa, Tibetan/Himalayan, Jews, Pacific Islanders