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# VOICE & HANDS

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# OVERCOMING OBSTACLES



reach  
beyond 

a word from  
*Wayne*



Reaching the unreached isn't easy. In fact, it's one of the hardest things that followers of Christ are called to do. I've been thinking about this a lot lately, and it seems to me that this task is so difficult for two reasons.

First, many obstacles must be overcome. Some of them are real—like the inability to travel or the demands on believers' time and resources. Others may be internal, like fear or apathy. Sharing Christ with others, whether they are local or in a faraway land, is challenging.

Second, there are the obstacles faced by those with whom we share Christ. Most unreached people around the world encounter serious cultural, social and religious consequences if they come to faith in Christ—even death in the most extreme cases.

In this issue of *Voice and Hands* you'll read stories from both perspectives. Some people have overcome extreme obstacles to share the gospel in the most difficult places. Others have courageously come to faith in spite of the costs they've paid to walk with Him.

I want to challenge us all as followers of Christ to be bold—bold for the sake of the One who gave everything to redeem us and bold for the sake of those who do not yet know Him.

Serving Him together,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Wayne Pederson". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Wayne Pederson  
President, Reach Beyond

# REMOVING ROCKS

## From the Field



**“O**thers fell on rocky ground, where there wasn't much soil, and they sprang up quickly since the soil wasn't deep. But when the sun came up they were scorched, and since they had no root, they withered” (Matthew 13:5-6, HCSB).

A good farmer knows that for his seed to grow, the soil needs to be prepared. For example, many parts of Central Asia are staggering in their beauty, but the soil is so rocky that the fields have to be repeatedly tilled to remove the rocks that seem to be everywhere.

That's also the spiritual condition of people in most parts of Central Asia. This region is a prime example of challenges faced by those carrying the gospel, and those receiving it. Cultural Islam, political resistance, deep-seated superstitions and other obstacles make it difficult to see immediate spiritual results.

“We refuse to quit because the work is hard,” explains David, executive director of Reach Beyond's Europe/Eurasia Region. “It just means we need to work harder. The love of Jesus shown in words and actions is the only thing that breaks down the fear and hardness that entraps the people who live there.”

In places like Central Asia and around the world, Reach Beyond is working to till the soil and sow seed that will bear fruit.

### SUPPORT



Please continue your faithful support of Reach Beyond. Your partnership is what enables the ministry to work in some of the “rockiest” places in the world. Learn more at [reachbeyond.org](https://reachbeyond.org).



# OVERCOMING TRAUMA IN SIERRA LEONE

**F**irst it was war. Then it was Ebola. These two crises, along with pervasive poverty and famine, have left a nation in trauma.

An estimated 50,000 people in the West African country of Sierra Leone died in the country's brutal, decade-long civil war that ended in 2002. Thousands more were maimed

and mutilated; 2 million others fled to Guinea and Liberia.

Then in 2014, Ebola hit Sierra Leone, one of Africa's poorest countries, resulting in over 14,000 cases and nearly 4,000 deaths.

As a result, an estimated 500,000 people—nearly 10 percent of the

population—suffer from anxiety disorders such as post-traumatic stress syndrome (PTSD), said Kenny Dennis who recently led four days of counsel-or training for 25 pastors and church leaders in the capital city of Freetown.

“In the entire country there’s only one psychiatrist, two nurse practitioners and very few mental health workers,” he related. “The need is extreme.”

Dennis said participants at the May 2–5 training were eager to bring hope and encouragement to their congregants and people in their communities who have trouble coping with the stress.

“You’re looking at a country where people did atrocious things to each other...death everywhere,” explained Dennis, a licensed professional counselor who specializes in trauma and stress cases. He traveled with his wife, Lauri, who serves in personnel at Reach Beyond in Colorado Springs, Colo.

“When the civil war ended, everybody got amnesty,” Dennis explained. “Imagine living next door to someone who a week earlier could have been killing you, and now you’re supposed to go on like nothing has ever transpired.”

During the Ebola crisis people spent “at least a year in deep fear, afraid they would contract the disease and grieving because they knew someone who died of it,” he related. “Schools closed for a year. If you stuck out your hand to shake hands


with someone, it was a \$100 fine. Even Christmas was canceled.”

The training was hosted by partner Ransford Wright, director of Believers Broadcasting Network which operates a Christian radio station and a drop-in counseling center in Freetown.

**“Imagine living next door to someone who a week earlier could have been killing you.”**

Many of the 3,000 people who’ve come to the center heard about it through the broadcasts on the station—especially the live, late-night call-in shows that aim to help traumatized listeners.

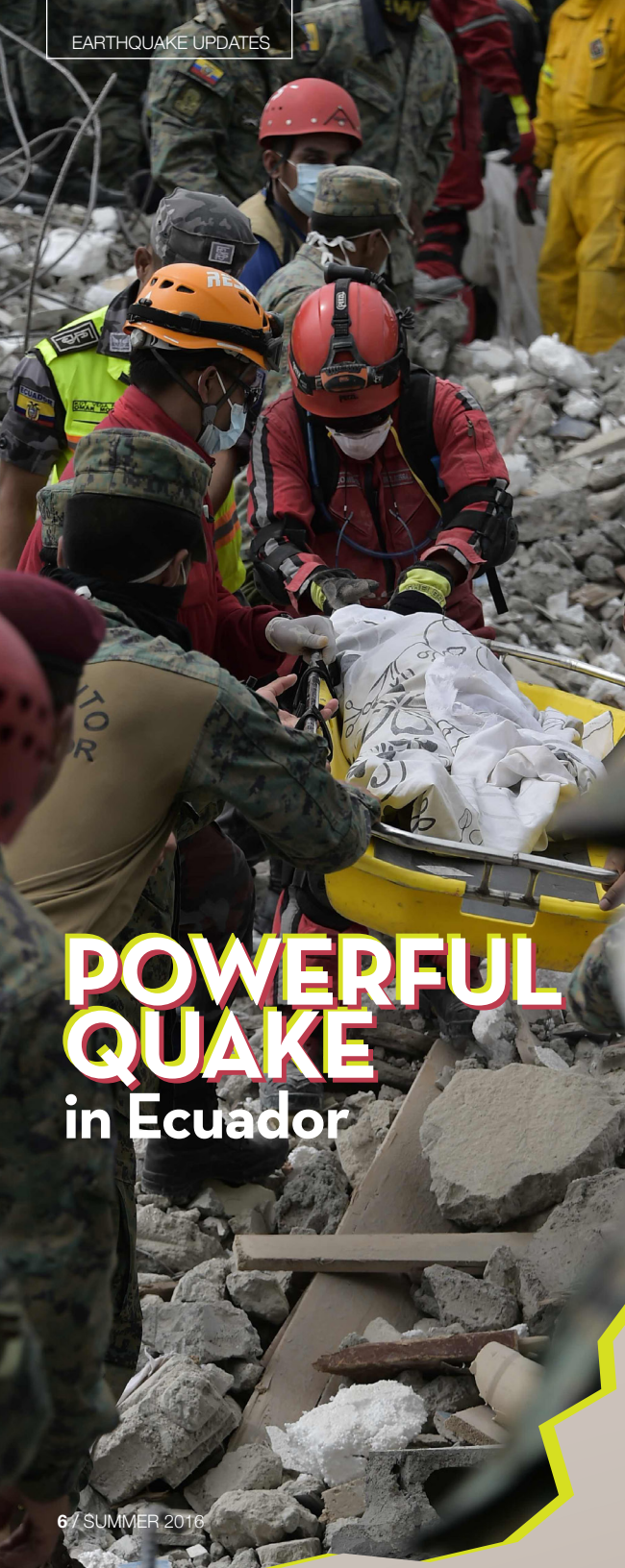
Wright launched the program some 12 years ago despite naysayers who said he was “crazy” because Sierra Leonians don’t like to talk about their problems. But the shows, airing from midnight to 4 a.m. three nights a week, are always filled with callers.

“After the training we handed out packets,” Dennis added. “All the sessions were recorded and put on thumb drives. I’ll also be available for weekly consultations to answer questions online, talk about issues and apply principles from the training.” 

## PRAY

Pray for the counselors and employees at BBN and for the ministry to have increased opportunities to free people from the wounds of the past and bring the hope of Jesus for the future.





# POWERFUL QUAKE in Ecuador

**W**hen a massive 7.8-magnitude earthquake hit Ecuador's coastal region on April 16, it didn't take long for Reach Beyond to organize emergency medical response teams to help in some of the worst-hit areas.

Three teams, serving under the auspices of Ecuador's Ministry of Health, saw 50 to 90 patients a day, doing everything from setting broken limbs to treating stress-related illnesses and counseling with victims.

At latest count, the temblor killed 661 people, injured 4,600, caused over \$3 billion worth of damage and left more than 22,000 people homeless, many living in tents at makeshift centers for displaced persons. "Life in the shelters was uncomfortable," quake survivor Rosa Arias told the Quito

Returning  
to Nepal

newspaper *El Comercio* about a month after the quake. “So my family and I decided to go to the island (Muisne) to begin again.” She fled the town along with some 1,500 others who moved to shelters.

Another victim, Ana Vince, and her four children live in a tent donated by the U.N. High Commissioner for Refugees. Fear of returning home keeps them there, along with a desire for government assistance on rebuilding or repairs.

### “So my family and I decided to go to the island to begin again.”

Even as medical teams treated the wounded, Reach Beyond psychologist Dr. Carlos Pinto was holding seminars in Quito and Guayaquil to train volunteers with their sights set on the quake zone as the mission’s focus changes from trauma care to primary care.

After more than a year of delays ranging from monsoon rains to an economic blockade that kept basic supplies from crossing the border from India into Nepal, Reach Beyond sent a work team to the Himalayan country in June.

The team, including 10 volunteers from a supporting church in the U.S. and several staff members from Reach Beyond, helped rebuild a Christian radio station in the remote community of Harmi that had been rocked by the devastating earthquakes in April and May 2015.

César Cortez of Reach Beyond’s community development department was glad to see that clean water systems that the mission helped with a decade ago in two of the hard-hit communities were still functioning normally.

HCJB-2 (Reach Beyond’s partner FM radio station in Guayaquil) and two repeaters in the quake zone never went off the air, broadcasting a message of hope throughout the crisis.

In June English Fellowship Church in Quito sent a nine-member team to the quake area to help construct a home for a local church member. 📌

The station is one of four that were damaged in the temblors, said Ty Stakes, executive director of the Asia Pacific Region. Another five stations, all established with Reach Beyond’s help, were undamaged.

“All four of the damaged stations are on the air,” Stakes explained. “Two are still operating in temporary shelters, and we’re involved in getting them into permanent, earthquake-resistant buildings.”

He added that Reach Beyond is looking to “build more radio partnerships, plant more stations and grow our partner’s radio network. We also want to add a community development person to expand clean water projects, help rebuild homes in Harmi and coordinate efforts to bring the gospel to unreached people groups.”



**“W**ho is it that overcomes the world? Only the one who believes that Jesus is the Son of God” (1 John 5:5, NIV).

If the dictionary needed a photo to illustrate the meaning of “overcomer,” it could well be an image of Joseph Kebbie. Beneath his contagious smile and the proud gleam in his eyes as he looks at his baby daughter’s face is the story of a man who spent much of his life as a refugee fleeing the horrors of the civil war in the West African nation of Liberia.

For more than a decade, Joseph lived from day to day, learning to survive in 14 different countries and countless loca-

tions. The journey began on the banks of the river that borders Liberia and Guinea. Refugees fleeing the horrific violence did what they could to find passage across the river to the relative safety of the other side. Miraculously, Joseph, then 14, and his parents made it to Guinea.

**“During the day I would do what I could to work, but at night the car was my home.”**

That was the beginning of a sojourn that led Joseph from Liberia to Guinea to Côte d’Ivoire to Sierra Leone to Ghana to South Africa and beyond. A life-shattering existence you might say. But not to Joseph. “I was never alone.





# \$20 A MONTH AND A VISION FOR A NATION

My parents always told me that wherever we were, God was with us,” recalled Joseph. “I grew up living that truth.”

At one point, Joseph lived for a year in the back of a car. “During the day I would do what I could to work, but at night the car was my home, and I was grateful to God for providing it. I was happy.” When Joseph made his way to Ghana, he was thrilled to find his “dream” job, working in an internet café 17 hours a day for \$20 per month—yes, *per month*.

But Joseph also knew that God had something more for him. The journey of his life was not intended to escape the


tragedy of war. Instead, God used this unlikely path to give Joseph a passion for the healing of his people and nation.

After getting his degree in the beauty and comfort of Cape Town, South Africa, Joseph had many opportunities to have a prosperous career in radio broadcasting.

“That’s not what God intended,” Joseph shared with a tone of resolve. “I returned to Ghana to do three things. First, I would serve God; second, I would serve my people and bring them the hope of Jesus; third, I would serve the world.”

Today that’s his passion and mission. Joseph, together with his wife, Genevieve, serve as Reach Beyond missionaries, based at the Sub-Saharan Africa Regional Office in Accra, Ghana. He is training broadcasters, developing partner relationships and helping to establish new radio stations across Africa.

Most recently Joseph has been developing a plan to bring hope and healing to the generation of young people in Liberia who continue to suffer from the effects of two civil wars, the last ending in 2003.

Joseph serves as a model to all believers, demonstrating that the circumstances of our lives can crush us or empower us, depending on how we trust God in the midst of them. 

## LEARN MORE



Learn more about Joseph’s life by listening to his podcast interview at [reachbeyond.org/podcast](https://reachbeyond.org/podcast)

# CURSED BUT NOT CRUSHED



**E**very Sunday millions of believers attend churches across North America. Typically, the buildings are air conditioned. They sing hymns, open God's Word and pray, enjoying fellowship in peace and relative security.

At the same time, believers in northern India recently heard the following words being spoken: "We will beat them, and all the things they have will be taken." (These were the words of anti-Christian activists shortly before an attack on a church and those sharing Christ.)

Christ-followers in the area were experiencing the reality of what turned out to be a promise rather than a threat. New converts were beaten, the church building was destroyed and the believers were scattered.

Following Jesus in places like India, North Africa, the Middle East or Central

Asia can be challenging. What's even harder is coming to faith in Christ in the first place. Fear of persecution, physical punishment, being outcast from your family and community and a host of other dangers—even death—trap people in spiritual bondage.

Let's be honest. We have an enemy who does not want people to know Jesus. But that's not stopping them because the prospect of hope in Christ exceeds the fear of following Him.

**"We have an enemy who does not want people to know Jesus."**

Reach Beyond's partner ministry in India recently received a letter that talks about the quiet victory many people are experiencing in spite of the dangers associated with following Christ.




Sarita\* recently wrote a note that reflected her anguish. “I am the only Christian in my family and village. No one talks to me, everyone hates me and says that I have betrayed them and our faith. My mother constantly curses and abuses me.”

The radio program production team prayed for her and so many others in her situation. But, as a song by the musical group 4Him says, “Where there is faith, there is a voice calling, keep walking. You’re not alone in this world.”

Not long ago Sarita responded to the Christian program that was carried by a secular radio station in India. “Your program yesterday on God answering prayers was too good!” she exclaimed. “Yes, I believe God answers prayers. My mother has slowly started to talk to

me. She wants me to pray to ‘my God’ about my father who is a drunkard.”

Sarita is learning that she is not alone. The One in whom she has placed her faith is with her, and her perseverance is beginning to change the lives of others. 

## PRAY



Sarita’s story isn’t finished. Please take a moment and pray for her and her family, and pray for all of the people who are coming to Christ at incredible personal cost. Your gifts and prayers made a difference for Sarita and so many others. Please continue to pray for and support the ministry of Reach Beyond. Your gifts are taking the good news of Jesus to a dark world.

\*Pseudonym used for security reasons.



*from*  
**BLACK ASH**  
*to* **NEW HOPE**

**T**he villagers smeared black ash on his father and told him, “Never come back!” That’s how Prem\* and his family departed the remote Nepali village of Harmi. As the first Christians among their people, they were rejected and cast out for their faith.

Thankfully, God’s plan wasn’t for Prem or his family to live in exile. Instead, He was using their years in exile to prepare them to be instruments of transformation for an entire community. What looked like

roadblocks to sharing their faith eventually proved to be more like speed bumps.

Twelve years following their initial banishment, Prem and his father returned to the village—not in fear, but in resolve to share their faith with those who they knew needed to know Jesus. They had no idea what to expect, but the community was their home.

Would they be met with persecution—more black ashes, or worse? To their surprise and God’s glory, they were greeted openly. The community was thrilled to

\*Pseudonym used for security reasons



villagers sang traditional songs, but in this case changed many of the words.

“Several of the verses talked about how it was a dark day when Prem’s family left the village and how much they wanted them to live there again,” Stakes recalled. “They also sang about being grateful for the radio station and the changes we’ve made in their community. The people are more open to the gospel now than they’ve ever been.”

**“The people are more open to the gospel now than they’ve ever been.”**

Today a number of Harmi’s residents are Christ-followers. In February 2015, just weeks before two devastating earthquakes rocked Nepal, destroying much of the village, local believers in the community held their first worship service.

Obstacles to the spread of the gospel are everywhere—social pressure, spiritual oppression, political resistance. The enemy uses them all. But where there is faith and resolve, the gospel always wins, one life, one village, one community at a time. 📌

have them back in spite of their faith in Christ. The result of their homecoming was a newfound openness to the relationship Prem and his family had with Jesus.

Since then, Prem and Reach Beyond have worked together to establish a community-owned radio station and even a birthing clinic that has helped reduce the infant mortality rate in the area.

Ty Stakes, executive director for Reach Beyond’s Asia Pacific Region, said he was privileged to attend a community event during which the

### GET INVOLVED



You are also an instrument of transformation. Without the support of people like you, this station in Nepal would not exist. Prayerfully consider making a special gift to Reach Beyond that can result in lives changed forever. Learn more at [voiceandhands.org](http://voiceandhands.org).

## NEWS



## Reach Beyond Announces New President Effective Sept. 1

**R**ev. Steve Harling, announced as Reach Beyond's president-elect on May 16, comes to the organization with a long legacy of missions and pastoral involvement.

The son and grandson of missionaries in Africa, he will become the ministry's eighth president on Sept. 1, culminating a year-long search. Current president Wayne Pederson will then move to president emeritus status followed by a six-month transition period.

During introductions at Reach Beyond's Ministry Service Center in Colorado Springs, Colo., Steve said his grandparents served in Nigeria for 40 years among the then-unreached Tangale tribe. Along with missionary colleagues and national partners, they started schools, clinics and a church-planting movement that now numbers in the millions.

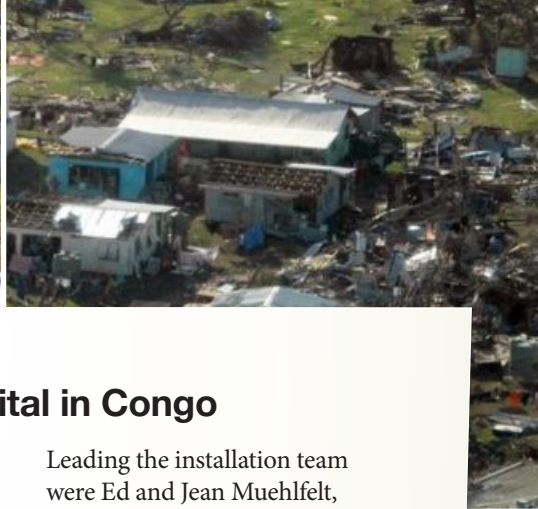
Steve grew up in Nigeria where his parents served as SIM missionaries

among the Hausa people. His dad taught at a secondary school and later worked in administration.

Steve and his wife, Becky, a popular speaker and author, entered pastoral ministry immediately after college. While still in their 20s, they were missionaries in Sudan where Steve pastored Khartoum International Church.

After returning to the U.S., Steve continued pastoral ministry, including the last 10 years as lead pastor of Foothills Community Church in Arvada, Colo. He has also served on the mission boards of SIM, Wycliffe Bible Translators and Global Refuge.

"I'm very comfortable with turning the reins of leadership to this very qualified and capable man who will lead Reach Beyond to the next generation of ministry," Pederson said. "Steve Harling is very passionate about cross-cultural ministry." 📌



## Tall Tower Boosts Signal of Station at Hospital in Congo

**A**fter 10 years of planning and prayer, a tall tower for a remote hospital-based Christian radio station in the Republic of Congo recently became a reality earlier this year.

The 300-foot-high column was dedicated at Pioneer Christian Hospital in the remote town of Impfondo, boosting the signal and range of *Radio Sango Kitoko* (Radio Good News). The dedication coincided with the hospital's 10th anniversary.

The station, a partner ministry of Reach Beyond and partner SonSet Solutions in Elkhart, Ind., now reaches potential listeners in a 60-mile radius.

Leading the installation team were Ed and Jean Muehlfelt, spending six weeks to pour the concrete foundations and stack 30 steel sections. This marked the Muehlfelts' 1,000th radio installation in their lengthy careers.

The relationship between Reach Beyond and Pioneer Christian Hospital began in 2006 when Dr. Joe Harvey, the hospital's director, attended a consortium in Ghana intended to show how radio and medicine could partner together, demonstrating what the "voice and hands" ministry could accomplish in Africa. 📌

## Powerful Cyclone Batters Partner Stations in Fiji

**C**yclone Winston—thought to be the strongest storm in recorded history to hit the Southern Hemisphere—landed on Fiji with a wallop earlier this year, killing 43 and leaving over 50,000 homeless.

Staff at Reach Beyond's two partner radio stations, operated by Evangelical Bible Mission, were winding up their biannual sharathon when the cyclone

hit, disrupting the stations' power supply. Listeners then began giving to relief efforts, donating clothing, food and building materials.

While winds approached 200 mph—the equivalent of a category 5 hurricane—EBM's two main radio outlets suffered only minor damage, and broadcasts resumed within three days. 📌

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