



# Reaching and Serving the Persecuted Church **IN TOUCH MONTHLY**

1 July 2009

*"Our God is great, his power is great and there is no limit to his understanding. - Psalms 147:5*

It is always encouraging to be reminded that our God understands...everything. Nothing is a surprise to him and nothing is beyond his reason. He also is completely capable of overcoming all obstacles as he implements his plan. Why is this? As the Psalmist states, "Our God is great."

## Fire Fixes the Focus

*"I think the fire made me more focused on what is really important. What does God want me to be busy with? It is a good thing if God sometimes rocks our boats to again make us see what is really important in His eyes." - Gerhard le Roux*

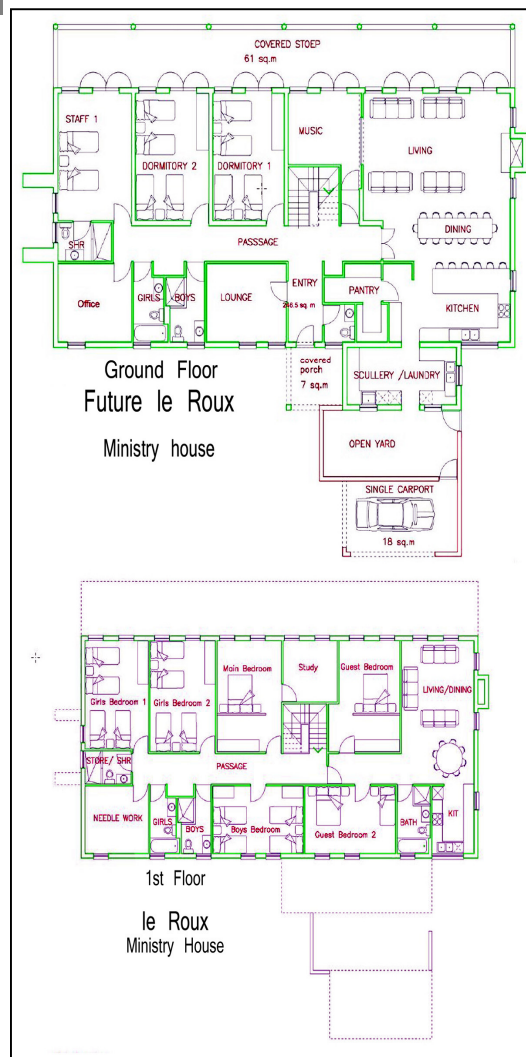
### SOUTH AFRICA

Three months after a fire destroyed **Moreson Children's Haven**, **Gerhard and Elmane le Roux** and their 8 children see God's blessings in their tragedy. Thankfully no one was harmed in the blaze, though the fire consumed more than half their house including all the contents.

Only the kitchen, a schoolroom and office and one guest unit were spared. This unit now serves as the bedroom for the entire family. There is only one shower and one toilet, creating logistical problems for the ten of them.

Gerhard says, *"Considering the conditions under which some missionaries sometimes live, we are grateful to God for what we have. He has spared this part of our home so we still have a place to stay."*

The burned rubble heaps now removed, Gerhard and Elmane look and pray toward the future. What direction does God want to go from here? *"God, in His grace, laid it*



*on an architect's heart to draw up plans for a new building. After sharing our needs for ministry and family, he put it together in a way that made sense."*

The plan is for a two-story building that will include living quarters for the family, office space for the mission, a private lounge used for ministry and counseling, and a guest unit for visitors. Accommodating overseas visitors is a blessing and a challenge for missionaries.

In construction, priority will be given to the most pressing needs, then finishing the building as funds become available. Contractors will be used for the specialized phases of construction with the remaining work being done by themselves and/or by volunteers to save money.

The final decision on what type of building material to use has not yet been made. In deciding between brick or block, brick is stronger and better able to withstand the severe weather conditions of Africa's South Cape.

*(Continued on page 4)*

# What's *Your* Flavor?

**One of my seminary professors**, Dr. Steve Tracy, earned his doctorate at the University of Sheffield in England. For part of his degree program he relocated his family to the UK.

When Thanksgiving rolled around, they had been there for some time, long enough to be missing home and family in the United States. They thought it would be good for their morale to prepare an old fashioned Thanksgiving dinner. They planned and cooked and with great excitement sat down to enjoy the feast.

Taking a bite of the turkey, they were surprised to discover the flavor was nothing like the turkey their taste buds were anticipating. In fact, it was a bad surprise. Steve said it tasted awful. They cooked it the way they always had. So how could this be?

Then it dawned on him. Turkeys in England aren't corn fed. They are raised on fish meal. Therein lay the difference. The flavor of the turkey has everything to do with the turkey's steady diet.

What's your steady diet?

**Proverbs 23:7** reminds us, "*As a man thinks in his heart, so is he.*" Our thoughts are powerful. And our thoughts, whether we like to admit it or not, are fueled by whatever "steady diet" we feed into our mind.

What's your steady diet? Does your day start and end with Constantly Negative News (CNN)? Is break room gossip part of your Monday through Friday routine?

Is your mood dictated by what you hear on talk radio or read on the front page of USA Today? Do you spend time on the phone with a whining partner, talking about everything that's wrong in your respective lives? Is the music you're listening to angry and depressing? The people you hang

with...is their glass chronically half empty?

What's your steady diet? Does your day start and end with hope? A prayer of thanks? The thought that no matter how ugly life looks God can make it beautiful? Are you listening to positive music?

Are you reading books that stretch your mind and feed your soul? Are you surrounding yourself with people who have just as many problems as you yet choose to look for positive solutions? The people you hang with...is their glass half full?

It's a given that we get bumped around in our rough and tumble world. No amount of positive thinking can shield us from that. We're going to get knocked around.

It's when we get bumped that people find out what flavor we are. A crisis here, an emergency there, an injustice done to us and no one has to guess what our steady diet has been. It's right there at the surface. In our words, our reactions, our response.

Whatever our steady diet is determines our flavor.

I can't speak for you, but I've got to spend more time paying attention to my diet. More God, less fear. More God, less worry. More God, less whining. More God, less short-sighted human thought.

More God, less me.

From the outside, all turkeys look the same. Their steady diet determines their flavor. When people have opportunity to discover my flavor, what's real on the inside of me, I don't want them to be badly surprised.

What's your flavor?

***"Whatever is true, whatever is noble, whatever is right, whatever is pure, think on these things."*** - Philippians 4:8

**-Todd A. Thompson**

**The Board of Directors would like to thank our Founder and his wife, Bill and Harriet Bathman**, for the faithfulness that led them to build In Touch Mission International. It has been a great privilege to serve beside them during our tenure on the Board. As our Founder transitions to devote his remaining time and energy to the ministry of his son-in-law, Peter Hammond, he does so with faith and courage and our prayers go with him.

Most of the Board was invited to serve ITMI through a personal request directly from Bill. One such invitation occurred many years ago, after Bill took a young man to Eastern Europe and watched God provoke an unquenchable passion for ministry within him. Serving first as a Board member and then as the Director, **Steve Evers** moved ITMI forward and, as Bill has often said, "into second gear and third gear."

As a mission, we seek to respond in faith to God's call by working with our brothers and sisters in foreign lands to reach their countries for Jesus Christ. During the past 28 years we have seen the Lord work marvelously through our dedicated missionaries and projects in Eastern Europe and Africa. We are enthusiastic about the future and remain thankful for the opportunity to serve our missionaries abroad.

We are enthusiastic about the future and remain thankful for the opportunity to serve our partners abroad through ITMI. Finally, we are deeply grateful for your faithful and ongoing support of ITMI's missionaries and projects, as we together continue to resource and empower those honoring and serving Jesus Christ in their own communities and abroad.

# Founder's Page

July 2009

## *Au Revoir issue*

Dear Team,

Things are changing at a rapid pace with us here due to unexpected medical conditions. But nothing surprises our Lord or catches Him "off guard," and "*all things work together for good.*" Romans 8:28 It's always interesting to see what He's up to.

This summer I've had minor surgeries planned that could not be done because of my heart / lung condition. Last month I spent 12 days at the Banner Baywood Hospital in Mesa, Arizona undergoing a wide range of tests.

Initially they thought it might be Valley Fever and began treatment for that. Lung cancer was also an option and a biopsy was ordered; then they suspected pneumonia and began appropriate treatment. After 4 days, they suggested it could be tuberculosis and put me in an isolation room. When I heard about this new concern (tb), I cracked up laughing and said to Harriett (my dear private-duty Registered Nurse for over 57 years) "Well, at least I'm an Equal Opportunity Disease Employer."

Eventually the results of the biopsy revealed the INSIDE story: carcinoma (cancer) of the lung. We rest in the knowledge that God is Sovereign and I have great peace knowing that whatever He does will be the best for me.

### **SPECIAL NOTICE – EFFECTIVE IMMEDIATELY**

Those of you, who have supported Bill and Harriett Bathman as missionaries across these many years, please re-direct your support for us from ITMI to Frontline Fellowship USA. The address is:

**Frontline Fellowship USA**  
1177 Branham Lane PMB 413  
San Jose, CA 95118

I am still Chairman of the Board for Frontline Fellowship, while I have no more responsibilities at ITMI. I've always said, "I'll never retire." I have worked closely with Dr. Peter Hammond over the past 24 years. He is a godly man with a great vision to fulfill the Great Commission.

There are several positive and logical reasons for this request which I ask you humbly to honor. Please change the address details for your gifts today. Thank you so much!

This is my *au revoir* "Dear Team" page. It has been such a joy to share our lives and His blessings with you over these past 28 years. We'll continue to keep 'in touch' via Frontline Fellowship News and our personal blog – <http://pennireef1west.wordpress.com> updated frequently.

I told the doctors and nurses during my days at the hospital that I'd learned one thing about **LIFE** – you never get out of it alive! We each have a Divine appointment, "*...once to die, but after this the judgment.*" Hebrews 9:27

Yours in His grip and soon to be in His arms forever,



Bill Bathman – Founder ITMI



le Roux children before house burned down

Decisions made now will impact the future. **Elmane** wisely noted, "Are we just building for ourselves? Or are we building for generations to come who will continue the work?"

When asked if there was one specific truth he wanted to communicate to the supporters of ITMI, **Gerhard** said this, "Matthew 6:33 says *Seek first the Kingdom of God and His righteousness and all these things will be added unto you. I have learned this lesson over the last 17 years. Not once has God forsaken me, even through this fire, the miraculous way God cared for us. We are to seek the Kingdom and His righteousness. The rest is in God's hands and He will provide for us.*"

God calls each of us to serve in our corner of the world. Once in awhile God calls us to go serve someone in their corner of the world. How about you?

How about asking God to allow you the privilege of going to help **Gerhard** and **Elmane** in their corner of the world? How about taking your

friends with you? Or your church?

Think about the difference you could make in their corner of the world with your construction skills, your strong back, your gifts of encouragement, your financial support, and your very presence working side by side to help them build God's kingdom in South Africa?

Could it be that God wants you to go to the le Roux's corner of the world and help them spread the Good News of Jesus?

Ask God if He wants to use you to help bring beauty from the ashes at **Moreson Children's Haven**.

Then listen to what He has to say. If He says, "Go!", then pro-



Gerhard Le Roux with abandoned baby

ceed with confidence. As Hudson Taylor put it, "God's work, done in God's way, will never lack God's supply."

Remember, like **Gerhard** said, sometimes it's a good thing when God **rocks our boats** to remind us of what's important. Here's to God...and to what's important.

-Gerhard le Roux, Todd Thompson, Steve Evers



Gerhard and children thankful for help and supplies

## Tempe, Arizona

### News from Tempe...

Our founder **Bill Bathman** has been very ill this past month with many complications due to his heart and lungs. To all of you who have followed his medical updates on our web site, we say thank you greatly for your prayers and your standing in the gap for **Bill** and **Harriett**.

With Bill's current medical condition, he is not out of the woods just yet and would be most grateful for your continued support in prayer and encouragement.

Please rejoice with us as we observe a long time child of God, reaching out and continually resting in the *One* that has sustained him for these many years. May we all be reminded, "Our God is great, his power is great and there is no limit to his understanding".

— Psalms 147:5

### For Praise . . .

1. Our Lord continues to sustain us all through tough financial times!
2. **Bill** was released from the hospital and allowed to rest at home.
3. Continued reports - our trip to Micronesia has allowed previously unvisited islands to hear the gospel.

### For Prayer . . .

1. **Bill** and his current health challenges.
2. **Timothy & Ashley Keller** as they pack their container and get ready to move to Zambia.
3. New and passionate partners who want to reach this world for Christ by obeying God's leading.
4. Wisdom and strength as God leads ITMI in new and exciting directions.

Authorized to Accept 