

Searching for Aslan

A year ago today we arrived in Colorado for the first time as residents. It is all such a blur as I look back, those first days, weeks, months. A feeling of loss as we left Guatemala remained right under the surface of everything else in life for some time, along with an anticipation of what was to come coupled with nervousness for the unknown. "Out of sorts" was the best way to describe all feeling last summer.

I do believe God led us here and sometimes I think I get a glimpse of why. Honestly, I feel quite like Peter, Susan, and Edmond in *Prince Caspian*, who were called back to Narnia but couldn't see Aslan. I can relate to their longing to see Him and their resolve to do their work when He doesn't show up.



They focused on the task at hand while they waited for Aslan. It appeared as if they doubted whether or not He would come, maybe they did. Yet, they continued to have faith that they were brought to Narnia for a purpose: His purpose.

I guess that is how I feel. I continue to have faith that I was brought to Colorado for His purpose, even when I don't see Him.

And since I'm being honest, I've had a very hard time seeing Him this year. It's been hard to connect with sermons in church, Bible reading, and even prayer. Sitting in my living room and gazing with awe at Pikes Peak has been one consistent source of worship for me.

Perhaps it has been a year of stripping away. What happens to my faith when all the crutches that have helped keep it up for so many years are no longer there? Church, ministry, missions, action, doing, etc.—what is my faith without all of those things?

How does God fit into my life without all the categories I've grown so accustomed to using to describe my walk? Or maybe the question is, "Who is He in me?"

I'm at a loss for words. I wish I could write this prayer letter and list all of the amazing accomplishments in God's Kingdom that I've witnessed or been a part of this year. Or describe to you the incredible Spiritual Truths I've learned, or talk about the wonderful faith journey I've been on. But actually, I think spiritually it's been the hardest, driest year of my life.

I'm still searching for Aslan, because I love Him and believe He wants to walk intimately with me as He does with Susan and Peter in the closing scene of *Prince Caspian*.

Thank you for your example of walking faithfully with Him for so many years,

Nell

From the President...

In response to requests from American church leaders, as well as a sense from the Lord within our mission leadership, OC opened the USA as a field of ministry in 2004. Our first resident team consists of four families who reside near Seattle, Washington.



Greg Gripenrog
OC President

One area of ministry that has opened wide is that of mobilizing the church to reach out to those who are immigrating to America from countries around the world. Many of these people come from lands where Islam, Buddhism, Hinduism, and Confucianism are prevalent. Here in the U.S., they have an opportunity to hear the gospel in unprecedented ways. OC missionaries Ken and Joyce Morse work to research who these people are and what needs they have, with a view to alerting churches as to how they can minister to them. Lyn Rasmussen teaches English as a second language (ESL) to new immigrants from Africa and Asia.

The U.S. team of OC International is working with many other groups in building the Ethnic Impact Network, which seeks "to interconnect and mobilize the church of all cultures in the Northwest to cooperatively demonstrate and proclaim the supremacy and love of Jesus Christ." Bob Rasmussen, our team leader, coordinates this network which sponsors seminars and conferences. To receive the monthly e-newsletter about the network, e-mail bobrasmussen@oc-us.org.

Beyond reaching out to such newcomers, the church in America has much to learn about welcoming into fellowship those who are from different cultural and economic backgrounds. In spite of the rapid diversification of our society, churches lag far behind. In fact, approximately 93 percent of churches in America are monoethnic. To help change this scenario, our U.S. team recently worked in partnership with three other ministries to convene a Consultation on Coaching Churches in Intercultural Transformation. Eighteen experienced practitioners from Canada and the U.S. came together to begin strategizing how to help churches reflect the diversity of their cities and put into practice the welcoming character of God's kingdom. Already, coaches are available to work with pastors who want to move toward intercultural inclusion.

By your prayers, the harvest from the nations will be full to overflowing, and our church life now will whet our appetites for heavenly worship where great multitudes of "all nations, tribes, peoples, and tongues" will sing praises together (Rev. 7:9 NKJV).

A handwritten signature in black ink, which appears to read "Greg Gripenrog".

Did You Know?

82% of births in America are to an ethnic minority family.

67% of all public school students in the USA belong to an ethnic minority.

By 2050, the majority of Americans will be foreign-born or born to immigrant parents.

Our Vision

Healthy churches working together to disciple all nations.



OC One Challenge.
Reaching the world together

OC International
P.O. Box 36900
Colorado Springs, CO 80936
800.676.7837

www.ONECHALLENGE.org

