

THE GLOBE

Summer 2008

News for the Passport World



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What are The Millennium Development Goals?

by Colleen Burroughs

In 2000, the United Nations called experts together and agreed on eight goals to address the world's poorest people. These goals are called the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs). Their aims are to systematically half the number of people living on less than one U.S. dollar a day by the year 2015 and eradicate extreme poverty by 2025.

All the world's countries agreed to work together on it, but I was late to the party. I didn't know about them. I stumbled upon their existence through a combination of relationships Passport has with various participating denominations, all of which have endorsed these goals.

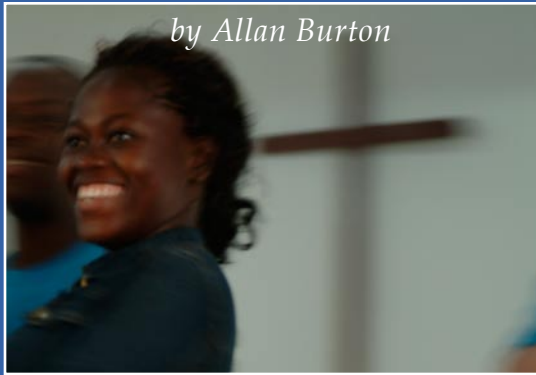
When asked to speak at a large Baptist church recently, I hoped the pastor wanted me to speak about the Millennium Development Goals. His response was not unique, though coming from him it was still surprising: "What are the Millennium Development Goals?" Please keep reading.



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Summer staffers

James Blay & Ciatta Sherman



Attending a Passport camp offers exposure to the world. Whether you are a youth, child or adult, when you come to camp, the world comes to you. Through the people groups we study, the offerings we give, the work we do and the fun we have, campers learn about the world and begin to understand how God can use them to change the world for the better.

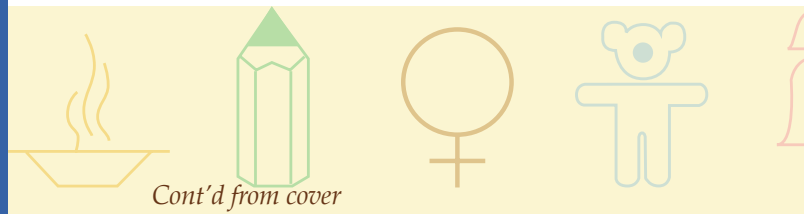


This summer, campers and adults in North Carolina and Georgia will have a unique opportunity. The “world” of Liberia, West Africa, will come to them in the form of two staffers who have been hired as a result of the inaugural PASSPORTLiberia camp this past January. James Blay and Ciatta Sherman - both staffers at PASSPORTLiberia -

will join the Passport staff this summer and teach campers about the lives they live in post-civil war Liberia. James will be the camp pastor at Wingate, and Ciatta will be a Bible study leader at Mercer.


This is a unique opportunity that Passport is proud to offer as we continue to seek the best ways to take campers to the world and to bring the world back to them.

Allan Burton, Youth Camp Lead Coordinator



Here is what they are:

The United Nations Millennium Development Goals

-  Eradicate extreme poverty & hunger
-  Achieve universal primary education
-  Promote gender equality & empower women
-  Reduce child mortality
-  Improve maternal health
-  Combat HIV / AIDS, malaria & other diseases
-  Ensure environmental sustainability
-  Develop a global partnership for development



Passport campers in Liberia January '08



Why these goals matter:

I believe Christians should be a part of living on the edge of what is possible on a large scale as the family of God. I believe we should not just be about saving souls, but we should be about saving lives because Jesus is about justice, mercy, human rights and grace.

Jesus loved the least of these. I am convicted that we are called to share from our extravagant banquet tables. This is what – as Bono says – “the history books will remember our generation for, or blame us for if we fail.”

We’ve all sat in our climate-controlled houses and flipped past pictures of dying children because we are so overwhelmed by the reality that it paralyzes us. But there are millions and millions of people living on less than a dollar a day. And now, for the first time in history, there is hope. The global economy is capable of bridging the gap. Educate yourself. Pick a goal and participate. Introduce your faith community to the MDGs.

What do I do first? If you don’t know where to start, start with water projects. Access to clean water is an integral part of reaching each goal. Go back and read the list and you will see how access to clean water can improve the success rate of each goal. Passport teenagers have helped us raise an astonishing amount for clean water in the last three years — close to half a million dollars.

Church groups in the United States participating in the goals:

The United Methodist Church, the Evangelical Lutherans, the Church of the Brethren, the Episcopal Church, the Mennonite Central Committee, American Baptists, Presbyterian Church U.S.A, and the Cooperative Baptist Fellowship. There are others. There is a specifically Christian approach to these goals called “The Micah Challenge.” You can also participate through organizations like Passport and Bread for the World, and through global missions endeavors.



Some helpful links:

wateringmalawi.org

hisnets.org

bread.org

one.org

micahchallenge.org

thefellowship.info

Colleen Burroughs is the Vice President of Passport, Inc. and the founder of Watering Malawi.





A Passport Vacation Bible School

By Mark McClintock

When Colleen Burroughs, Passport's founder and vice president, heard that the small African country of Malawi was suffering from a severe drought and famine, she knew God was calling her to do something. The one thing she could not do was sit still and ignore the plight of people she had grown up loving while her parents served as missionaries there.

Little did she know that her dream of Christians in the U.S. pulling together to help would inspire so many youth and college students! But the vision did not stop there — churches clamored to find ways they could introduce the ministry, called Watering Malawi, to adults and children. Three summers later, we had received numerous requests for materials to use during summer Vacation Bible Schools, many of whom gave their offering to help dig wells.

Dreams — especially those founded on the continuing work of Jesus in the world — have a way of growing. If churches so enthusiastically embraced the project, why not develop a full VBS curriculum to meet the need? So, **Passport** has developed a biblically-based, fully integrated, and fun VBS program with a strong missions emphasis.

Written by Cindy Gaskins, who has authored missions studies for the Women's Missionary Union and Cooperative Baptist Fellowship, the new material offers five lessons that include a Bible story, a mission story, recreation and snack ideas, crafts, music and worship resources, all related to the daily scripture concept.

True to the spirit of Watering Malawi, the new VBS emphasizes the United Nations Millennium Development Goals, giving a true-life portrait of the critical need to achieve the goals and the hope they offer.

The new VBS is named for the ministry’s current motto, Water U Doing? Each day has a local and global application. Participants will be motivated to take action—through prayer, stewardship and creative advocacy—to make a difference in Malawi and their own communities. And, while the curriculum is designed for preschool and elementary school-age children, adults will find the stories, crafts and other activities informative and inspiring as well.

Water U Doing? will be an affordable choice for many churches, with all the lesson materials readily available as online downloads. Other resources such as journals, gardening tools and clay are easy to find and give children an opportunity for hands-on learning that they will remember for the rest of their lives. The curriculum is being “test driven” by a number of churches this summer, with the aim to have it online in the fall.

For more information about Water U Doing? and Watering Malawi, visit www.wateringmalawi.org or contact the Passport National Office at 1-800-769-0210.



Mark McClintock, Children’s Programs Coordinator, serves as the chair of the Children’s Advisory Council.

Watering Malawi continues to live a life of its own. Students across the country continue to inspire their congregations and communities to water gardens in one of the poorest countries on the planet.

Examples of what you are doing:

Baptist Theological Seminary at Richmond, in partnership with the Cooperative Baptist Fellowship of Virginia hosted a multi-church, community wide event. It raised thousands of dollars and priceless awareness.

Bayshore Baptist, site of the first ever Watering Malawi event, hosted a follow up event this year that netted close to three times the contribution of the first one.

Youth at Calder Baptist in Beaumont, TX host an annual event that continues to surprise us with its phenomenal and growing success.

Then there are the individuals that contribute monthly and students that choose Watering Malawi as a school project. Some groups buy a well, others buy a treadle pump. It’s beautiful to watch how you care for the world.

Watering Malawi is careful not post individual numbers. One person’s gift, no matter the size, is as powerful as the largest checks that may come. **Every drop matters.** Gardens are growing. Women are able to care for the children with access to water and healthier gardens. Some valleys are greener. Fisheries are springing up creating new ways to make an income. More children can attend school because water is closer, or accessible for the first time.

Thank you for your commitment to helping us water gardens and provide access to clean water. There is still plenty to do globally. Malawi is grateful for the ways you are sharing Living water.



A World-Changing Journey

by Marnie Fisher-Ingram

*Feed the hungry. Teach the children.
Heal the sick. Respect each other. What
do these have in common?*

All are teachings of Jesus, and all are United Nations (UN) Millennium Development Goals (MDGs). This precise realization is what led us to this year's Youth Camp theme of "Count-down 54321." Over 5,500 youth will spend a week studying the teachings of Jesus alongside the MDGs. We invite you to take a peek at what our youth are learning this year:

According to the UN Millennium Project, more than a billion people live on less than one dollar a day. That is a staggering amount! On day one of camp, youth will study the story of the boy who shared his meal to help Jesus feed a crowd of 5,000 (John 6:1-14). It is a remarkable story in which we learn of Jesus' deep desire to care for us and how we should share.

Every year, 11 million children die, most of them under age 5. More than 6 million die from completely preventable causes like malaria, diarrhea and pneumonia (UN Millennium Project). On day two, youth will learn about the goals focused on health and about the four friends (Luke 5:17-26) who were determined to have their sick friend see Jesus. These friends were so determined they lowered their friend through a roof just to get to him.

Around the world, 114 million children do not get even a basic education (UN Millennium Project). Day three will focus on the MDG goal of universal primary education and the Book of Jonah. Youth will learn to value the gift of education and to be a willing life-long learner.



It has been proven that if a girl is educated for six years or more, as an adult her prenatal care, postnatal care and childbirth survival rates will dramatically and consistently improve (UN Millennium Project). Women around the world are not given the chance to succeed simply because of their gender. On this last day, youth will learn about Mary and Martha (Luke 10:38-42) and how Jesus empowered both women, and how we can be like Jesus and respect women around the world.

These are complex and deep studies our youth are embarking on this summer. It is a journey that is bound to be life-changing. It is a journey that could be world-changing. For that very reason, we believe we are called to this theme. These MDGs are not just something we should do; they are something we should do because it is the right and Christian thing to do.

***"Time's up! God's kingdom is here.
Change your life and believe the
Message." Mark 1:15, from The Message***

Marnie Fisher-Ingram is Coordinator for both the Youth Camping with a Mission teams & Episcopal Mission Exchange.

PASSPORT Pen Pals!

by David Burroughs

I believe that the United Nations Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) are about more than just political action — way more. I feel strongly that these goals must be internalized on multiple levels all across the developed world. I want American young people to act, react, alter and adapt in personal, corporate and global ways.

The hard part is — after you buy the bracelet and sign the petition...then what?

This is a question people way smarter than me have been wrestling with for quite a while. But I want to join in as best I can and help find solutions. I support organizations like Bread for the World and the Jubilee Campaign, and their work is vitally important. But if we can't figure out how to live into the MDGs, then we will stall on our way to meeting them.

So here's one idea: *Passport PenPals!*

What if we got children and teenagers to become international pen pals with a student of similar age or grade and start writing letters to each other? Now, I know this sounds a bit old-fashioned — after all, we can find international friends on Facebook much quicker. But the reality is, the people who are being helped by the MDGs don't have computers, or power for that matter. So an old-fashioned, hand-written, airmail letter is a great equalizer.

I love getting an airmail letter. It means one of my friends from Malawi or Liberia has taken the time to sit down and write me a letter. I read it several times, and I keep them in a stack in my kitchen. And I learn something about that person in the process.



Sure, this is a small step, but think about a self-absorbed American teenager becoming friends with someone who has nothing. It has potential. “Those poor people” suddenly have a name and a story. It is similar to what happens on a stateside mission exchange — with global implications.

The program will include a monthly curriculum so that your students can write their letters together, asking similar questions and being guided in moving slowly and building a real relationship.

This pilot year, space is limited. So if you think your group or some of your group could benefit from putting a face on poverty, then consider joining us. Send me an email at david@passportcamps.org and I will put you on the short list. Or you could write me a letter!

David Burroughs is co-founder and President of Passport, Inc.

Living Water

by Cindy Gaskins

I'm sipping on one of my eight needed daily glasses of water. I do this because kidney stones have attacked me throughout my life. Bountiful, daily drinks of water are really the best way to combat these miniscule land minds.

As I sip, the world cries out.

There's the cry because too much water has washed away the fragile existence of life and home. There's the thirsty cry of the land or her people because dust and hardness creep around the land and into the heart where there is not enough water. The world cries when the disease, empty pantries, ruined crops, compromised education and too little resources march in step with no access to clean water. Catastrophe, greed, waste and unkindness know no boundaries. Neither does thirst.

There is a deeper cry. The human heart thirsts for hope. The search continues

for what or who can help. Sacrifices are made, rituals performed, good deeds counted, agony and doubt expressed. Yet for most of the world, there is silence and endless longing. Too much, too little.

But the Invisible, Eternal God hears those cries and remembers. God sent Christ Jesus into the neighborhood to water what is dead without Him. We who have been refreshed and renovated because of this Living Water can easily leave drops, cupfuls and refreshing drinks every place we go. But yesterday's cup does not meet today's need. Bountiful, daily drinks of Living Water are the best way to combat landmines in the soul. Daily sipping will enable you to sprinkle, splash and give away freely to others what never runs out.



"The Lord will guide you always; he will satisfy your needs in a sun-scorched land and will strengthen your frame. You will be like a well-watered garden, like a spring whose waters never fail." Isaiah 58:11

Cindy Gaskins is the author of the "Water U Doing?" VBS curriculum and serves on the Passport staff in Birmingham, AL.

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Colleen Burroughs

Design and Communications

Abigail Banks Brandenburg

Design

Dale Massey

Editor

Allan Burton

Youth Editor

Mark McClintock

Children's Editor

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PASSPORT, Inc.
3421 Sierra Drive
Birmingham, AL 35216

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