

# Close Connections

*Save, Face, Prosper, Unify the Nation*

BOTSWANA



Close Connections Partners' Meeting  
February 22-23, 2010

Minutes

Recorded by: Jeff and April Sukup

### **Meeting opened by Jeff Williams.**

1 + 1 + 1 = 10 Strength in numbers

Went over the agenda, a few changes were made due to airline itineraries

### **Welcoming statement by Donna Chisam:**

Donna gave a brief overview of the origin of Close Connections. The relationship began in 2006 through Training in Mission Evangelism (T.I.M.E.). It has emerged from listening at that time to Norman's big, bold and sometimes unbelievable vision to a God-sized ministry. With such a vision, it was evident that no one organization or church could do in Botswana what a consortium of partners could do. Donna began to tell the story and about the opportunity. One by one, partners began to emerge. First, Johnson Ferry, next Call to Africa, then Whitesburg Baptist Church. Call to Africa engaged Kelly Green Evangelistic Association, Dwayne Moore, Thomas Young, etc. The base began to grow. Today the consortium has over 20 partners such as those gathered for the meeting and others are showing interest. God continues to pour out his blessings on Botswana and the unique work in this country where God is magnified is powerful work. Welcome!

### **Attendees introduced themselves.**

Sharon Pumpelly – True Love Waits

Brad Thomas – Fresh Start for all Nations

Whitney Hill – Call to Africa

Ken & Renata Galyean – Call to Africa, Sarah & Joseph Foundation

Jeff & April Sukup – South Tampa Fellowship/OBC Mission's Facilitator

Ricky Wheeler – Missions Pastor with Johnson Ferry Baptist Church

Charles Estes – Member of Johnson Ferry Baptist Church

Chris Underwood – Pastor of Highland Baptist Church

Terry Herald – Sr. Associate Pastor Whitesburg Baptist Church

Marty Pitman – Church member

Kelly & Beth Green – Kelly Green Evangelistic Ministries

Craig Rees – Senior Pastor - South Tampa Fellowship

Tim & Christy Hipkins – Alice Drive Baptist Church

Scott & Tonya Shipes – Alice Drive Baptist Church

Mark Johnson and Donny Kaufman – Freedom Fellowship

Jim Nutt – One Goal Basketball

Sandy & Karen Baird – Manna Worldwide Inc.

**Gabi Schaefer.** Mma Moruti of Open Baptist Church, Gaborone, Botswana.

Thanked the attendees for investing in Botswana and attending the conference.

**Norman Schaefer.** Moruti. (Senior Pastor) of Open Baptist Church, Gaborone, Botswana.

Norman Schaefer spoke from his heart about what has been accomplished in 4 short years. He gave a short devotion on following the call of God. He spoke about how Jesus launched his ministry simply by asking 2 fishermen to stop what they were doing and follow Him. He didn't go to the authorities, but just asked 2 men to follow Him. Jesus is about the re-creation business whereby He polishes rough diamonds and changes them. This partnership is called together to follow Him. If we follow the call of God, he will make the path straight, provide, and change us into what he wants us to be. Let us catch onto the vision of God and be obedient to Him.

**Jeff Williams opened in prayer.**

**Donna Chisam – What is Close Connections?**

CC is a consortium of like-minded churches and faith-based organizations working closely to assist Open Baptist Church and its mission points expand the Kingdom in Botswana and elsewhere.

Decision criteria. This is how OBC/CC determines if a ministry opportunity is suitable. Is it:

- 1) Replicable
- 2) Sustainable by OBC
- 3) Empowering and does not cause long-term dependency
- 4) Measurable and fruitful?

Strategies.

- 1) Face the Nation (2006)
- 2) Save the Nation (2007 – present)
- 3) Prosper the Nation (2011)
- 4) Unify the Nation (to be developed)

Contributors – Churches, organizations & individuals.

## **Key accomplishments of the Partnership – Norman Schaeffer**

- 1) Church moved to new location – 40 acre lot, golf driving range and restaurant was renovated.
- 2) Over 1000 people attending on Sunday (excluding children)
- 3) Face the Nation was born. Starting with 8 schools in Gaborone
- 4) Sports evangelism. A plan is being developed to use the land wisely
- 5) Women’s, men’s & couples conferences. Johnson’s Ferry helping with first conference
- 6) Evangelistic outreach. Many evangelists coming to spread The Word
- 7) Pastoral care ministries
- 8) New member assimilation – Mary? of Whiteside BC helped organize. Over 100 people entering into membership last year
- 9) Internship program. 7 interns are now on board. Give 50% of time at Church and 50% to studies
- 10) Staff has quadrupled.
- 11) Mission outreach. Church is reaching out into Zambia and throughout Botswana
- 12) Pastors’ Encouragement Conferences. First conference last February with 92 pastors present. One planned in August, 2010 and two in 2011.
- 13) Vitalized Children’s ministry. Started with VBS run by US but now have ongoing children’s workshops which has helped build the Church. Scott & Tonya will be working with children’s ministry starting in August.
- 14) Fine arts Training.
- 15) Trips to USA for Norman & Gabi to gain “big church” experience.
- 16) Counseling and Stephen’s Ministry. 9 Stephen ministers have been trained and 12 more are being trained. 75 Counselors have been trained in 1 year.
- 17) Church attendance has doubled. 1000 people attending on Sunday.

### Outside OBC

- 1) Naledi
  - Added partners (Manna, FF, ADBC, TIME) for Tlamelo Feeding Center and church

- Relocation of church and completion of new church plant
  - Evangelistic outreach
  - Leadership training
  - Sewing Center
  - Moruti James and Julian visited USA
  - Mini van and trailer (ADBC)
- 2) Molepololi
- Relocated from home based church to former bar (Shebeen)
  - Renovated Shebeen
- 3) Missions at Kweneng, Mosojane, Gakuto

#### **Scope of Close Connections Effort – Jeff Williams**

- 1) Over 25 churches, organizations and individual donors supplying human, fiscal and time resources
- 2) Human resources – approx. 200 people trips
- 3) Financial – Approx \$1.4 million contributed through travel, in – kind gift and cash gifts

#### **Key Accomplishments – Botswana Government**

- 1) Interacted with key government officials
- 2) Developed a comprehensive strategy regarding risk avoidance
- 3) Government has launched a campaign to reduce multiple partners
- 4) Working on plan regarding moral implementation. Presented plan to National AIDS Council.
- 5) Took film crew and shot video to take to schools. Out of that, 30 second ads were developed of which 3 were shown on TV last year.

#### **2010 Priorities for direction of partnership – Pastor Norman Schaefer**

Face the Nation

Teach next generation to make good life decision and avoid pitfalls of HIV/AIDS and other threats to Godly life.

- 1) Ministered to 29 schools in 2009
- 2) 10121 young people signed abstinence cards in 2009
- 3) 4821 young people made commitments to Jesus Christ in 2009

#### Save the Nation

1) Develop a strategy for sport and recreation ministry. Part of OBC's property is zoned for sports and the government has put a 2 year time limit to see something practical towards that effect. The clock is ticking. *Note: Since the meeting, Highland Baptist Church, Florence, AL is working with OBC to determine how they can best be utilized to help with this objective.*

2) Expand OBC's mission Program. 3 Sundays ago, 300 people committed to a short term mission trip for 2010. Over 200 committed to volunteering in the Church. 12 mission trips have been planned for 2010.

3) Buildings to accommodate OBC growth. Adding on to existing sanctuary, counseling center and leadership development center.

#### Reviewed chart showing opportunity for Faith Based Organizations (FBO) levels of engagement

- 1) Provide logistical support
- 2) Disciple students making decisions
- 3) Conduct Youth outreach
- 4) Conduct bible studies
- 5) Preach sermons

#### Where is work needed

- 1) Sustainability (funding)
- 2) Government relationships
- 3) Relationships w/ other churches and FBOs
- 4) Expanding to Jr. Secondary Schools

#### **True Love Waits International - Sharon Pumpelly**

Ministry w/ students in Uganda thru International Mission Board in 1981. In 1994 started program that was biblically based, high impact with young people called True Love Waits. She left Uganda in 1996 because of a chronic illness. In that year, they presented 10,000 cards of commitments of abstinence to the President of Uganda. The next year, there were over 30,000 commitments.

Proverbs 5:15-20. Relating water with sex. Spoke about how she uses these verses to speak with the youth regarding abstinence.

Testimonies: Zambia – young man said “why didn’t you come sooner, maybe more of my village be alive?” And a young man in Zimbabwe just kept clutching the card to his heart. And the Masai warrior who answered the question,” do you believe it is possible for a Masai boy to grow old and never have sex with anyone until he gets married and then never have sex with anyone else but his wife?” and a Masai warrior stood up and said “if he did everyone would know he was a Christian.”

Pastor Craig prayed for the food and the meeting was adjourned for dinner.

### **6:30pm Meeting Resumed.**

#### **Jeff Williams**

Must get the government to realize that this is not an advertising campaign but a change of moral behavior.

\$90,000. Needed:

- 1) Two ministries and one individual have committed to approximately \$45,000
- 2) Remaining \$45,000 needs partner support to locate individual or group donors. *Note: Since the meeting about \$12,000 in commitments has been received. Partners are encouraged to invite people and members to invest in Face the Nation.*
- 3) Recap: it cost \$1,400 per college student to put them through 5 weeks of training and another 5 weeks of service.

**Alice Drive BC, Sumter, SC.** Report given by Scott and Tonya Shipes.

Alice Drive Baptist Church raised money to build a church building in Naledi. Women made trips to do sewing with women, and then men attended to raise foundation of building and conduct feedings. Alice Drive’s Open Door offering that is collected each November/December will in part be used to help with the relocation of the feeding station as well as expansion of the Station to 6-7 day feeding instead of 5 day.

Scott and Tonya along with their 6 children, two adopted with HIV/AIDs, will be relocating to Botswana in August 2010. Scott will serve as National Children’s Director for Botswana. In this capacity he will travel, train and equip children’s workers and leaders. He will be the only person with such an assignment in the country. Alice Drive is sending them as their first missionary couple/family.

**Freedom Fellowship, Greer, SC.** Report given by Mark Johnson. Working in partnership with Alice Drive. Helped build the worship center at Naledi, taught children, conducted village evangelism and ministry. Mark has made three trips to Botswana. Others in his church are

understanding the vision. People at Freedom are coming to understand “A new commandment I give until you. That ye love one another: as I have loved you, that ye also love one another. John 13:34. New people are stepping up to partner with them. They will be helping with the relocation of the Feeding Station to the church property along with other capacity building ministries related to Save the Nation.

**Jeff Williams** showed several 30 second video clips prepared by Johnson Ferry for the use of the Botswana government. The ads all use the tag line Abstain, Be Faithful and Claim Christ/Character. *Note: The government is not only committed to changing the behavior of its citizens, but is working toward this end. Jeff and his team, included Norman Hearst, CA and Ted Green, Washington, DC, have worked untiringly over the past three years to help the government develop a plausible strategy for change based upon and evidence and values based approach for addressing the social ills of Botswana. The fruit of this work is beginning to develop.*

### **7:30pm. 1<sup>st</sup> Day’s Meeting Adjourned.**

Ricky Wheeler with JFBC closed in prayer citing Phil. 1:3-6

### **Tuesday, February 23, 2010**

#### **Sandy Baird opened with a devotion.**

Psalm 113:7 He lifts the poor from the dust and the needy from the garbage dump. He sets them amongst the leaders, the princes of the world.

The work we all do together helps lift people up from the garbage dumps. The spiritual sense is that we are lifting people up from sin.

The young people that we are working with in FtN are the princes of the next generation. The only way we can change the garbage dumps of the world is thru the supernatural power of God.

Sandy then opened the meeting in prayer.

**Pastor Norman Schaefer** thanked Johnson Ferry BC for hosting this conference. Norman gave each partner a handout and showed a video introducing us to the various staffs working at or with OBC.

**Note: CC would like to thank Peter Miano and others at OBC for their fine workmanship on the video and handout used at the CC meeting.**

### **Open Baptist Church**

Pastor Norman Schaefer, Senior Pastor

Pastor Desmond Henry, Associate Pastor for missions

Pastor Adekunle Eyitayo, Associate Pastor for counseling and the Stephen ministry

75 trained counselors at OBC

Allan Megaw, Church Administrator (signor of the Botswana Constitution)

Sandy Bradley, Church Accountant

Boitumelo Ramohube, Secretary of the Executive/Pastor

Gofaone Kehumile, Church Receptionist

Ajay Gotru, Church Builder

Internship Program: 50% with study, 50% with ministry

Isaac Genheimer, Sports

Lenos Ngugi, Youth and students

Samantha Sylvia Myambo, Children

Moses Williams, Junior Youth

Vivien Dakpo, Worship ministry

Samantha Mogwe, Missions

Peter Miano, Media and sound

### **Face the Nation:**

Modise Mokgwathise, Program Director

Tirelo Miano, Office Administrator

Maria Phiri, Facilitator Coordinator & Curriculum Development

Gail Wingreen, Coordinator of Training

Lara Henry, Accountant

### **Sister Ministries**

Pastor James Mpopang, Naledi BC

Pastor Modise Mokgeathise, OBC, G-West

Pastor David Thokwane, Molepolole BC

Pastor Andrew Mwima, Mosojane BC

Pastor Boston Mwebela, Lighthouse BC, Kabwe, Zambia

A short video of Open Baptist Church was shown.

### **Terry Herald, Senior Assoc. Pastor of Whitesburg Baptist Church**

Terry spoke on future plans for theological education. There is a need for harmonizing the message of Christ to all of those that share the Gospel through churches and ministries. This can best be done through theological education. There is also a need for cross-cultural communication. Just prior to the CC meeting, Dr. Terry Herald, Whitesburg Baptist Church; Dr. Phil Roberts, President, Midwestern Baptist Theological Seminary; and Dr. John Brock, Senior Pastor, Highland Baptist Church visited Botswana for the purpose of exploring the possibility of starting theological education classes. Terry distributed a handout which is summarized below.

Hebrews 11:8 Abraham did not have to have all the answers when he went forward for God. Without faith it is impossible to please God, but with faith it is possible. Pastor Terry spoke on how to implement theological education in a cross-cultural community.

- 1) Feasibility – 2010 Where does this school go from here?
- 2) Foundation - A foundation built on Jesus Christ is critical
- 3) Function – Several key areas were addressed
- 4) Formation – OBC needs to legally and officially approve of the ministry & proper documents drawn up
- 5) Funding Considerations –
  - a. Debt free
  - b. Clerical support
  - c. Printed material
  - d. Textbooks, etc.
  - e. Financial commitments from multiple partners
- 6) Facilities - OBC to provide space
- 7) Faculty - minimum of BA, in a few years, minimum of MA
- 8) Future - We don't know what the future holds, but we know who holds the future

Dr. Phil Roberts -3 levels of theological training

- 1) Basic/Primary education
- 2) Advanced/secondary education
- 3) Formalized theological training

2 ways to do “theological education”

- 1) Similar to trade school, taught at church 1-2 nights per week, very affordable, usually not accredited
- 2) 3 part team that does theological education. 3 weeks per year of instruction. 4 year BA degree

This objective, which is part of Save the Nation, is in its infancy. It will take many years to develop, but the work of this team, along with the support of OBC, is a gateway toward achieving this much needed tool for ministry.

#### **Future training courses – Pastor Norman Schaefer**

Pastors will come with an emerging leader from their church. After attending 2 courses, they will receive a certificate. Pastor Norman wants to work with the emerging leaders to develop their abilities.

Jeff Williams – The Church needs to lead the culture, not the culture leading the Church.

#### **Ken Galyean with Call to Africa**

Ken shared of their last trip to Mosojane were they distributed bibles to the very people that helped translate for them but never received a copy. Priority work is in Mosojane as a gateway into Zimbabwe. The great need is for discipleship of those converts. Pula is what the currency is called, which means water. *Note: Ken has openings for his trip in May. The cost is \$3150. Anyone interested in partnering with Ken and Call to Africa should contact Ken immediately. 256.200.0529.*

#### **Sandy & Karen Baird with Manna Worldwide**

Manna Worldwide helps provide humanitarian assistance in various ways including feeding centers (150 worldwide), orphanages, clinics and schools. Priorities are:

- 1) To bring Christian Faith; “if you save a child’s life but lose their soul, what good have you done them?”
- 2) Integrity – 97% of income goes to programs.
- 3) Partnerships with indigenous people and organizations.

4) Community focus such as the schools in Nairobi, Kenya's slums where students are encouraged to continue on into high school.

Karen spoke about the message of hope, that God hears the hundreds of thousands of children that die each year living in poverty. Proverbs 21:13 noted. She shared about Project Biashara - working with the women in the Kenya community to start their own business and feed their own children.

Manna International supports the Tlamelo Feeding Station, a ministry of Naledi Baptist Fellowship with a substantial monthly gift.

### **Kelly Green – Kelly Green Evangelistic Association**

An evangelist for 32 years; in the last 20 years moving to the international scene including Brazil, Germany and most recently Africa. Chose to get involved with healing ministries bringing doctors, nurses, dentists, etc. His passion is equipping the local leaders, since the doors can close at any time. Kelly desires to see authentic harvesting that is true to the call and that has lifetime impact. Kelly's organization works with Water Missions International and other partners across the world.

*Note: Kelly has been a key CC partner by sharing the story, bringing other partners to the ministry, spending time in Botswana ministering to Norman and Gabi, leading evangelist rallies, teaching in Face the Nation and embedding Truth into many throughout the country.*

### **Jim Nutt with One Goal Basketball Ministry at GWest**

Jim shared that before God can use us we have to know what we have. While at GWest he started basketball camps at 4pm daily. Usually each day began with 2 people and finished up with 25. Jim felt the need for a sports program that carried excellence in Botswana. The girls there ate it up stepping up to the plate.

At the end of the program he had 36 in attendance and 37 balls. One ball was flawed. God provided and each attendee received a new basketball.

Jim brings the message of forgetting what lies behind and keeping eyes on Christ. If you are any of your team would like to partner with Jim, he is returning to Botswana in August 2010 for basketball sports camps at OBC and GWest. You may contact him at: 940.390.9681.

### **Brad Thomas with Fresh Start for All Nations**

Fresh Start for All Nations is a Biblical Counseling Ministry. They help people understand the wound or loss that has occurred in their lives. Helping them truly understand the forgiveness from the fullness of Christ in their lives. Fresh Start is partnering with OBC and Face the Nation in 2010.

### **General Information and Requests:**

Jeff Williams commented that since 2006 OBC has gone from being on a .4 acres location to relocating to 40 acres; 22,000 people have come to know Christ through Face the Nation, two couples have committed to long term service in Botswana. While these results are impressive, it is more compelling to realize that God has walked before OBC and the partners to see His Kingdom glorified!

Donna asked that everyone get a G mail address to link into the Close Connection calendar. *Note: If you do not have access to the Google Calendar for Botswana, please send Donna a Gmail address and she will give you access.*

Pastor Norman asked that anyone wanting to make plans to come to OBC see Gabi.

Donna gives thanks to Mark Johnson for the CC web site.

### **Close Connections Survey Results.**

Areas from the survey that need improvement include:

- Overall communication – can be helped by more frequent conference calls between US partners and OBC
- We will begin to publish more frequent updates regarding trip reports, etc. Each traveling group is encouraged to send their trip report to Donna. ([d.pchisam@gmail.com](mailto:d.pchisam@gmail.com))

Jeff Williams said we need to find a way to organize the army of people that want to serve in Botswana. Everyone can go away to pray about where in Botswana God is calling them and match them up with the needs that are there; recognizing those that already have ministry occurring and being methodically and strategic. Please pray, have patience and plan, communicating those plans to those in Botswana.

Pastor Norman and Gabi will identify church plant areas and revitalization that are needed; specifying the gifts needed.

Jeff Williams suggests a chart with types of church plants, location, resources needed. *Note: This is in process and will be available at the next partner's meeting.*

### **Pastor Craig Rees Closed the Session using Matthew 13:1-3**

“That same day” – immediately that same day

“Jesus went out of the house” – the house at Capernaum which is his ministry base. Norman and Gabi are at the ministry base. We should not leverage our own passion onto them. Let them have their home base to go home to rest and be strengthened.

“Jesus came out of the house and sat and great crowds gathered around him so he got in a boat” – Jesus moved so that more people could hear – strategically positioning himself. Ministry needs to move in order for more people to hear.

“So people could hear” - Jesus made himself heard because Capernaum is situated in such a place that there are natural resources to allow sound to travel. Jesus got into a boat because He is a master at using natural resources and the water acted as a sound carrier.

“and the whole crowd stood on the beach and he told them many things in parables.”

“Then the disciples came to Him and said “Jesus, why do you speak in parables?” - They are asking this question because Jesus is doing something very different. They want to know why He did something different this time.

There are so many different styles of getting the word out. No one way is right. We have to be as embracive as Jesus was when it comes to getting the message out. We need to be strategically agile. Pastor Norman does this very well. Jesus did not create a monument, he created a movement.

Pastor Craig closed in prayer.

#### **Next Partner’s Meeting.**

**The next meeting will be in Tampa, Florida, hosted by South Tampa Fellowship, Craig Rees, Senior Pastor. The dates TBD and a message will be forthcoming. We are tentatively looking at November 1-2, 2010.**