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# network

## What Does **RACIAL JUSTICE** Have to Do With **MISSIONS?**

*We asked  
three MTW  
missionaries  
of color.*



**mtw**  
Mission to the World

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# What Does RACIAL JUSTICE Have to Do With MISSIONS?

*We asked three MTW missionaries of color.*

**MTW:** Across the United States, and the entire world, recent violence against Black men and women has sparked sorrow, outrage, and a global conversation about racial justice. How have you been experiencing these events and conversations on the mission field?



**Lauren:** Being on lockdown in Ukraine, things were already difficult. I live by myself, which is fine because I'm an introvert, but at some point it's like—I could use people, or a hug. ... But then when all of this was happening [it got a lot harder].

Every time somebody gets killed in this way it's like a hit against your confidence as a Black person because it just reinforces [this lie] that we're not as important as other people. It's difficult, because you keep seeing people of color in these positions and [you can't help but ask,] "Why does this keep happening?"

I think I'm a valuable person and then things like [the death of George Floyd] happen. And you know about the history of our country, how our ancestors were treated as property, as cattle; families ripped apart; and you realize that for some reason people who look like you are [treated as] lesser. And you know that you have parents or grandparents who have dealt with really terrible things, and you know your own family members have had really terrible experiences with police officers. Crazy things happen that shouldn't happen.

[There's a lifetime of experiences and perspectives that all pile up,] and that's what makes this harder—because of all those things.



**Barbara:** At the church [in England] I'm going to, City Church Manchester, there are two pastors—Matt and Ralph—and I feel that they have their fingers on the pulse of not only the individual but the local body and the body universal. ... So they brought the discussion [about racism] to the table via a Zoom conference. There were four of us on a panel: two Black people, one Asian person, and one bi-racial person. We had the opportunity to share our backgrounds, to share our feelings about perceived racism, and to entertain questions. More than 80 people came, so interest was high.

So, [while this violence is horrific], it has also heightened the interest and willingness of people to talk about these issues, and that's good. ... I feel that the conversation is necessary,

even though it is often uncomfortable. It has amplified in my mind my perception of my value in Christ, but it has also magnified the fact that we are sinners, that we live in a marred world, that this is not God's intention, and a lot of what we see is cultural ignorance. God is sovereign, I'm certain of that, and He's allowed such a time as this.



Lauren (front) and the women on her Odessa, Ukraine, team pose for a photo during a lunch outing.



**David:** After what happened in America people in Australia said: "But what about the Black lives here—Aboriginal Australians and Torres Strait Islanders?" Police brutality in America helped remind people here about [a similar incident that] happened to an Aboriginal Australian who was imprisoned and died in custody. I forgot the exact story, but David Dungay Jr. was being moved to a different cell in prison and was restrained by five officers, sedated, held face down, and then [like with George Floyd], he said he couldn't breathe and then he passed away.

So that's been kind of the focal point for a much larger history. ... So people here have jumped on the Black lives matter [movement]. ... The first protest happened a few weeks ago.

**MTW:** Are the people in your mission field overseas asking you what is going on in the U.S. related to these issues? If so, what do you tell them?

**Lauren:** One of my students in my English ministry messaged me about [George Floyd's death] and said, "This person was a criminal and they deserved to die." They're an atheist, so I realized that I couldn't really talk to them on a Christian level, and that was hard.

I got to the point where I said: “Lord, I know these things are happening, but how can I love in the midst of it? How do I love this person who is saying really offensive things about this very sensitive topic?”

**Barbara:** Some people here will ask me, but most are expressing sorrow or sympathy. They stop by and say: “I’m so sorry about what I hear is going on in America.”



Barbara (front left) gathers with her weekly Friday Bible study group, which includes women from six nations.

**David:** It’s hard. I have to tell them in one sense: “I don’t know [what’s happening]. There’s a lot going on.” ... I tell them that there is a complex history, [and that] there is a lot of injustice.

But you know, things like this actually can become gospel talking points, even evangelistically. ... I also tell them that, as Christians, we should not be surprised when we see injustice because we know about the Fall—that’s the reality of the world and we should expect to see the effects of the Fall. But, for a Christian, there’s also hope. You get to talk about that fact that you believe you’re made in the image of God, which is why we even bother to seek justice. [Justice is] one of the communicable attributes of God, so we have this natural desire to seek it out.

**MTW:** What does racial justice have to do with missions?

**Lauren:** Racial justice sounds like a really big term, but I think it’s really just about loving and caring for your brothers and sisters, their livelihood, and their lives in general. If someone in

this population is being killed, and its continuing, and people are hurt about it, not saying: “Well, that’s deserved,” or “Let’s just forget that this happened.” As Christians, we’re called to mourn with one another, to love one another, to carry each other’s burdens; not to see somebody who is hurting and say, “Here’s some more salt for that wound.”

**Barbara:** This is the way I see it: Justice is a big umbrella, and [our] God is a just God. So anything under that big umbrella of justice is still God’s business. [Whether] racial, cultural, age, or economic injustice—God is still the one that we need to defer to. So I see racial justice as a subset of biblical justice.

That has a lot to do with missions as far as I’m concerned. ... Though we all come from Adam and Eve, there are still differences between Nigerian culture versus British culture versus Malaysian culture. ... And if we are going to be missionaries

## This is the way I see it: Justice is a big umbrella, and [our] God is a just God. So anything under that big umbrella of justice is still God’s business.

immersed in a culture, we need to be well-advised of the cultural differences. And we should not allow invisible, artificial barriers to prevent us from sharing the truth. ... If we’re going to preach the gospel, we need to know other people’s stories, we need to take the time to listen, and we need to recognize our differences.

We’re all made in the image of God, and we need to respect each other. We know that because of sin the garden was marred, the world was broken. ... And I believe that the Church should be at the forefront of how these things can be mended. I also perceive that the Church has probably not stepped forward quickly enough or forcefully enough, [but] this series of tragic events has awakened

many in the Church. But it’s not enough for us to just understand the dynamics: we must do something. And the “doing something” is not only voting or reading a book. It’s inviting someone who doesn’t look like you to a meal. It’s saying: “Tell me your story.” It’s not only me sharing my story, but being willing to hear their story.



David (second from left) prays with students during a Student Outreach to the World camp in Australia.

**David:** If someone says to me: “What’s the primary mission of what you’re doing, of the Church, of the Great Commission?” It is absolutely to make disciples, to spread the gospel, to teach what Jesus taught. ... But Jesus also performed acts of mercy. He physically healed people, fed people, and reached out to those who are lowly and oppressed. ... So when people are oppressed for various reasons—maybe for racial reasons, maybe someone is homeless, maybe someone is in an abusive relationship—there are lots of times where most Christians would say, “These are bad things,” and no one would object to helping. That doesn’t mean that your worldly help is the ultimate end, but you can point people towards Jesus through acts of love and mercy. And so I think that even with the racial [justice issues] that are coming up, whatever you think of the “why,” we can mostly agree that there are things that are ... not ideal, to put it very mildly. Whether you think it’s systemic or it’s all up to individuals, whoever’s fault it is ... we were called to love our neighbors. So are you caught up in political debates or are you trying to err on the side of love?

... Someone once said: “The Psalms are like a window into the human soul.” Often when you see what the psalmists are talking about, they’re just hurting, they’re crying out, or sometimes they’re angry. But ultimately (though not for every single one), they end in hope; they end in praising God. I think that’s something that we’ve lost even in our worship: we pick and choose just happy, feely songs. We don’t know how to lament. I think we’re told by the world just to chin up. And I think the same message comes in the church, like, “How can you be sad? Don’t you know Jesus?” But Jesus wept. ... So there is a place to mourn the fallenness of the world, but we don’t spiral and get lost in that despair because we do know that we have ultimate hope. [\[n\]](#)

30  
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REVELATION 7:9-10

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# 10 CHURCHES in 10 YEARS

2010

Grace City Church  
Tokyo

2013

Double O Cross  
Church

2014

Grace Harbor  
Church

2015

New Community  
Church

2016

The Bridge  
Fellowship

2017

Tokyo International  
Presbyterian Church

2018

Redeemer Church  
of Roppongi

2019

Brand New Life  
Church

2020

Tokyo Center  
Church

## The very first church in Tokyo was planted in the heart of the city in 1597.

Just a few years later, it was burned to the ground. For the next 400 years, not a single church existed in the city's center. Then, just 10 years ago, Grace City Church was planted in cooperation with Redeemer City to City.

Since then, nine more churches have been planted out of Grace City—10 churches in 10 years. It was impossible by human standards—something only God could do.  
*What will God do next in Japan? How could He use you?*

Tokyo International  
Presbyterian Church  
+  
Toysu Community  
Church

Photo: Claire Rodger



# Your Donations to the Compassion Fund Feed the Starving

For many MTW missionaries serving in the emerging world, the COVID-19 pandemic has not only disrupted their ministries, it has begun to slowly kill their most vulnerable neighbors.

In countries where much the population already lives a hand-to-mouth existence, lockdowns mean no income. And no income means no food. As weeks of quarantine stretched to months, people began to starve.

In 13 countries spread across South Asia, Africa, the Middle East, and Latin America, MTW missionaries requested and received money from the Compassion Fund to feed those most severely impacted by the pandemic and lockdowns. These efforts—made possible by more than 750 donors giving over \$460,000 to MTW's Compassion Fund—have almost certainly saved hundreds or even thousands of lives and demonstrated the love of Christ to those in need.



Donation to the Compassion Fund help Ethiopia ACT, a ministry run by MTW missionaries, distribute food in Addis Ababa.

## CARING FOR THE DISPLACED IN AFRICA

For South Sudanese refugees at a camp in Uganda, the situation is dire. Many are wholly dependent on humanitarian agencies for food and soap. When the aid stopped due to perceived COVID-19 risks, their only food supply was suddenly cut off. Money from

the Compassion Fund is enabling an MTW national partner and pastor to feed 1,500 of the neediest congregants from the four Presbyterian churches in the refugee camp, many of whom are widows, orphans, or differently-abled refugees.

Similar missionary- and local church-driven relief efforts are taking place elsewhere on the continent. In West Africa, Compassion money is being used to provide food, sanitary, and disinfection products for more than 3,500 people in five different countries. In Zimbabwe, funds are helping to feed more than 500 families. In Malawi, an MTW church plant and national partners are ministering both to church members and to their neighbors, using the Compassion Fund to provide hygiene, food, and other needed items. Along with these life-saving items, they are also delivering the saving message of the gospel.

## SERVING THE VULNERABLE IN THE CARIBBEAN

When Haiti's first confirmed case of COVID-19 surfaced in late March, the government completely closed the borders—barring entry even to Haitians traveling abroad. Here, too, the poor starve. MTW's ministries had to hit pause, including several church plants, a small seminary, and a school that provides a good Christian education, basic medical care, and free meals to more than 500 children. Your gifts have helped provide basic food staples to over 900 people involved in the ministry, as well as neighbors who have asked us for help.

In Belize, the virus continues to spread, and social services have been stretched to capacity. Thanks to generous donations during the pandemic, the Church is stepping into the gap.

As our broken world groans, the global Church is responding. Of the thousands reached through these missionary-directed relief efforts, each

is receiving the love of Christ in their hour of need, offered by His servants and His Church. [\[Read More\]](#)

**Your help is still needed!**

Please give to support communities in need through MTW's Compassion Fund at [mtw.org/compassion](http://mtw.org/compassion).

# Introducing...Virtual Mission Trips!

WHEN THE PANDEMIC CANCELED INTERNATIONAL TRAVEL, MARTHA BATEMAN TOOK MTW'S SHORT TERM MISSION TRIPS ONLINE.



It was March 2020, Martha Bateman's first month on the job as the MTW Southwest Hub's new youth mobilizer.

Tasked with recruiting youth from PCA churches in her region and organizing short-term mission trips, she had a globe-trotting, life-transforming, Great Commissioning summer all planned out. And then came the global pandemic.

As COVID-19 made international travel more difficult and dangerous, MTW canceled all short-term mission trips, including those that Martha had planned. With these plans thwarted, Martha and Southwest Hub Director Jerry Gibson were forced to adapt and innovate.

Their idea? Virtual mission trips.

Between March and July, Martha organized three week-long virtual mission trips. This series of nightly interactive Zoom calls allowed participants to meet and hear from MTW missionaries, learn more about missionary life, and dig into three particular mission fields: Cambodia, West Africa, and the Texas/Mexico border. People of all ages participated, from high schoolers with their youth groups to families with kids to elderly couples, all eager to engage with missionaries they might not otherwise have a chance to visit.

## A CATALYST FOR MISSIONS CONVERSATIONS

"I've always been interested in missions," said Fatima Briones, a rising college freshman who attended the virtual mission trip to the Texas/Mexico border. "I'm just trying to learn, trying to listen. It's so amazing how God works through people."

While Fatima emphasized that in-person mission trips are irreplaceable, she found that her recent virtual mission trip experience still provided valuable insight into what missionaries' day-to-day life looks like. Now, Fatima plans to explore summer internships with MTW and discern God's calling on her life.

Meanwhile, others used the virtual mission trips as a learning tool and catalyst for conversations about missions and the kingdom of God.

"We were scheduled to go on a mission trip to Mexico this summer, but the pandemic put a wrench in everyone's plan," said Pastor Kevin Arevalo, who leads the youth and community groups at Redeemer Presbyterian Church in Sugarland, Texas. "When this opportunity came up I thought: 'That's going to be great!'"



"One of the missionaries in Mexico was walking around with her iPhone and showing us the [impoverished] neighborhood where she ministers," he said. "Later I thought: 'I wonder if this is the first time that these students used technology to see not a fantasy world on social media, but the brokenness of the world.'"

## MORE ON THE HORIZON

Following the success of these virtual trips, Martha organized a virtual seminar series for college students attending RUF's Summer Conference in July. Now she's planning virtual trips to Honduras for this fall and winter.

While virtual trips aren't a replacement for the boots-on-the-ground experience, they have provided a unique opportunity for individuals and churches to explore missions and connect with global mission fields. Even after the pandemic is over, there's a good chance they're here to stay. [\[Read More\]](#)

# Our Vision for the Pacific Islands

## CITY CHURCH HONOLULU BRIDGES THE PACIFIC

Back in 1988, I accepted a teaching job at a small Christian school on the island of Hawai'i. While there, I met 25 young students who had arrived from the Pacific nation of the Federated States of Micronesia.

BY: PAUL HADIK

Even though I was a geography teacher, I had never heard of a country with that name. Five years later the Lord led me to move to Kosrae, one of the four states of the FSM, where



Members of the Grace Partnership are working together to reach the Islands. L to R: David Choi, Paul Hadik, Mel Mow, John Kim, Matt Eusey, Todd Capen, and Jim Jung.

I spent the next 25 years of my life as an educator, preacher, basketball coach, and debate coach.

In 2017, after 18 years on Kosrae and seven in Chuuk, I returned with my wife, Sepe, and our six children to Hawai'i where we got involved in the Micronesian community and I became an elder at City Church Honolulu, a PCA church, pastored by Rev. John Kim.

### WHAT IS MICRONESIA?

Three major nations make up "Micronesia": The Republic of the Marshall Islands, The Federated States of Micronesia, and

Paul Hadik is an elder at City Church Honolulu.

the Republic of Palau. Their total land mass would barely fill Rhode Island yet they are spread across over 2 million square miles of the North Pacific.

The vast majority of Pacific Islanders, while knowledgeable of Scripture, remain lost and in need of God's saving grace. Traditional belief systems mingled with Western ideas of "church" have resulted in a burdensome religion that emphasizes personal works, ignores grace, and is losing the younger generation.

### MICRONESIANS IN HAWAI'I

Due to a treaty with the U.S., many Micronesians have immigrated to Hawai'i. City Church Honolulu has worked with this community for many years, now with a focus on school-aged children (a weekly Bible study and free meal) and during the pandemic, an outreach of sharing financial support. Our church had planned a vision trip to Kosrae for the summer of 2020, but that unfortunately had to be postponed as all three nations completely locked down their borders.

Having seen the swell of Northern and Southern Pacific Islanders immigrate to Hawai'i over the years, it felt natural for us not only to reach out to these communities here in Hawai'i, but also to focus on the Pacific Islands from where they have been immigrating. Through MTW missionaries like Jim Jung and David Choi, along with other like-minded Christians, we became convinced that the need for solid biblical teaching, discipleship, and training is great on these islands.

Because of that, we are excited to work with MTW and an association of PCA churches in Hawai'i called Grace Partnership. Grace Partnership is, like MTW, committed to church planting and evangelism. God has orchestrated all of these connections and, through His grace, we hope to work together to meet the need for teaching, training, and discipleship in Micronesia. [n](#)

### Please pray

for the Forum on Gospel Revitalisation in Oceania, May 2021, in Samoa. We hope this gathering of Christian leaders from Vanuatu, Fiji, Tonga, Samoa, American Samoa, Australia, New Zealand, and the U.S. will lay the foundations for where God is leading the Island to Island Partnership.

# God Orchestrates a Partnership in the South Pacific

Uaita thought he had his retirement figured out, but that was before he heard about the Island to Island Partnership—and the hope of bringing the same gospel message that had changed his life to his native Samoa.

Look up the religious demographics in the Pacific Islands and you'll see some of the most Christian nations in the world. We're talking over 90% Christian in most of these places.

Missionaries swept through the islands in the 1800s. Mission accomplished, right? God certainly did amazing things through the first missionaries in the Pacific.

So why are we talking about missions and the Pacific?

As is often the case, the full story is a little more complicated than what the statistics tell you.

### JOINING TOGETHER TO REACH THE ISLANDS

MTW missionaries serving in Australia and New Zealand met with the missions arms of three local denominations in 2018. They knew the Islands are heavily churched, but just as heavily saturated with cults, Mormons, Jehovah's Witnesses, the prosperity gospel, cultural nominalism, and syncretism.

So, the Island to Island Partnership was formed. Its first task was to deploy MTW missionaries Jim Jung, Steve Williams, and me to visit the Islands to assess the needs, identify local partners, and begin praying and dreaming with Island leaders about how the gospel could take hold in the Pacific.

That time of assessment reconnected us with an old friend, Pastor Uaita Levi. Jim Jung and I met with Uaita in Samoa where he shared his story with us.

Uaita and his wife, Susana, moved to New Zealand over 40 years ago from their native Samoa. Like most Samoans, they were Christian. When they arrived in their new home, they walked into a church on Sunday, something they had done their whole

lives, but something was different this time. At that church, they heard the true and full gospel for the first time.

Uaita's life changed. He knew this was something precious, and he committed his life to sharing this good news. Uaita became a



BY: DAVID CHOI

Reformed Presbyterian pastor in the Grace Presbyterian Church of New Zealand denomination before recently retiring with plans to move back to Samoa and grow cocoa. He thought he had his retirement figured out, but that was before he heard about the Island to Island Partnership and the hope of bringing that same gospel message that changed his life to his native Samoa.

In a moment of clarity, Uaita realized that God had brought him back to Samoa not just to retire, but to be part of this plan to bring gospel revitalization, to bring the life-giving message of salvation by grace alone through faith alone, to Samoa and to the Pacific Islands.

We are still in the early stages of prayerfully planning and preparing our next steps alongside leaders like Pastor Uaita, but we are excited and hopeful for how God has already been moving and opening doors and hearts in Samoa, Tonga, Fiji, Vanuatu, and American Samoa. [n](#)

David & Julie Choi serve with MTW in Australasia.



Here's a sampling of the virtual events and trainings hosted by our regional hubs:

- Virtual mission trips
- Missionary Q&As
- Equip trainings
- Virtual Bible studies
- Virtual book club
- Student interest meet-ups
- Prayer gatherings

Find your hub and learn more at [mtw.org/events](http://mtw.org/events).

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mtw  
Mission to the World

**Our vision:** The gospel of the kingdom advancing throughout the world.  
**Our mission:** Making disciples among the nations.

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Sometimes the "least of these" have the most to give. This Roma (gypsy) played her heart and gave what she could for those rushing to something "more important"... and probably more fleeting.

Keep an eye out for one of the "least of these." They may have the most to share with you.

Photo: Peter Bakelaar, MTW Missionary

## FROM THE COORDINATOR

## How Does Racial Justice Relate to Missions?

How do we fulfill the Great Commission? We fulfill the Great Commission by making disciples among the nations. This entails two main tasks: First, leading people to receive the sign of baptism marking their inclusion into the community of faith. And second, teaching them to obey everything that Jesus commands (Matt. 28:18–20).

So not only are we to share the gospel with others, we are to teach others how the gospel affects every aspect of our lives: our singleness, our marriage, our children, our work, our role in society, how we treat our neighbors, etc. *Teaching disciples to obey everything that Jesus commands impacts everything, including how we think about racial justice.*

So how does racial justice relate to missions? The credibility of our global witness as heralds of the gospel is diminished by our lack of love for our neighbors here in the U.S. who do not look like us. Conversely, our engagement here in racial justice and reconciliation in Jesus' name, as well as sending and supporting diverse teams of missionaries, is a powerful apologetic to the power of the gospel to break down walls of hostility (Eph. 2:11–22).

In every country where we serve, there are racial or ethnic tensions—many of them stemming from historic abuses, wars, and discrimination. Our challenges in the United States are not unique. The hope that we offer the nations in the gospel is not only the hope of eternal life in the future, but a present relationship with God that has power to reconcile enemies and bring peace. Those we are seeking to reach can see it lived out in the diverse mission teams we send. Therefore, part of teaching others to obey everything that Jesus commands is teaching by our words, actions, and attitudes the power of the gospel in bringing racial/ethnic reconciliation.

Isn't this our story? God has reconciled us, His enemies, to Himself through the sacrificial love of His Son Jesus Christ (Rom. 5:8–11). We are living proof of the reconciling power of the gospel.

As we think about the challenges we face related to racial justice, what hope do we have for real change? I am convinced that in this life our only real hope for change comes through the gospel of Jesus Christ. It is the reason why we are so passionate about sharing the gospel with the nations! **n**



Dr. Lloyd Kim

inside



RACIAL JUSTICE AND MISSIONS



CALLED TO HARD PLACES



COMPASSION FUND FEEDS STARVING