

# GO NEWS

NOVEMBER 10

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## Tragedy IN AFGHANISTAN

**Press Release by International Assistance Mission (IAM), 09/08/2010, Kabul, Afghanistan:**

Today we bring you sad news. It is now confirmed that the bodies of the ten people found in Badakhshan on Friday were those of our missing Nuristan Eye Camp team. This is a sad day, particularly for the relatives and friends of those killed. Our thoughts and prayers are with them all. We pray they will find strength in their faith and in their communities to bear this unbelievable loss.

Our ten colleagues who were killed on Thursday, 5 August, had just trekked one hundred miles back through the Hindu Kush mountains, after giving eye care to some of the poorest and most remote communities in Afghanistan.

The team had driven to Nuristan, left their vehicles and hiked for nearly a day and a half with pack horses over a 16,000 foot high mountain range to reach the Parun valley. A group of local guides had accompanied the team on their trek, and guided them safely back to their vehicles. Shortly afterwards they drove across

a river dangerously swollen by heavy rains, then got out of their vehicles obviously relieved that the difficult part of their trip was over. It was then that a group of armed men attacked the team, killing all but one of its members on the spot.

We want to pay tribute to each of our colleagues who died, and to their commitment to serve the Afghan people. They were:

Dr Tom Little, 61, USA; Mahram Ali, 50, Afghanistan; Cheryl Beckett, 32, USA; Daniela Beyer, 35, Germany; Brian Carderelli, 25, USA; Jawed, 24, Afghanistan; Dr Tom Grams, USA; Glen Lapp, 40, USA; Dan Terry, 63, USA; Dr Karen Woo, 36, UK.

In some news articles, the people on this team have been described as 'saints.' This is not how they saw themselves. They were basically selfless professionals willing to spend their lives and energy in a meaningful way.

Tom Little, the team leader of the eye camp, was the driving force behind much of what has been achieved in eye care in Afghanistan. He is irreplaceable.

IAM has worked in Afghanistan since 1966, as the guest of the people and the government, and our eye care work alone has benefited an estimated 5 million Afghans. As long as we are welcome, we will continue to stay and serve the Afghan people. ☞



MAHRAM ALI



CHERYL BECKETT



DANIELA BEYER



BRIAN CARDERELLI



JAWED



DR TOM GRAMS



GLEN LAPP



DAN TERRY



DR KAREN WOO

The Nuristan Eye Camp team who were murdered in Afghanistan in August.



### TOM LITTLE

Known in Kabul as "Mr Tom," he knew his work was dangerous, and that following God's call could mean losing his life - but it didn't deter him from making Afghanistan his home for 33 years.

Tom learned the language and culture, and used his professional skills to literally help the blind to see, in a place with very little eye care until Tom went to live there. And it was all from the bottom up - he not only did the eye charts and vision tests, but also ground the lenses for the glasses. Later on he set up hospitals and clinics, and trained Afghan staff in eye care, so they could

sustain the work he and others began.

One of Tom's trainees is Dr Abdullah Abdullah, a senior Afghan politician and former presidential candidate. After the murders he publicly paid tribute to Tom's dedication to his people, and labelled the attackers "enemies of the Afghan people".

"We always knew we shared him with the Afghan people," his wife, Libby, said. "We honor God's unique call on his life skills and energy. We believe with Tom that there are some things in life worth dying for."

Tom was buried 21 August in the British Cemetery in Kabul. He is survived by his wife and three daughters. ☞

## FROM THE DIRECTOR

### **Building Community! This is the second of Interserve's five new 'International Priorities', but what do we actually mean by it?**

Right from the start we catch a glimpse that community is of key importance to a triune God. He introduces Himself in the relational plural 'Let us create...' and in that context His creation of man and woman as His most excellent masterpiece points to His intent – to share the love, relationship and togetherness that already existed within the Godhead. Mission is simply working with God towards making this a global reality – people reconciled into meaningful relationship with Himself.

When Jesus walked the Earth He demonstrated this by giving Himself, very intentionally, to a small group of men and women. Yes, He also

preached to crowds and had a thriving public ministry – but it was the small, dedicated band of friends He mentored and invested in who became the nucleus of a rapidly expanding movement, a movement that changed the world!

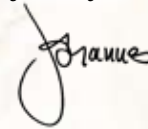
We are part of this movement which still creates ripples and waves around the globe. Mission is not projects and strategies and targets, but continually deepening and widening relationships that allow His love to flow unimpeded.

Thirty-so years ago when I travelled the hippie trail through Afghanistan, I met a man who invited me in for a meal, and shared the love of Christ with me. He gave me a book to read on my travels - C.S. Lewis's 'Mere Christianity' – and a few months down the track, in India, Jesus became a reality for me. That man's

name was Tom Little. In this GO News we honour Tom and his team who paid the ultimate price for their service to God: I will be forever grateful to the optometrist of Kabul who helped open my blind eyes to the Light!

Please pray with us that we will continue to let Christ's love flow through building community. If you would like to receive the complete version of 2010 – 2014 International Priorities, please contact our office.

Blessings on your journey...



## DEAR Friends...

### **Last night Linda and I sat in our garden for a dinner of take-away chicken. It was too hot in the kitchen to cook. Our guests were late – who knew when they would get in from their eye camp.**

We made arrangements to cook them pancakes when they arrived. Maybe it would be the next day before they showed up. They had to come through our city on the way back to Kabul because the mountain passes were blocked with fresh snows.

As we sat at the table Linda noted the oppressive atmosphere. Monsoon rains were flooding Pakistan across the mountains from us. But the humidity in our valley had risen, promising rain but never delivering, making the heat so unbearable. And the light was a strange amber lending an eerie feeling to the twilight.

"Look," I said, "there's not even the slightest breeze." The highest leaves on the trees sat stationary as if formed of stone.

Through the night our phone rang several times and an anxious morning confirmed our worst fears. "Ten bodies, including eight foreigners, found in northern Afghanistan" was announced over the news websites. Our guests would not be coming.

The eye camp was led by our long-time friend Tom Little.

I had seen him only a few weeks before as he was planning the trip to a remote corner of the world – Nuristan. The name means "land of light" and few attempt to go there because of its isolation. How appropriate an eye camp from the NOOR project would go and help.

Hundreds of patients had been seen. The team had packed their supplies back across the mountain pass to the vehicles they had left a week earlier in the southern district of our province. Tom checked-in by sat phone as they were packing the vehicles and that was the last anyone heard of them.

Linda and I knew most of the team well but our grief can never touch the grief of the families of those who died. We had never met the visiting dentist from the USA nor the visiting pediatrician from the UK. They came along to add depth to the medical work. But we did know Brian, the young videographer who had stayed with us in March so he could film the local sport of buzkashi. We had eaten with Cheryl earlier in the summer

when we were down in Kabul.

Daniela had taken us under her wing to help re-orient us to Afghanistan when we returned last year. Glen was a great companion and a kindred spirit. Dan had taught our children to shoot baskets and drive his jeep back when we lived in Mazar.

And Tom had been a mentor and friend for thirty-four years. Back when Linda and I met in Kabul in the early 1970's, Tom led our humble community outreach to hippies. When we left, he and his wife Libby stayed on – through the time of the communists, and the Mujadeen, and the Taliban.

Who knows who killed the team and why. What makes sense in days like these?

The sky is clear now – blue draped with high clouds. A wind is blowing through the trees.

Inside my heart is an oppressive heat – windless – and I wait for the weather to change. ☹

*Joel and Linda*



## ON TRACK NEWS

**Our On Track programme offers short-term service opportunities, that give a taste of what mission to the hard places is like. For ages 18-75+, On Trackers serve from one month up to two years. Planning a gap year, OE, elective, sabbatical? Or wondering what to do in retirement? Contact us to arrange your tailor-made service opportunity!**

### Expecting the unexpected

**Steve and Liz and their two daughters, aged 9 and 13, recently returned from six weeks On Track in South East Asia.**

“After an invaluable orientation held by the IS Country Team Leaders, we were placed for three weeks with a community development agency that focuses on literacy. We were involved in leading English speaking classes, story telling, and other programmes at schools, tertiary institutions and

nearby villages. It was challenging and rewarding work and we quickly learned to expect the unexpected.

“I (Steve) also gave a guest lecture at the law school of the local university and did some business training with the leaders of the agency. That was very challenging in that it required me to try to quickly come to grips with a very different business model operating in a completely foreign context. What I enjoyed most about it was getting to know the National Director, and to understand something of his passion for the work of his organisation.

“Next we spent two weeks with a community development organisation, where we helped the Director address some organisational structure issues in a changing environment. He was very encouraged by what we were able to offer him, and we left there with a sense that our visit was very much in God’s timing.

“Overall, our On Track experience was a roaring success. We felt hugely supported by Interserve, our family and church, and are so pleased we chose a placement which allowed us to bring our children. The experience for them was as rich as it was for us.

“We feel privileged to have had the opportunity to get close to some remarkable people, and to see first hand the results of their sacrifice and dedication as they serve God and the people of their country.

“Would we encourage others to have a go at an On-Track adventure like ours? You bet! It isn’t cheap, it isn’t easy, and there will be times when you will wish you were back home. Times when you just want familiar food, clean water, and a cool breeze, but then you remember the bigger purposes of life and you start to see things in God’s context. At that moment you wouldn’t want to be anywhere else...” ✨

## PARTNER NEWS

**Long-term Partners form the core of our mission, serving some of the neediest people in Asia and the Arab world. We have more than 800 Partners worldwide, from many diverse cultures and nationalities. Contact us to learn more about how your faith, life experience and professional skills can change lives.**

### Teaching life skills to orphans

**Hope is a youth worker in Central Asia. Since April 2009 she has been working with an international NGO that helps children who grow up in orphanages to develop practical and relational skills in preparation for independent living.**

“The project started in 2002 after research confirmed that most of the children raised in orphanages were highly institutionalised and unable to cope in the real world.

“We aim to fill some of the severe gaps in the children’s developmental, academic and life skills education by providing life lessons (about values, and consequences, for example), and teaching practical skills such as cooking, how to use a computer, and how to catch a bus. We also help them build a support network by recruiting and training local volunteers to work with us.

“Five months ago, at the request of the government, we began a pilot programme to assist orphanage ‘graduates’ transition from institutional life to independence. Our first two graduates to enter the programme were 18-year-old Gulya and Aliya, both of whom had grown up in orphanages.

“Gulya and Aliya moved in with me, and we started to work with them on basic living skills such as budgeting, shopping, cleaning – and cooking. On their second night with me I showed them how to make plov (a rice dish), and just a week later the two of them cooked plov for three guests. It was an impressive success, especially as their previous kitchen experience consisted only of washing dishes and chopping vegetables for salads!

“We helped them write their CVs, and, terrified but ready, they started knocking on doors looking for work. Within an hour and a half they both had job offers!

“Because Aliya’s job was down the other end of town, I took the bus with her so that she could learn how to get herself there. At journey’s end Aliya handed over the fare and was given the equivalent of five cents change, which she promptly tossed in the bin. I suggested that next time she decided she didn’t need her money that she give it to someone who did.

That wasn’t Aliya’s only incident related to wasting money, but the calculation of how much five cents a day became over a year at least made her think. But it wasn’t until she started getting her pay packet that she realised how much money she didn’t have, and what she couldn’t pay for with what she did have, that it started to click: she has now become very frugal.

“Gulya and Aliya have recently moved into their own flats. They stop by on their days off for tea, or we go for a walk, but they are both settling well into their new homes and enjoying the challenge of learning to live with their new flatmates.

“We are impressed with how they have met a significant amount of challenges and worked through them - they have learnt so much in a short time, and have really gained confidence and maturity.

“Next year we hope to be able to work with more graduates in the same way. Through our experience with Aliya and Gulya, together with needs expressed by the current group of will-be graduates, we have started running transition readiness classes. These sessions seek to cover practical issues as well as issues related to our young people understanding their own behaviour and character.” ✨

## BOOK CORNER

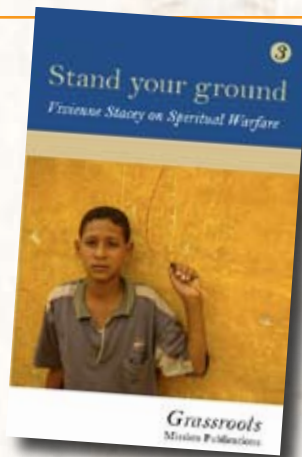
**Stand Your Ground** is a collection of the writings of Vivienne Stacey on spiritual warfare.

Vivienne (1928-2010) lived a very long and fruitful life as a 'stateswoman' for mission in the Muslim world. She went to Pakistan with Interserve in 1954, but her work developed into a global ministry of teaching and writing.

She has written much to help Christians understand Islam and to minister to Muslims, and also on the role of women in mission. Her most unique contribution, though, has been her writings on spiritual warfare. These are based on her understanding of, and experience with, the spiritual forces of evil. This book contains Vivienne Stacey's best on that theme.

*"Give us more long-term people like Vivienne. These are the people impacting the Muslim world."*

John Stringer, *St Francis magazine*



RRP \$18.95 (USD) + P&H

### TO ORDER

email [editor@stfrancismagazine.info](mailto:editor@stfrancismagazine.info)

or contact the Interserve NZ office

## VACANCIES

Contact us to learn more about these positions. Many more vacancies are available on our website.

**BANGLADESH** Teacher for a Year 5 class is urgently needed, to start January 2011 (1 year+).

**ARAB WORLD** Sports teacher needed for a 1000-pupil school (2 years+). [395]

**AFRICA** Church planters needed to establish indigenous, self-reproducing churches (2 years+). [57]

**ARAB WORLD** Advocacy & Development Manager needed for a human rights organisation (2 years+). [52]

**ARAB WORLD** Accountant urgently needed by an NGO (3-6 months). [505]

**CENTRAL ASIA** OTs/Physios urgently needed for a range of short and long term job opportunities. [407]

**ARAB WORLD** Social worker needed to help government develop a foster care system (2 years+). [454]

**INDIA** Short-term Paralegals with a knowledge of Indian Law. [469]

CHECK OUT OUR WEBSITE! Have you visited us lately? Did you know that back copies of GO are available for download? You can also make secure online donations! [www.interserve.org.nz](http://www.interserve.org.nz)



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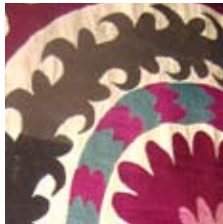
INTERSERVE DAY 2011



### KEYNOTE SPEAKERS

**Lyn Pearson** (AUST)  
IS Regional Director for SE Asia and the Pacific. Lyn lived in Central Asia for many years, and worked in development projects and TEE.

**Ellen Alexander** (INDIA)  
International Director of People Development



REGISTER NOW!

0800 446 464  
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**WHEN** 9:30 am - 4:30 pm, 2 April 2010  
**WHERE** Royal Oak Baptist Church, Auckland  
**COST** \$30 (\$20 if registered by 11 March), \$5 discount for students/unwaged  
**RSVP** by 25 March. Registration is needed for catering purposes.

## WWW RESOURCES

Here are some great mission resources available on the Internet.

>> <http://www.kitab.org.uk>

Kitab is a provider of literature, DVDs and videos in more than 35 languages to help serve Christians in their outreach to peoples of other faiths.

>> <http://www.gmi.org>

This website provides world-class research to inform, equip and connect the Church with resources for more appropriate and effective mission...

>> <http://missions.org.nz>

Missions Interlink offers a wide range of information on people, organisations and resources focused on cross-cultural mission in, from and to NZ.

>> [www.visionnetwork.org.nz/lausanne/780-what-delegates-thought.html](http://www.visionnetwork.org.nz/lausanne/780-what-delegates-thought.html)

Feedback by four NZ delegates to the recent Lausanne III Congress in South Africa.

0800 446 464  
[www.interserve.org.nz](http://www.interserve.org.nz)

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09 630 0981  
[talk2us@interserve.org.nz](mailto:talk2us@interserve.org.nz)

Interserve NZ  
PO Box 10244, Dominion Rd  
Auckland 1446, New Zealand

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