



this issue

Teaching Korean MKs in Mongolia pp.1-2

From the Projects and Placements Director p.3

Flourishing Future pp.4-5

Transformation TRACC pp.6-7

Project Planning - Start at the End pp.8-9

Work Experiences with FARM pp.10-11

Goings and Comings p.12

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Teaching Korean MKs in Mongolia

by Naomi

It has been about ten months since I walked into my first classroom, a terribly green teacher with a month's experience and a backpack of English teaching binders to my name. Though I was looking forward to my assignment, I was consumed with anxiety about teaching *high schoolers*—after all, few people believe I am not one myself, and I could not tell yet who was going to be intimidating whom.

Strangely, it is not the fear, the learning curves, or the pile of challenges that stand out most from that first semester. It is the moments that I would recall at the end of the day, the ones that I would write in my journal because I wanted to remember them 12 months and years from now. For instance, that particularly rough day a few weeks after I started, when one of the school pastors stopped me to say, "Every time I look at you,

continued on p.2

Naomi
from the USA,
is a JCS short-term
volunteer with
UBMK through
OMF Serve Asia.

"...and
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"I'm
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Naomi (second front left)
and her students

Teaching Korean MKs in Mongolia *continued from p.1*

I thank God for sending you to teach our children!" Or the day when fellow teachers showed me how to bow like a Korean gangster as opposed to the ordinary Korean's bow.

Being an English language/Computer teacher at UBMK means much more than writing editorial composition lesson plans or explaining when to use the gerund and when the infinitive. It means holding back a chuckle and giving good advice when your 12th-grader laments his inability to date the girl of his choice. It means catching a taxi with a student and learning he was up the entire night completing a major English project—and then for me to do the unthinkable and allow him to sleep through my class! It means donning a sports vest and forever destroying the idea that every American excels at basketball. And it means zeroing in on the only purpose of life when at the end of the day a 10th-grader walks into the teachers' room, where I am the only one left, and admits he is struggling with intense spiritual concern.

Ministering among the children of a micro-Christian community presents a unique set of challenges. Nearly every one of my students is thoroughly acquainted with the fundamentals of the Bible; most of them display a remarkable level of character and ethics. Ministering to the children of Korean doctors, pastors and teachers is not exactly equivalent to working among orphans, street children, or even your average Mongolian schoolchild. The processes are different, but what I am learning is that the core is the same: love. And for me, who abhors the colloquial or cliché, that is not a formulaic answer—it truly has been a process of discovery for someone who has never excelled at the standard words and gestures of affection.

I remember specifically the day when one of the girls I teach asked me, "Teacher, do you love us? Do you really love us?"

I was stunned. Of course I loved them! That day was a turning point in how I purposefully related to my students. Doing was not enough. A child does not just need an extra half hour

of tutoring; the clingy 9th-grade girl needs an extra hug and the negligent 11th-grade boy needs an "I'm proud of you". Every day, every class, every interaction needs to be flavored and filled with the genuine love of Christ. The children often know as well as I do the way of the Bible; what they need is to see and feel the results of that way in those who guide them.

This is nothing new or groundbreaking, of course. But once my student asked me that question, I realized that often it is through the students themselves that God is teaching me the greatest lessons.

*to see
Mongolians*

BUILDING AND RESTORING

families, churches, and communities

From the Projects and Placements Director

by Charles Jackson

This Horizons issue again updates you on the variety of projects and placements which are available in Mongolia. In the course of the last 5 years that I have been the Projects and Placements Director, there has been a gradual move in JCS from implementing JCS projects to providing personnel for JCS partner agencies. For outsiders this move has hardly been noticeable because many of our projects have now become independent and are being run as Mongolian NGO's by Mongolians. However, we continue to provide them with professional volunteer advisors, so you still hear about many of their activities. Many of these advisors encourage their donors to support the JCS partner that they are involved with, creating long-term sustainability.

Just this past year we have seen the ArtisAltai Project become the ArtisAltai Co-operative. We continue to help them build their finance and sales team, as well as link

them with like-minded organizations that we know, to help them grow and serve their community. The Hellbergs recently left Mongolia to resettle in Sweden; one of their workers is attempting to set up a business with other former workers to keep the vision and work of Eternal Springs Café alive as a local business and youth outreach.

Besides providing professional advisors to our partners, we also offer opportunities for people to come, observe and work with our partners and learn what they are doing. These people may come as "tourists" to observe the partners' activities, as interns in order to learn from our partner organizations, or as graduates seeking practical experience.

As you have read, Mongolians are moving from doing the project work to leading the project work. We also hope that Mongolian NGO leaders will start exporting their knowledge and experience;

in some cases this is already happening. Some examples are: dryland farming and environmental care.

JCS not only regards this as the practical outcome of our vision to see Mongolians building and restoring families, churches and communities; JCS also finds that the projects which have the longest-term impact are the ones in which Mongolians have caught the project vision and are making it their own.

We are excited to see this transition even in our own JCS office as we hope to have Mongolians join our Leadership Team. This will mean changes, but any living organism must change/grow or die. We pray that these changes will bring a stronger support to JCS'ers, to our partners and projects in this country.

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Flourishing Future

by Ben Selin

"Such families have to decide between buying food or medicine, medicine or heat, heat or education."

The *ger* districts of Ulaanbaatar could be considered both slums and developing suburbs of the capital city of Mongolia. Many have moved from the countryside after losing their livestock due to a harsh winter called a *dzud*. Many come with just a few belongings, their family, their *ger*, and hope that they can find work and education for their children. But it is very hard to find work due to lack of needed skills and simply lack of employment. Many lose hope and try to escape into alcohol.

But alcohol produces addiction, poor decision-making, abuse of all kinds, and financial ruin.

These are the families that Flourishing Future NGO is seeking to assist. There are many poor, but there are also the suffering poor. Such families have to decide between buying food or medicine, medicine or heat, heat or education. These are the families where there just is not enough to obtain absolute necessities.

Flourishing Future runs many programs: there is a head-start

program to prepare children who have no kindergarten or preschool to go to. A food program provides basic nourishment such as flour, oil, powdered milk, and rice. A football program is also in place in order to train many young boys in the area. English classes are available too. A Moms' group meets twice a week for young children to play together and for the mothers to have time to talk and share. There are several social workers who go out into the community and check up on a large number of

continued on p.5





Summer camp for orphans

Flourishing Future continued from p.4

families they have had contact with and that they are following up. We are also closely connected with Desert Rose, a girls' shelter that provides a home for about 25 girls who are endangered, homeless, and/or abused.

Flourishing Future also has a long-term relationship with the state orphanage. There we have one full-time English teacher; another of our staff is there several times a week to meet one-on-one with the over 100 children who live there, checking up on them and providing someone to talk to. All these children go to a

summer camp where they are housed for all 3 months of the summer. Flourishing Future brings in teams for one month to organize games and activities for these children. But the biggest gift that can be given is simply love and attention. The summer camp is one of the highlights of their year, and for some the highlight of their lives.

The roles Jody and I have are still developing, as we are in the process of getting a good grasp of all of the work here. Currently my role is as an English teacher, while Jody and our children participate

and assist in the many activities of Flourishing Future. We would appreciate your prayers for us to gain a clear understanding of the vision the Lord has for us here in Mongolia, and the vision He has for Flourishing Future. Also, of course, your prayers for our language study are essential: we need to be able to speak good Mongolian so much!

For more information, see: <http://www.flourishingfuture.com/>

"The summer camp is one of the highlights of their year, and for some the highlight of their lives."



Ben Selin and his family from the USA, are JCS volunteers with Flourishing Future through WMPL.



"...to share information about addiction and recovery with the public..."

Transformation TRACC - **TR**aining **And** **C**ounseling Center for addiction recovery by Hishgee

When I was young, I could not imagine that one day I would help those who are dependent on alcohol. All I was dreaming of at that time was that even if I had to be very poor or have nothing to eat, that would be fine as long as my father would stop getting drunk on vodka all the time. Due to God's grace, the unimaginable happened and my father became a Christian and stopped drinking. Our whole family was transformed! God also started healing my wounded heart and filling it with a desire to help alcoholics to be set free.

In 2005, when I started to work in JCS, I saw that

many men and women who were divorced and lived on the street because of alcohol addiction came to faith in Christ, were freed from their addiction, found a new purpose in life, returned to their families and started contributing to society through their involvement with Celebrate Recovery.

On a hot summer day in the JCS office, a man called Sandag came to see us and shared how his life had changed through CR. His testimony and joy encouraged us very much! Such things often happen; they make me feel grateful that I am part of God's wonderful work. I want to continue to see people's

lives transformed and their families restored.

Our aim is to share information about addiction and recovery with the public, and also to train people so that they are better equipped to work with recovering alcoholics. We have changed our project name from Celebrate Recovery to one which expresses our vision and goals more clearly. It is now called Transformation TRACC (TRaining And Counseling Center for addiction recovery).

We continue to organize CR Leadership training, Teleios training (equipping lay counselors), Addictive Behavior Counseling training, and semi-

continued on p.7





Zorigbaatar (second left)
at a CR training

Transformation TRACC *continued from p.6*

nars about addiction recovery. In addition, we are planning to start an Addiction Counselors Development Program and to organize seminars for the general public about addiction recovery and prevention. In 2015, when we evaluated our activities, we realized that we had to develop a counseling service. So we needed to find a safe and comfortable place for counseling, where help is always available. We are still looking for such a place. If you want to contribute to our counseling program, please go to www.transformationtracc.org for more information, including prayer topics.

Zorigbaatar's testimony

My name is Zorigbaatar. 8 years ago I was a shaman. Although I told people that I would help alcoholics and set them free from their addiction, I was an alcoholic myself! Because a friend of mine tried to persuade me for over 2 years to join his church's CR group, and because my life started disintegrating, I swallowed my pride and started attending this group. Soon I came to faith in Christ, stopped being a shaman, got rid of the idols in my house and stopped drinking. I also had to get rid of my sins and find healing for the wound in my heart. Since

2009 I have been serving in CR; I attend the CR project trainings to be equipped for working with recovering alcoholics. It is amazing that I, who was once an alcoholic and a shaman, now work as a Christian counselor in a different organization, lead a CR group and serve as a church leader. My purpose in life is to tell others how there is real freedom for men and women who are in bondage to idols and alcohol.

*"...I was
an
alcoholic
myself!"*



If you want to receive TRACC's monthly newsletter, contact them directly at: tracc@transformationtracc.org

"...the best advice I can give people who want to start a project is to start at the end."



Project Planning – Start at the End

by Charles Jackson

Some of the best advice I can give people who want to start a project is to start at the end. It may seem counterintuitive, but it works. In our project documents we ask people first to write down their vision or their goals, because these express where they are planning to go, or “end” up.

A vision statement usually should be broad enough to make it seem unachievable. That pushes us to think about what it would look like in an ideal world with an ideal outcome. Peace on Earth and Goodwill to All is a Christmas

vision, but it will not be achieved until the old things have passed away. However, God had goals along the way that would be the steps toward fulfilling this vision. It included the hard work that only God could do, but it also included an “exit” strategy for God. This was the transition or handover to us. Right from the beginning we heard words like “Follow me!” and “When I leave, you will be expected to do this” and “Go out and do what I am doing and come back and tell me how it went.” God, who could have been with us forever, had an exit-and-hand-over strategy. But

we mortals will have to leave at some time, so we need to plan our own exit-and-hand-over strategies.

Mark Cuban has been quoted as saying, “Do not start a company unless it is an obsession and something you love. If you have an exit strategy, it is not an obsession.” I would agree with this statement, because an obsession is about me and me doing what I love. I would suggest that as the Body we are called not be obsessed, but to be passionate, or to suffer for a purpose. A wholistic vision of life and what I should be doing is

continued on p.9





Project Planning – Start at the End continued from p.8

necessary to make the world a better place for others. I am successful when this effort is multiplied and others join me in this task. Therefore, my exit will be just a small blip on the screen of eternity if others have also picked up this vision.

Even creation was planned right from the beginning with its goal results and exit strategies. These are the prophetic words we read. In creation, what were the results needed to make a plan and a future that would give us hope? Do our projects do the same? Are there those who will carry this on? Do others believe the vision of the changes we want to see happening, or is

it only our vision? To what extent does the vision of our project/work serve the greater good of the community? Are there tools in place for those who come after me to continue the vision? Are the people who want to carry on this vision trained to use the tools they have? What will be the ongoing follow-up to ensure long-term success? When will we give others the joy and the burden of full responsibility for our project?

The most important thought about our vision and transition strategy is, "Have we communicated this to our partners and beneficiaries?" It is "my vision" when I am doing it and they do not know what

I am doing. It is "our vision" when we plan together and know where we are going. It is God's vision when we know that what we are doing has eternal impact.

Making a project plan by starting at the end is like a good thesis statement in a book; it ensures that all the work we do is focused on the results we want and expect. It cuts away the activities and expenses that are not going to get us where we need to go. Looking at the end is not only a good idea for our projects, it is actually a great way of planning our daily lives.

"When will we give others the joy and the burden of full responsibility for our project?"

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Work Experiences with FARM

by Nate Andersen

You may be surprised to hear that when I grew up, I did not want to have anything to do with farming! It is only by the grace of God (and a little redirection) that I am here today.

In a few days, it will be four months since I stepped off a plane and was ushered into a small airport room all by myself: the authorities had to deal with some slight technical visa difficulties. Several months later, I have found that first experience to be fairly representative of my time here. Nothing works out quite as I thought it would, but there is a special Mongolian ingenuity that manages to get

everything straightened out in the end, even if it takes a third battery to get the truck started!

There is only so much preparation one can do before immersing oneself in a new country. The hardiness of the Mongolian people never ceases to amaze me. Many of the locals that I have come into contact with through FARM are great examples of a willingness to struggle forward. These former herders, who have often lost everything because of the severe winters here, are trying to scrape an existence off dry and rocky ground at an elevation of 6,000ft (1800m) or more with little or no expe-

rience and insufficient equipment. I do not know a single farmer in the USA who would ever bother to try and farm such a place without the proper tractors and irrigation equipment. But I am glad to say that there are now a few thousand hardy farmers in this country who are directly and indirectly affected by the work of FARM.

I have been able to participate in much of this work, travelling with Turkhoo (FARM's director) to many places all across Mongolia. Our work has involved greenhouses, field sites, soil testing, planting, planning for the future and soon for the harvest.

continued on p.11





Work Experiences with FARM *continued from p.10*

I am reminded of a saying, "Farmers are patient; if they weren't, they wouldn't be farmers anymore." That holds true here, especially as regards my first experience planting potatoes. What a long day that was! We arrived at the farm early one morning and began to uncover the root cellars where the seed potatoes are kept for the winter. To get the potatoes out of the cellar we used a strange contraption made of scrap metal (I am pretty sure one of the handles was once a PTO shaft) to lower one of the workers down into the hole. He proceeded to tie a rope around two sixty-pound bags of potatoes which a couple of us would then hoist up from the hole. We did this for seven tons of potatoes that day. Each of those bags then had to be loaded by hand into

an old Russian potato seeder, which still worked pretty well after three or four welding jobs. At the end of the day I had a sore shoulder but was happy as a clam to be covered in dirt for the first time since arriving in Mongolia. I have not been back to that farm since, but in a few weeks I hope to be there again to harvest those same potatoes.

I think that often we skim over the parable of the sower/farmer in the Bible and move on to the caring shepherd. We just accept that some soils are good and others are bad and that the farmer simply does not care. I do not think that that is the case, though. I think of the stone walls in Ireland and the Midwest (USA), built by caring individuals who took the time to

remove the rocks and thorns from the soil one at a time. We too have a Lord who cares for those who are not perfect soil to begin with. If we let Him, He will pluck the thorns and remove the rocks from our lives one by one and provide us with a chance to become good soil. In turn, we can and should produce fruit for our kind and attentive Master. Just as the Good Shepherd will leave the ninety-nine for one, so the Good Farmer will train the vine of our lives and trim the unneeded and harmful branches so that the strong stem that is connected to Him may produce an abundance of fruit.

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*Nate Andersen
from the USA,
is a language
student and
JCS volunteer.*

Goings

The OMF Team consisting of David Hamilton, Silas Moe, Hannah Newman, Lauren Lalli, and Isabel Pooley arrived in Mongolia just in time to run the children's program at the JCS spring retreat. Since then they had a very busy schedule of travel and forging new relationships. They left on 1 August.

Vivien and Alessia Osele will leave JCS and Mongolia later in August. They have been here since early July and have been involved with Streams and FARM.

Nate Andersen will leave in September. Since early spring he has been doing language study and volunteering with FARM.

Ben Withers, a Waste Management specialist from the UK, was here for three weeks, acting as a consultant for Bethel and FARM. This was Ben's third visit to JCS and Mongolia.

Comings

Bert and Elisabeth Mensert from the Netherlands plan to arrive on 19 August. They are coming through ISV Holland and expect to be here long term. They will start their time in Mongolia with language study.

Jakob Svahn and Solomon Tlang Lian from Sweden expect to join us for 9 months this September. They will be studying Mongolian language and culture and during their free time they will be volunteering in connection with various JCS activities. They are coming through Interact's Step Out program.

Rahel Habegger from Switzerland expects to arrive in September. She will also do language study and in her spare time volunteer in work with young children. Rahel is coming through the OMF Serve Asia program.

Important dates

JCS Board Meeting
25 and 26 April, 2017

Annual General Meeting
27 and 28 April, 2017



*The OMF Serve Asia team
at a countryside Naadam*