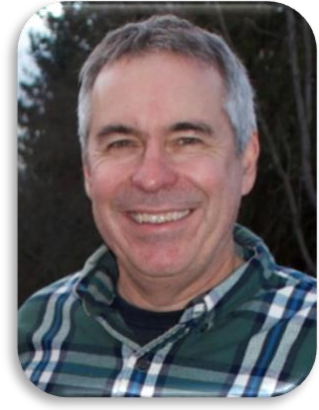




Phil Linton  
*Director*

**World Outreach Committee**  
Report to the 41<sup>st</sup> General Assembly



Rick Dietzman  
*Chairman*

**Summary of Work, 2020-2021:**

1. Provided crisis support to many global workers (including three support teams sent to give face-to-face help).
2. Provided resources to key national partners.
3. Converted face-to-face events to online workshops to train EPC members in cross-cultural ministry across their own communities.
4. Appointed new WO global workers after an extensive assessment process that culminated in a four-day video conference with 15 candidates spread across 14 time zones.
5. Began formation of a task force to encourage and care for people of color that want to launch into full-time missions.
6. Updated WO policies.

**Recommendations to the 2021 General Assembly:**

None

## **Work of the Committee in 2020-2021:**

Caring for World Outreach global workers in crisis was a significant part of the committee's work this year. The committee spent much time encouraging missionary families working through difficult personal and ministry challenges, as well as celebrating with those that have seen success despite this season of uncertainty. One example was the quick-response Member Care Team dispatched to Lebanon to help personnel traumatized by the Beirut port explosion on August 4, 2020. Three separate visits over the course of three months helped our global workers regain their equilibrium and joy.

Political turmoil in Africa and Asia put great strain on national Christian leaders who are key partners of World Outreach. In one case, we responded quickly with emergency relief funds that allowed national believers to feed starving neighbors—to the amazement of state media. In another case, our theological educators quickly prepared and presented a video seminar to national Pastors who urgently requested help on the topic, "Looking for Wisdom in Times of Civil Unrest." And in a third case, a WO global worker used emergency funds to personally deliver aid to victims of a devastating fire in the world's largest refugee camp. In each case, our response enabled our partners to present and embody the gospel to people in desperate need.

In recent years, World Outreach has devoted considerable resources to develop opportunities for EPC congregants to learn how to effectively engage cross-culturally across their communities. Last year we converted many of these opportunities from face-to-face events to virtual workshops. The same was true about training events for national Christian partners. Though there were definite losses, there were also great gains in the switch to virtual training—students in distant locations were able to participate, timid participants felt more at ease, and costs dropped dramatically.

There were a number of significant personnel changes in World Outreach in the past year. The approaching transition to a new WO Executive Director colored many of our discussions and decisions, but did not impede the work. One global worker family "graduated" from World Outreach by successfully bringing their church planting effort to maturity. The church they started four years ago is now thriving to the degree that it is able to provide full financial support for its multi-person pastoral staff! Another global worker's poor health (exacerbated by COVID) required withdrawal from the field. And a third global worker completed his short-term commitment and returned to the States for further education which may lead to long-term re-appointment in the future.

In the "additions" column, the committee welcomed 14 new global worker appointees, and launched four recent appointees into service. Several of these appointments break new ground for World Outreach—a church-planting internship in downtown Tokyo, and a consulting business in a country of difficult access. Others are crucial reinforcements for EPC Engage 2025 church-planting teams. The committee also rejoiced to see two new roles filled within WO: Thomas Davis as a Church Engagement Coordinator, and Phil Thrash as a Lead Intercessor.

Beyond the mundane (but vital!) work of updating policies and procedures, the committee also began the process of forming a task force to care for and engage people of color that are interested in launching into full-time missions.

Finally, at this year's General Assembly we reach the end of a five-year prayer initiative for spiritual breakthrough among the Malay people. Many have prayed this before us (for example, our WO global workers Mac and Rhoda Bradshaw started praying for and sharing with Malays back in the late 1950s!). But as another global worker in Malaysia wrote, "this prayer effort by the EPC tipped the heavenly scales to create a prayer *movement*...."

History of EPC Prayer for Spiritual Breakthrough Among the Malay People:

- 6/2013 WO workers and Pastor Koh separately start two monthly prayer meetings.
- 6/2016 At WO Banquet, 149 commit to pray 1x/week for Malay.
- 9/2016 Weekly prayer email (to the 149) begins.
- 10/2016 525 Prayer Initiative launched in Malaysia.
- 2/2017 Pastor Koh violently abducted (not heard from since).
- 6/2017 EPC WO renews Year of Prayer for the Malay (also in 2018).
- 6/2019 525 Malay Prayer Guides distributed; EPC recommits for two more years.
- 6/2021 Prayer initiative ends. The number of weekly intercessors grew from 149 to 1,000. Many more local believers engaged in disciple-making and prayer. Verified reports of people coming to faith and forming groups.

May more and more of the 20,000,000+ Malay people find their greatest joy in God!

**Committee Members**

- TE Rick Dietzman (Chairman), Presbytery of the Pacific Northwest
- TE Whitney Alexander, Presbytery of the Gulf South
- RE Phyllis Ellsworth, Presbytery of the Midwest
- RE Susan Lear, Presbytery of the Great Plains
- RE Johnny Long, Presbytery of the West
- RE David Miller, Presbytery of the Rivers and Lakes
- RE Wes Peterson, Presbytery of the Mid-Atlantic
- TE Waring Porter, Presbytery of the Central South
- RE David Van Valkenburg, Presbytery of the West
- Phil Linton, WO Director (ex officio)
- Jason Dunn, WO Associate Director (ex officio)

**Committee Meeting Dates:**

- September 28, 2020 (WO Executive Committee): Video Conference
- October 23-24, 2020: Video Conference
- January 7-8, 2021: Video Conference
- February 15, 2021 (WO Executive Committee): Video Conference
- April 15-16, 2021: Video Conference

Respectfully submitted,



Rick Dietzman  
Chairman



Phil Linton  
WO Director

June 2021