

Who is ABWE?

ABWE is a missions agency focused on evangelism, discipleship, and church planting with more than 1,000 long-term and short-term workers serving across 70 countries. For more than 90 years, we've focused on helping local churches send their own missionaries, under their authority, to fulfill the Great Commission by seeing every people group reached with the gospel and, in turn, having those people groups reaching others.

We began in 1927 when Dr. Raphael Thomas, a medical missionary in the Philippines, was told by his missions agency to stop engaging in evangelism and focus all his efforts on hospital work. Dr. Thomas left the field and returned a year later under a new agency he, his family, and his close associates helped found—known as ABEO (Association of Baptist for Evangelism of the Orient). Resolved to fulfill his evangelistic mandate, Dr. Thomas continued in ministry, and a movement of self-replicating churches was born in the Philippines.

When the Philippines were invaded by the Japanese during World War II, God used the roadblocks to direct the ABEO toward expansion into other parts of the world including Latin America. Soon, ABEO became ABWE (Association of Baptists for World Evangelism). Working across denominational lines with like-minded churches centered on the gospel, ABWE expanded into Europe, Africa, Asia, the Middle East, and beyond. Today, ABWE ministers across the globe in under-evangelized developed countries, least-evangelized developing countries, and among the unreached throughout the 10/40 Window.

What Makes ABWE Unique?

We believe God has gifted organizations differently. Nevertheless, we believe God has uniquely equipped us to provide missionaries value in three ways:

- *Seriousness about doctrine.* ABWE partners with more than 500 sending churches that are unified around a big-God theology, richly rooted in the gospel. Our philosophy of ministry is to use the Word of God—presented chronologically, relationally, and Christologically—to open hearts, with the help of the Holy Spirit. We don't apologize for central doctrines of the faith like the exclusivity of Christ, the reality of judgment, and the qualifications for leaders in the local church. If you're serious about biblical theology and truth, we're serious about you. We are theologically conservative, robustly evangelical, and distinctively baptist.



- *Connecting a variety of ministries to church planting.* Being overtly evangelistic doesn't make us unique. But we believe we're among the few missions agencies that understand how to use ministry platforms like medicine or education not only for evangelism but for actual church-planting. We use these compassion ministries as bridges to take the gospel to the unreached, and to spark new church communities.
- *National partnerships.* We are driven by the sincere conviction that Western missionaries can't be seen as accomplishing the mission by themselves. We want to see every nation become a sending nation. Our track record over the last 90 years shows that we turn the work of ministry over to the nationals as quickly as possible—not by pulling out once a church has formed, but by partnering with them until those churches are multiplying and even sending their *own* cross-cultural missionaries.

The Strategy

ABWE's vision is to fulfill the Great Commission by multiplying leaders, churches, and missions movements among every people. While our ministries are multifaceted and spread across 70 countries, each part of ABWE's ministry is built around this core vision.

Whether providing medical care in developing countries, working with national partners in countries hostile to the gospel message, or resourcing seminaries and training programs around the world, we want to see Christ worshipped and adored through the making of disciples among every people group.

Fulfill the Great Commission. Christ's final command was for his followers to reproduce themselves by making disciples of the nations. When we seek to fulfill the Great Commission, we are calling individuals to repent, believe the gospel, and follow Christ through union with the entire Body of Christ as expressed in the local church.

Multiplying Leaders. We seek to discover faithful disciples of Christ and mentor and equip them to multiply themselves in their local contexts. The goal is to see the foreign missionary take a background role, empowering indigenous leaders to thrive in their own context.

Multiplying Churches. The local church is the center of all that ABWE seeks to achieve for the glory of God. We are connecting the ministries of churches in North America to emerging churches around the world. Where there is no church, we seek to reach the unreached and establish churches that are equipped to reach their communities with the gospel. Where there is an established church, we seek to partner with them to help them multiply themselves.

Multiplying Mission Movements. Cross-cultural missions is not the exclusive privilege of the North American church. To advance in the tremendous task of making disciples of every nation, we are



committed to helping churches around the world not only to better reach their own communities, but also to reach beyond their own ethnic groups to share in Christ's vision of calling worshipers from every tribe, language, and people group. We believe God is pleased to use the diversity of the multi-ethnic Body of Christ to reach the world with the gospel.

Among Every People. There are over 6,400 unreached people groups. ABWE seeks to be used by the Spirit to collaboratively empower and equip the global church to see the gospel saturate every unreached people group, and to see self-supporting, self-governing, self-propagating, and self-theologizing indigenous churches networking to multiply themselves beyond their own people group. Our prayer is that the vision of ABWE will be used of God to add to that "great multitude that no one could count, from every nation, tribe, people and language, standing before the throne and before the Lamb" (Revelation 7:9).

