

# Connections



for evangelical Lutheran Christians

July/August 2011

**Walk in Conformity with Christ  
and His Call**

**WENDY BERTHELSEN**

**Callings!**

**CHUCK LINDQUIST**

**Called and Gifted**

**JOEL BERTHELSEN**

**Learning to be a Linguist**

**ESHINEE VEITH**

**LCMC, WordAlone, LCORE & NALC Updates**

# something extra

## Passion into Purpose: God's Gifts Becoming His Impact

by Jennifer Cameron

We Christians believe that God has created us in His image. If this is true, we must also believe that He has planted within us special gifts and passions to be used for His glory. For some, these are clear right from the start. For others, it takes a combination of years, relationships, jobs, life experiences, and sometimes a knock over the head, to see the plan that God has orchestrated.

Here are several stories of people (myself and others) who have uncovered His passion in their lives and what they're doing to turn it into His impact.

I am blessed to have been raised in a faith-filled family. I have always loved travel and cultures, serving people, being creative, showing people how special they are and working to meet their needs. I went off to college, spent a year doing service and travel, and came home and got settled into a job. I knew it wasn't what I was supposed to be doing, but I didn't know what the "what" was. About that same time I was nominated for an award and was participating in a Renewal ministry at church. Both required looking at my heart, history, faith and motivations. I was getting more involved with missions and ministry and saw how often organizations got "stuck". I started to see a role for someone (or something) to walk alongside small grassroots ministries and "serve the servants." As a result, ***Into the Field*** was born on May 1, 2008. Not only am I able to use my gifts of organization and creativity to serve others and facilitate connections for increased Kingdom impact, but I'm also actively engaged *around the corner and around the world!*

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### Jennifer Cameron

*is Founder and Executive Director of Into the Field. She has a heart for serving others, and loves to watch the twinkle in children's eyes when they know they're loved. She attends Upper Arlington Lutheran Church in Columbus, Ohio.*



When he was two days old, Alex Krutov was found in a trash can in his hometown of St. Petersburg, Russia. His life in (and out) of the Russian orphanage system was anything but easy (you can read about it in his new book *Infinately More*). He had one goal: to go to the US and leave Russia behind. Several times he had encounters with missionaries, who planted seeds of hope and faith. As those seeds grew, he did come to the U.S. and got his education. But he also found himself being drawn back to the land he left to serve those who grew up like him. Another encounter with an American missionary and ***The Harbor*** (a transitional home for orphans "graduating" from Russian orphanages, equipping them with family, faith and skills) was born.

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From an early age, Kambra wanted to be a mom. When she and Shawn married, they envisioned a big family. After six successful pregnancies and births, they learned that their seventh baby would not be born alive. Devastated not only by the news, but by how they were treated through the process, they vowed that another family would not share their experience. ***Back in His Arms Again*** serves families through the loss of an infant. Kambra and Shawn took their grief and combined it with their faith, passion and love for others. In an average month they care for over 40 families who are in the midst of some of the greatest pain life has to offer. Additionally, they work with medical professionals to better equip them for serving these families, too.

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A pastor friend told me that I needed to meet Nicolle. He said, "She's crazy, she's passionate, she's feisty, she needs your help, and you are going to hit it off." Our initial meeting was to be 45 minutes...four hours later we decided we needed to adjourn. The more we get to know each other, the more intersects and parallels we find in our lives. While I am thankful that I have not had to experience some of the overcoming that she has, her experiences help to fill her with a drive and compassion like few I know. ***Eyes Wide Open International*** (EWOI) was launched in the end of October 2009 to bring the body of Christ to serve widows and orphans in the midst of disaster.

In January 2010, Haiti was struck by a life-altering earthquake. Eight days later, EWOI workers were on the ground in Port-au-Prince—and they haven't left. Street boys are loved and fed, and pastors are supported while they care for their flocks. Nicolle goes toe-to-toe with those who are corrupt, telling them that her Father is in charge and knows what they're doing. Also, footings have just been poured for a new orphanage.



Joe's "Uncle Joe" served (and died) as a missionary in China. His personal call into ministry as a pastor, combined with family heritage, fostered a drive to share the Lord's love with the people from the East. David, born in Beijing as one of six children to a devout Chinese Christian mother, uses his medical background and burden for his fellow Chinese to serve others as few I know. Almost 20 years to the day of standing on the border between a then-closed China and Hong Kong, Debby and her husband arrived in Beijing with their suitcases and a plan to stay. Through ups and downs, support and sabotage, they serve Him with a confidence that only He can provide. Together they, along with a tight group of like-minded (and hearted) individuals come together to connect people through service and love with *chinaconnect*.



There are many more stories about God using the gifts and passions He has planted within the hearts of His people to serve and impact His kingdom. What will your story be? Maybe you already know it. Maybe you're trying to figure it out. Maybe you think you know it, but will soon find out that He has something much greater in store for you! Wherever you are on this great journey of life, faith and service, I want to encourage you with a couple of things while in the pursuit:

- Open your ears and your heart. You never know what you might hear...or what you might miss if you are only pretending to listen.
- Acknowledge the tug. Embrace it.
- Take notice of cues, of needs.
- Look at your relationships.
- Don't jump to question when asked to do something that seems contrary to YOUR plan. Pause. Pray. Trust. And watch what happens.
- Remember, our timing is not always His timing. God will reassure you. His plan and desire for you will be validated in more ways than you can imagine. If He calls you to it, He will equip you to do it.

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SERVING THE SERVANTS AROUND THE CORNER AND AROUND THE WORLD

We are all called to go out INTO THE FIELD and serve...  
but our fields, like our gifts and our passions,  
are all going to be different...

Some will work with orphans...others, the homeless...  
others, those in prison...

Maybe you will serve in your neighborhood...maybe in Haiti...  
maybe in Russia or in China...maybe you want to go serve,  
but are unable or don't know how.

If you are a ministry which is stuck or looking for a partner,  
let us know...maybe we can help.

Are you a congregation or an individual with a heart to serve or  
dollars with which to support? INTO THE FIELD would love to  
be your ministry of choice! Your gift helps to enable our work  
as we go out INTO THE FIELD to serve others!



We all have been given special gifts - gifts that are to  
be used to serve others.

At *chinaconnect* we seek to help people discover how  
their gifts can be used to impact the lives of others.

Long-term post-retirement...

Teaching over the summer...

Or on a short-term trip...

You have gifts that can  
be used to share the  
Gospel and change  
lives.

Why not join us?



[www.chinaconnectonline.org](http://www.chinaconnectonline.org)

*chinaconnect* shares the love of Christ  
through service and relationship.

