

In the late 1990's the word from Christian missionary strategist Luis Bush was that the area of the world most in need of the Gospel was the '10-40' window. The 10/40 Window is an area of the world that contains the largest population of non-Christians. The area extends from 10 degrees to 40 degrees North of the equator, and stretches from North Africa across to China. The leadership of the Florida Church of God at that time had a burden to carry the Gospel to the neediest part of the world. The door that opened for us was India.

In 1999 the first group of pastors traveled from Florida to Northeast India to the State of West Bengal. It is the nation of India's fourth- most populous state and it is also the seventh-most populous sub-national entity in the world. The target was two cities where we had strong indigenous Church of God leaders – the cities of Kolkata and Siliguri. From that first trip, a decade of ministry from Florida Church of God churches has poured into that area through our State organization and its partnership with Helping Hands in Motion.

In Kolkata, Florida churches built a discipleship center that has been used to train pastors, leaders and church planters. Literally hundreds of churches have been planted throughout northeast India under our partnership with the National Fellowship in Kolkata. This work has only grown and is now branching out into discipleship of women, crisis relief and marriage enrichment. In Kolkata itself, there is arising a new 'middle class' through the IT industry. An apartment has been secured in this new area and a church is being planted to reach a whole new cast for Christ.

In Siliguri we have built a discipleship center and have property to start on a second. We have been a part of planting many churches in the tea gardens near there and have several successful children's projects in conjunction with Compassion International. From Siliguri we have connected with an apostolic leader in Gangtok, Sikkim. We have built a discipleship center there and have been training pastors and church planters. Sikkim is strategic in its proximity to several countries that seem closed to the Gospel. From this key location we are partnering to reach Bhutan, Nepal, Tibet and China. When Florida pastors first visited Sikkim, it was but 2% Christian. Today it is 15% Christian and growing. This is very exciting to be a part of. Recently there was a horrible earthquake in Gangtok of the same magnitude as the one that hit Haiti in 2010. We are now assisting locals with relief efforts that we believe will help spread the Gospel as well.

Throughout this period of time we have been connected to the Church of God in Meghalaya that is headquartered in Shillong. The church in this area is well established and we have been a part of supporting the Nichols Roy Bible College in that area. Florida Church of God and President Hall have been working to connect this college with Warner Univ to further enrich both institutions. The church in Meghalaya is training and raising many fine leaders and pastors and they are quite missions minded. We are partnering with them in many areas of the world including

Tibet and Bangladesh. The exchange of resources and inspiration from that area has been fruitful to all who have been involved.

These partnerships and this work to the most needy area of the world are ongoing. Florida churches are still very involved. As I write, Church of God Youth leaders from around the country are just returning from time in Kolkata, Shillong and Siliguri. You too can be involved in what is a powerful mission movement with great integrity that includes personal relationships and frequent correspondence.