Member Care Update

Ethnê-MC Facilitation Team
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Ethnê-MC Update **Issue 3: March 2008**

Welcome to the *Update*! Our monthly reports inform you about important member care resources, news, and topics. We especially want to further equip people with member care responsibilities who are focussing on mission/aid personnel in least-reached people groups (LPGs). In addition to the mission/aid emphasis, each report usually contains material from the international humanitarian, health, business, and human resource sectors. Each report is archived on our web site: **www.ethne.net/membercare**. Feel free to share the *Update* with others and your networks!

The special topic this month is **Encouragement!** We want to thank *Barnabas International* for the use of their materials for this *Update*, and for their ongoing work all over the world.

Encourage *one another day after day*
Stimulate one another to love and good deeds
Encourage *one another as you see the day drawing near*
Hebrews 3:13; Hebrews 10:24,25

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SPECIAL RESOURCES and SPECIAL EVENTS
Tools and gatherings to further equip you for member care

This month we are highlighting resources/events from *Barnabas International*. **www.Barnabas.org** Their staff/services are good models for the types of member care practitioners/practices that are needed around the world. Their work is inspiring and instructive! Some of their main resources are:

- *Pastor to Mission Workers Conferences*
- *MK Reentry Seminars*
- *Elim Retreats*
- *Encouragement Letters and Encouragement Online Magazine*

SPECIAL TOPICS: Current issues and approaches related to member care

- *Family Matters, by Scott E. Shaum (February 2008, Encouragement Online Magazine)*

  Scott asks us to consider this question: Do our kids think they are less important than our work?
- *Too Soon to Quit! by Lareau Lindquist (July 2007, Encouragement Letters)*

  Lareau shares some very encouraging words with us, on perseverance for Christian workers.

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The *Update* is compiled on behalf of the *Ethnê-Member Care Network*. We are a growing *network of colleagues* from different nations and organisations. Our passion is to see the least-reached people groups (LPGs) experience the transforming love of Jesus Christ. We are committed to help provide and develop member care resources in order to support the diversity of people/senders who are working among LPGs. Our *Network* is part of the Ethnê to Ethnê Movement (**www.ethne.net**).

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SPECIAL RESOURCES and SPECIAL EVENTS
Tools and gatherings to further equip you for member care
This month we are highlighting some of the resources and events from Barnabas International.

It was early spring of 1986 when Lareau and Evie Lindquist had a two week assignment with the Wycliffe Bible Translators in Colombia, South America. They were unexpectedly detained in a remote jungle area, Cona Colorado. Throughout that night as they were walking the small airstrip, the concept of Barnabas was born. Although they had many opportunities for service in their years together, the Lord was moving in their hearts to begin a ministry of encouragement for workers overseas. A few months later and after much prayer, Barnabas International became a reality. A supportive Board of Directors was formed and the ministry of "encouragement, enrichment, and edification" was put into action. The ministry targeted mission workers, national church leaders overseas, workers in the USA, and Christians. The organization was started as a "Ma and Pa" ministry with no intention of being more than that, but the ministry of Barnabas quickly began to grow.

Perry Bradford, the Interim Director is known for his long-term commitment and work with mission kids and families. The 60+ Barnabas staff provide encouragement through field visits, pastoral care, and teaching. The main resources include the annual *Pastor to Mission Workers Conference*, the annual *MK Reentry Seminars*, *Elim Retreats*, the monthly *Encouragement Letters* (available in Spanish, Hindi, Russian, and Ukranian), and their new *Encouragement Online Magazine*. **Contact: www.Barnabas.org**

PTM Conference: "Pastoral Care in a World of Hurt" was the theme for the 2007 conference. Stressors for global workers are on the rise. The world is increasingly volatile and it requires more from all of us in the way of wisdom, perseverance, and courage. Note: PTM Conference, Malaysia 24-28 March 2008.

MK Reentry Seminars: Barnabas offers seminars and retreats to help MKs connect with other MKs who are in the midst of transitions. These events encourage MKs in all aspects of their journey. Time is given to focus on spiritual formation, relational issues, and cultural differences in their experience.

ELIM Retreat Ministries: Elim provides opportunities for spiritual debriefing, renewal, and pastoral care. Several free retreats are help each year in lovely settings (currently in USA). The vision of ELIM Retreat Ministries is to provide a safety net of preventative pastoral care for global workers in strategic locations world-wide.

E.L.I.M. Retreats
Encouraging Leaders In Ministry

Encouragement Letters and Magazine: For over 20 years Lareau Lindquist has sent out a free monthly letter to encourage Christian workers. These are now available online. In addition, last year Barnabas began an online magazine, with brief articles on topics that are relevant for Christian workers. This month in the *Update,* we feature an *Encouragement Letter* and an article from the *Encouragement Online Magazine*—see next two pages!

Family Matters

Do your children think they are less important than your ministry?

by Scott E. Shaum

http://barnabas.org/magazine.php

As a young college student, and a new follower of Christ, I was amazed to meet so many others who had grown up with a Christian faith. But a peculiar theme began to emerge. Of my peers who had parents in ministry, the number who were disillusioned and hurt startled me. Knowing I was headed for ministry myself, I wanted to know what had caused these young adults to be so disenfranchised.

When I asked around, I heard two common responses. One was that there was the dad they saw on Sunday at church and a different dad they experienced the rest of the week. This incongruence first caused confusion, then later, anger. A second response was that the parents had all the time in the world for those they ministered to but not for their kids. Kids walked away with the assumption that ministry was more important to their parents than children were.

I was determined to avoid such damaging mistakes with my own kids. Along the way, here are some things I have learned as my wife and I raise three sons now in their 20's and teens.

Be present. Turn off the cell phone and computer, put down the book, and be with the kids. Designated family time is just that; do not allow things to infringe on it. But go deeper. What are you doing together–merely watching TV? Are you engaging your spouse at a heart level? Do you eat dinner together? Do you have designated times with each child? Do you know what is troubling your children? What are you talking about together? Are you journeying well with your spouse and kids?

Make what's important to them important to you. I have often struggled here. I have made a lot of Lego forts with my boys–when I'd rather have been reading a book. Even though I get slaughtered, I will play Xbox with the boys during their designated computer times. This is a point of simple servanthood. Be a kid with your kid. Hang out with your teen. Be available to your spouse.

Demonstrate humility. I must be the first to say, "I was wrong. Please forgive me." Many adults today have no idea how to have healthy conflict. My wife and I fight well–no name-calling, no sarcasm, no dredging up the past. We talk through the issues and do not avoid them. We forgive. Our boys are watching. We expect the same from them when they get into it. And when I mess up–overreact or say something insensitive–I must own it. It is amazing how many of my peers claim they never heard their dad say, "I'm sorry."

Be willing to delay career advancement. This is a tough one. Be willing to hold back in your career to be more available to the family. Too many parents are marching up the ladder and leaving the family behind. Once you are older and a little wiser, you can go out and conquer the world. Make your finest investment in raising the next generation of Christ-followers.

Is it proper to seek to have a lasting impact in our community if we are not doing so well at home? It's too easy to use "ministry" to dodge the harder work of intimacy in the home. We must begin with the prior stewardship of our own marriages and children. The family matters.

Scott E. Shaum is on staff with Barnabas International, and is involved in coaching developing leaders. This article is in Encouragement Online Magazine *(Feb. 2008), by Barnabas International.*

Encouagement Letters—Too Soon to Quit!

Lareau Lindquist, July 2007

http://barnabas.org/letters.php?release=2007-07&lang=en

Thirteen years ago I wrote my first book, TOO SOON TO QUIT. It was a compilation of ENCOURAGEMENT letters. We are now ready for the second printing. In preparation for it, I have read and re-read the book. I have found it to be a personal refreshment . . . all over again. It has been revised and updated. It has an attractive new cover.

Best of all, the central message of the book has powerfully hit me again. Yes, it is TOO SOON TO QUIT. And now, thirteen years later, it is ***still*** TOO SOON TO QUIT. I'm not talking about titles and organizational commitments. In fact I stepped down from the directorship of Barnabas International two years ago. I no longer carry that title. I no longer carry the many responsibilities that are attached to the directorship. I am out of that loop. But be sure of this . . . I have not quit ministry. I'll continue to follow Him and serve Him until He calls me home. Even then, I hope that my ministry impact will continue to live on. And hopefully it will be true of me, even as the Scripture says . . . *though dead, yet He speaks.*

I challenge you, too. Don't be a quitter. Remember John Mark, the one-time travel and ministry colleague of Paul and Barnabas? He quit in the middle of his assignment . . . He simply QUIT. The Bible doesn't give details or explanations. Too often, when we think of John Mark, we fixate on him as "the quitter." Sure he quit, but he came back. He became a ministry associate of Barnabas. Paul recognized the renewed worth of John Mark and later in life, he asked John Mark to minister to him and with him on a trip to Jerusalem. What a wonderful story with a happy ending. He once quit, but he came back and was `better than ever.'

What about you? Have you ever quit? Ever turned back? Ever stopped following the Lord? Ever stopped serving Him? Ever given up on Him? Ever been shackled with weights? Ever been controlled by "a besetting sin" . . . again and again? Ever dropped to a level that you never dreamed you'd fall to? Whether it was public or private, ever been there? Ever done that?

No doubt, all of us can see ourselves somewhere in the previous paragraph. That's the bad news but it's also the real news, unless you live in denial. Now here is the good news. Quitters can begin again. I recall these accounts in the New Testament: John Mark, the quitter; Peter, the denier; and the Prodigal Son, the drifter. But they all became winners, because they came back to the Lord. There was forgiveness and restoration. There was the dawning of a new day.

Erwin Lutzer has written a marvelous little book, AFTER YOU'VE BLOWN IT. It has powerfully blessed me. I have bought dozens of copies to freely give to others. The sub-title of the book is this . . . RECONNECTING WITH GOD AND OTHERS. Is it possible? Yes, yes, and yes.

Two closing words!

- It is TOO SOON TO QUIT . . . always was, is, and shall be.

- BUT if you have quit, it is never too late to reconnect. Get back into the Word. Back to the Lord. Back into fellowship with Him and with others. Back to growth. As you return, see the Lord Jesus running toward you with open arms. Hear Him say, *"Welcome Home."*

Be encouraged,

Lareau Lindquist.
Founder, Senior Associate
Barnabas International