

August 2023



FUNDAMENTAL BAPTIST MISSIONS INTERNATIONAL



## BURUNDI A Tower is Born

Missionary Gregg Schoof is a technical guru. His mind thrives on the challenges of mathematical, mechanical, and computer complexities. The more intricate the problem, the more fixated his focus becomes.

When Gregg announced his call to Rwanda in 2000, scenes of the grisly horror of the 1994 genocide of one million Tutsis—hacked to death by machete-wielding Hutu militias—were still fresh in the world’s memory. Courageously, Gregg and Angela Schoof, along with their eventual six children, navigated endless government bureaucracy, fought loneliness, went soul winning, and built a church in the capital city of Kigali. They were the only independent Baptist missionary family in a country of 13 million people.

When visa renewal was necessary, Gregg needed a business opportunity to stay in the country. After seeking wisdom from George Zarris, director of Christian Radio International, Gregg sought a license to build a Christian radio station in the capital city of Kigali. Having no previous experience, he forged ahead; researched tower construction; examined 20 area towers; cut, welded, and bolted steel; fabricated a 150-foot tower in his backyard; and hauled it to the top of an 8,000-foot mountain, where an intricate, homemade pulley system hoisted each piece into place. While watching Gene Sharp install the transmitter, antennas, and cables at the Kigali station, Gregg assimilated the technicalities of hooking up the electrical equipment and navigating the computer program. One year later, Gregg camped out for weeks in a tent, on a mountaintop four hours from home, and built a second station near Lake Kivu.

By intense perseverance and sheer grit, Amazing Grace Christian Radio was born in 2007, and 25 million people in 5 East African countries could hear the Gospel clearly. Hundreds were saved, baptized, and discipled. Six radio converts completed Bible college and began pastoring churches.

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In 2017, Satan struck back! One poorly chosen word spoken by a national pastor on one radio program provided an excuse for the government to shut down the eight-year-old Christian station, close Gregg's church (and 7,000 others), and eventually eject Gregg from the country. The action was a bitter pill to swallow!

Reeling from the blow and questioning what God was doing, the Schoof family moved to Uganda, but Gregg couldn't get radio out of his mind. With dogged determination, he applied for a license in neighboring Burundi and was awarded the last radio frequency in the capital of Bujumbura. For the third time, Gregg ordered supplies; purchased a drill press; cut, drilled, welded, and bolted steel; dug by hand (with dedicated helpers) an 11 x 11 x 8-foot hole for the tower base; bucketed out water; poured concrete; backfilled the hole; poured more concrete; and proceeded to erect a 100-foot, free-standing tower between two buildings at Grace Gospel Baptist Church in Bujumbura. After weeks of backbreaking labor, Phase 1—a stable tower—will be completed in September for less than \$11,000, and one very tired missionary will prepare for Phase 2—to erect a two-story studio building and install the transmitter, antennas, electrical equipment, and computers.

When asked about the future ministry plans for the Schoof family in Africa, Angela Schoof responded, "I believe God has uniquely equipped Gregg to train national pastors and establish Christian radio stations in the region. We have seven more licenses waiting for government approval in Uganda."



**Editor's Note:** *The Bujumbura Christian station must be broadcasting by December 31, 2023, or the license will be revoked. This is a very short time to complete the build. CRI will be using much of the equipment from the closed Kigali station, but we will need \$20,000 immediately to finish this project. Please help us with a special gift for BURUNDI.*

## **CANADA**

### **Vancouver**

Broadcaster Michael Germi held a Farsi Evangelistic Conference with Missionary Pastor Ben Turner at the Anchor Baptist Church in Burnaby, British Columbia, Canada, July 16-19. The results were very encouraging.

- 45-50 Farsi speakers attended!
- 6.5 hours of preaching!
- 14 saved!
- 3 men baptized!
- 14 Farsi speakers attended church the following Sunday!

Please pray for the new believers to be grounded in the faith. Pastor Turner requests prayer for wisdom to know when and where to start a Farsi ministry. He needs a translator to interpret the messages. (The church desperately needs its own permanent building because they meet in one rented facility Sunday morning and at another location Sunday night.)

## **MIDDLE EAST**

### **More Muslims Saved**

Iranian Broadcaster M\_\_\_ held a four-day evangelistic meeting in a restricted Muslim country at a Farsi-speaking church pastored by Mo\_\_\_, a convert from the CRI satellite television program Besharat. Despite 100-plus-degree heat and no air-conditioning, the hours spent on the street inviting Iranians produced fruit, and five professed faith in Christ. One Muslim

Afghan lady and her Christian sister, both of whom were visiting the country, came to the meetings every night. Pray for the Muslim lady to be saved.

## **ARGENTINA** **Radio Rally**

Pastor Fabio Betancourth, Director of La Luz Latina (LLL), the CRI master station for the Spanish-speaking world, held a Radio Rally on July 20, 2023, at the newly affiliated Christian radio station housed at the Iglesia Cristiana Famaillã in the state of Tucuman. More than 100 people attended the service, including 25 new radio converts who walked from the neighboring village half an hour away. Pastor Alderete recently started a new church for these converts in the city where they live. Six people were saved at the rally. (Pictured are all the church workers who have been saved directly as a result of the Christian radio station.)



George Zarris  
*Christian Radio International*