

Going where the gospel is opposed

The tweets from the International Mission Board's team in East Asia tell the story of the region:

"Listen to Brian Ripken* say thank you to Southern Baptists for their gifts to the Lottie Moon Christmas Offering."

And below it: "Please ask for God's protection over a national Christian worker who has been detained, as well as those close to her."

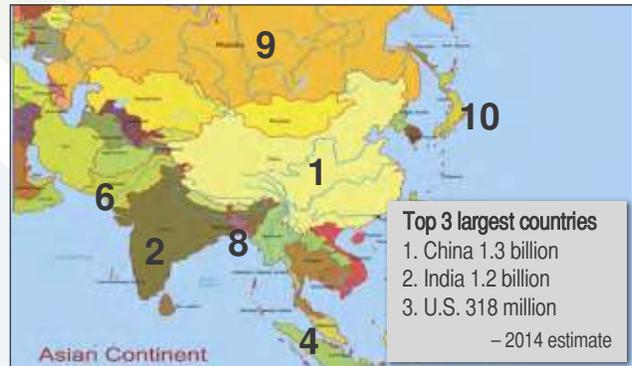
Asia is where Southern Baptist missionaries first traveled to spread the gospel to the world. Lottie Moon, famed missionary to China, is the namesake of an offering many churches collect every Christmas to support missionaries serving through the IMB. But parts of the continent also are marked by government restriction, persecution, and widespread adherence to atheism or religions other than Christianity.

Jack and **Avah Shelby** from Illinois went to Asia in 1968 as missionaries appointed by the International Mission Board. The couple started in Hong Kong and later lived in Malaysia and India. They returned in 1986 to Hong Kong, where Jack served as the Board's regional representative for China, Laos, Vietnam, Philippines, Cambodia, and Outer Mongolia.

The Shelbys organized medical teams to serve in the region, and recruited English teachers to come to the universities. The teachers weren't pastors, Jack said. But as they taught, students asked questions.

"They couldn't aggressively proselytize, but if the students asked them questions, they were free to answer," he said.

A 68-year-old teacher from North Carolina named Sue was surprised one evening when an army captain knocked on her door. "People have told me that you



We serve in ... Asia

The continent is home to the two biggest countries in the world, as well as numbers 4, 6, 8, 9 and 10: Indonesia, Pakistan, Bangladesh, Russia and Japan.

are a Christian." She wondered if he had come to arrest her. "Yes, I am."

"Do you have a Bible I could read?" Sue invited the man in for tea and gave him a Bible. A few weeks later, he came back to visit and she asked how things were going with the Bible reading. The captain told her he had become a Christian and had led six men in his unit to Christ.

Pew Research reported in 2011 that 13% of the world's Christians live in the Asia-Pacific region, up from 4.5% a century ago. Christians in China are a minority group, only 5% of the total population. Still, that's 67 million Christians.

In a part of the world with a rich missions history, that's good news.

**Name changed*

— Meredith Flynn



ALL ROADS LEAD TO ROMANS

Paul advised his protégé Timothy to "be prepared in season and out of season" to share the word (2 Timothy 4:2). We all need a few tools in our evangelism kit:

(1) Our personal stories. Write your story **on one sheet of paper**: What life was like before I knew Jesus. How I came to faith Christ. How my life is different now. Can you share your testimony in the length of a short elevator ride? Try it.

(2) The Bible's explanation of sin and salvation. Many people memorize a few verses so they can share them whenever needed. Learn the **Romans Road**: Romans 3:23, 5:8, 6:23, 10:9-10, 13. And there's always wonderful John 3:16.

WHAT WE BELIEVE ABOUT... **EVANGELISM & MISSIONS**

Read Article 11 of *The Baptist Faith & Message (2000)*, “Evangelism and Missions,” at IBSA.org/B101.

Do you know that feeling of riding a massive roller coaster? It is both exciting and terrifying! I feel that way when it comes to missions and evangelism—excited and terrified.

I am excited to share my faith. But I am not immune to the fears that come with sharing my faith. I get nervous. I worry about what someone will think of me. I wonder if I will mess things up or get into an awkward or painful moment.

And still I witness. *The Baptist Faith & Message* gives us two solid reasons why we are to be evangelistic and missional:

“It is the job and honor of every follower of Christ and of every church of the Lord Jesus Christ to try to make disciples of the people from all nations.”

First, I witness because it is my job. God has called all believers to share the exciting message of His love. It is my job even though I am imperfect and regardless of the response of those who hear.

What kind of plan is that? God is using rank amateurs like us to share the message of eternal life? Couldn't He find a better plan than that? But this is exactly God's plan. He wants to use people like

us to tell other people like us of the great story of redemption.

We dare not ignore the responsibility of evangelism and missions. Every believer has the responsibility of participating in the great commission.



IMB photo

My first mission trip overseas was life-changing. I went out of obligation as much as out of love. But God grabbed my heart for the nations on that trip. I found a sense of joy and purpose in sharing the message with people who did not speak my language or know my culture.

Can I give you some advice? Share your faith. Even if you are nervous and don't know all the answers. Do your job. Go on a mission trip and support international missionaries. Even if it requires sacrifice and stretches you. Do your job.

Secondly, I witness because it is my honor. Being evangelistic and missional is not just a respon-

sibility; it is also a great privilege.

I recently led an adult man to faith in Christ. I was with him when he repented of his sins and gave his life to the Lord. What an awesome privilege! God didn't need me, of course. He could have saved the man without me. But He allowed me to participate in this man discovering the joy of salvation. My witness became my honor.

I have had the opportunity to tell people in several other countries of the message of the gospel. In some cases, they had never heard the name of Jesus before. What an awesome privilege to introduce them to the Creator of the universe and the Redeemer of the soul. My witness became my honor.

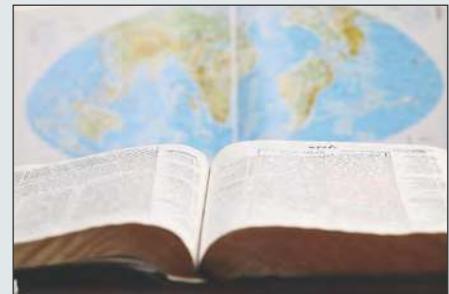
I share because it is my job. But I also share because it is my honor.

Southern Baptists take missions and evangelism seriously. Our cooperative strategy of missions is brilliantly effective. I want my life and the life of my church to be committed to sharing the message of the gospel with others in my local community, my region and state, across cultural barriers and to the ends of the earth. Join me on this exciting—and sometimes a bit terrifying—journey of evangelism and missions. It will be the ride of your life!

Doug Munton is senior pastor of First Baptist Church, O'Fallon.

CONSIDER THIS For personal study or group discussion

- 1** We often talk about evangelism and missions as separate activities. Are they?
- 2** Why do you think *The Baptist Faith & Message* pairs them in one article?
- 3** Why do you think evangelism is challenging for some people?
- 4** What Scriptures or tools do you use to share your faith? How might you enhance your evangelism method?



See the World from a new angle

60% of the world's people live on the continent of Asia. **4.3 billion people.**



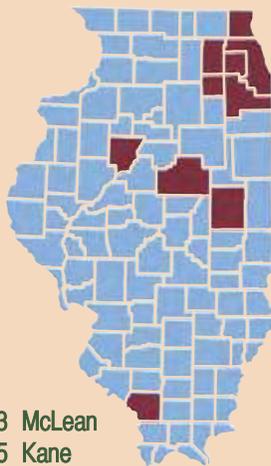
China and India are the most populous countries, with **37%** of the world's inhabitants.

Asians are the fastest growing ethnic group in the U.S.

1.5 million in 1970
17.3 million in 2010

4.6%

of the people in our state have Asian heritage



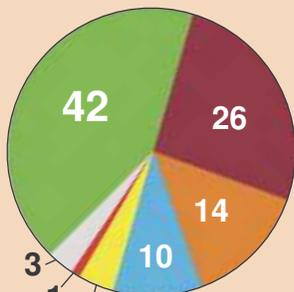
% of Asian residents in these Illinois counties

10.1 Dupage	4.3 McLean
8.9 Champaign	3.5 Kane
6.3 Lake	3.2 Jackson
6.2 Cook	3.1 Peoria
4.6 Will	3.0 Kendall

— 2010 census, according to indexmundi.com

What we say we are:

- 42 Christian***
- 26 Unaffiliated**
- 14 Buddhist**
- 10 Hindu**
- 4 Muslim**
- 1 Sikh**
- 3 Other**



(*including Evangelical, Protestant and Catholic)

— U.S. adults surveyed by Pew Research, 2012

WHAT MAKES US DIFFERENT

LOTTIE MOON

For a short time, the elevator at the IBSA building had a frequent and startling rider. The doors would open to people waiting in the lobby, and stepping into the car they would come face to face with Annie Armstrong. Well, a life-size cardboard cutout of Miss Armstrong. It was part of a promotional kit for North American missions that popped up at various spots around the building for a few weeks.



Most people were surprised by how tall she was. Five-ten. That's probably because of how small Southern Baptists' other towering missions figure was. Four-three.

Charlotte Digges Moon was well suited for her pioneering work in China, both in stature and temperament. As the only white woman many Chinese people would ever see, Lottie already stood out. She arrived in Tengchow, an ancient and proud city of 80,000 people, in 1873 at the age of 33. Quickly branded a "foreign devil" by the people, she nonetheless made the city her home. After all, she had had to wrestle her own people back home for the privilege to give her life in service as a missionary.

"What women want who come to China," Moon said, "is free opportunity to do the largest possible work." She faced opposition at home and on the field, but Lottie forged ahead.

Born in Virginia in 1840, Lottie earned an early reputation as a bit of a rascal. At boarding school, she once wrapped her bed sheets around the clapper in the bell tower to prevent the early morning wake-up toll. Most everyone overslept and was late for class that day.

Although mischievous, she was also bright and adventurous. The combination prepared her to blaze trails deep into northern China as Southern Baptists' second single female appointed as a missionary. Her sister Edmonia was the first.

In almost 40 years there, Moon shared

Christ with the people, toured the countryside teaching, and planted churches. Today, two congregations claim continuous existence since the time Miss Moon worked among them. Even after Communist persecution, many other churches trace their roots to Lottie's evangelism work.

Her death is almost as famous as her life. She died on Christmas Eve 1912, aboard a boat in Kobe, Japan. Younger missionaries had insisted that the sickly elder missionary go home to America for medical treatment, after virtually starving herself by giving away her food and her goods to save the Chinese people during a famine.

"I am immortal until my work is done," Moon said.

She still is.

— Eric Reed

Think about it:

1. How would you respond if a good friend said they were considering missions in a dangerous or forbidden place? What if your child said that?
2. How does the life (and death) of Lottie Moon inspire you or challenge you?
3. Do you think the story of Lottie Moon encourages missions as effectively today as it did a couple of generations ago?

ILLINOIS IN SIGHT

Chaplain's mission: Be there and listen

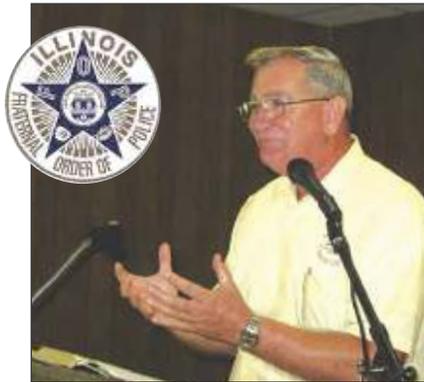
Dan Lovin's first experience with chaplaincy started around a break room table at the tire plant where he worked. Lovin was brainstorming with a few co-workers about the needs they saw in their workplace. They decided chaplains—trained volunteers who serve as sounding boards, counselors, and spiritual advisors—could help meet those needs.

"We're literally the church's missionary out in the field," Lovin says of the men and women who serve as chaplains in a variety of settings: in hospitals, prisons, the military, after natural disasters, and among law enforcement officials, to name a few.

Of the 250-350 chaplains in Illinois, Lovin estimates more than 80% are volunteers. Some are retired; some are full-time pastors; some work a full-time non-ministry job. The North American Mission Board offers endorsement for chaplains, which Lovin encourages because it lends more credibility.

His own chaplaincy story could have been short-lived. The tire plant soon came under new management that didn't see the need for the chaplaincy program. But his mission to serve and to help others serve didn't end then. Still working at the plant, Lovin moved into law enforcement chaplaincy in Mt. Vernon, where he has ministered for 20 years.

When he was one year from retirement at the plant, he said, a man



Dan Lovin is a state chaplain for the Illinois Fraternal Order of Police, and also serves as IBSA's chaplaincy coordinator.

approached Lovin and told him he had saved his life. The man said that as a 16-year-old, he had almost taken his own life on the one-year anniversary of his father's death. Lovin was called out to talk to the teenager, and got him some help at the local hospital.

"I think the biggest part of chaplaincy is the ministry of presence, and the ministry of listening," he said. "And I think [those are] two gifts that any chaplain has to have. If they have that, they're going to go a long way in their chaplaincy."

A mentor of Lovin's used to say, "Where two or three are gathered, there should be a chaplain."

"Really, what he was saying was, 'Where people are gathered together, we need a witness.'"

At a tire plant, in the hospital, on a ride-along with a police officer. Chaplains serve where the needs are.



ABOUT B-101

This is a 20-part study on the basic beliefs and missions of our denomination. It is designed for new believers, new Baptists, and those who want a refresher. Clip it out of the newspaper, fold into a four-page leaflet, and share with the people who would benefit from the information. You might even lead a study.

B-101 can be used for:

- New members classes
- Study on missions in Illinois and around the world
- Exploration of doctrines in *The Baptist Faith & Message*

Make as many photocopies as you need for study groups, church members, and worship attenders. Or download the PDFs at www.IBSA.org/B101.

Produced by the editors of the *Illinois Baptist*: Eric Reed, Meredith Flynn, Lisa Sergent. Designed by Kris Kell.

Look for B-101 in every issue!



mission illinois

Pray for a new church

Location: Chicago's southwest suburbs

Focus: Multiple generations of immigrants from South Asia and the Middle East, and their U.S.-born children

Pray: To develop first- and second-generation leaders, and for churches to partner with each other to meet the needs of recent immigrants.



— From the IBSA Church Planting Team

What are you doing on Wednesday nights?

This is the 13th in our 20-part series. That means more than half the essays on *The Baptist Faith & Message* are ready for use in a new members class, small group, or doctrine study. Look online and download the set. We've bundled them for easy printing and distribution.

By the way: If you need copies of *The BF&M (2000)*, they can be downloaded too, or IBSA will provide them for your new study group.

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