



Diocese of the
MID-ATLANTIC
Anglican Church in North America

April 18, 2013

Dear Friends,

Perhaps you noticed it, too. In the videos of the bombings at the Boston Marathon (played unceasingly on cable news outlets), many people, despite the natural impulse to flee out of harm's way, rushed *to* the site of the explosion to help the wounded. What gracious demonstrations of courage and love.

In reflecting on those images of rescue efforts, I thought again of the stirring calls to go to the lost which I heard at the New Wineskins Missions Conference, held in Ridgecrest, NC during the week after Easter. Our God is an outreaching, missionary God, who loved us so much that He sent His Son to rescue us from sin and death. And Jesus in turn sends us out, as well: "As the Father has sent me, even so I am sending you" (John 20:21).

Many of us were formed in a church culture that was what the missiologists call an "attractional model." Do church well through worship and programs and ministries and you'll draw people to your church. It's a model that can be effective in an environment where many folks are looking for a church home.

But the Gospel and our 21st century American culture are calling us to a different model and a more biblical vision. We're being challenged to embrace what's termed a "missional" approach, in which you and I go out to bring Jesus to lost and broken people who need him so much.

One moving presentation at New Wineskins was led by the Rev'd David Case, who heads Truro Church's ministry to reach and serve internationals who have come to that community. David facilitated a panel of mostly young adults who have come to faith in Christ from Muslim, Buddhist and Hindu backgrounds. They shared beautiful testimonies of the transforming power of Jesus Christ at work through those who took the initiative to reach out to them in His Name.

Nearly all of our communities have internationals—including university students—living among us, and we have unprecedented opportunities to form friendships and share God's love with them.

All Nations DC, a church plant led by the Rev. Wright Wall, has been used by God to bring two Chinese university students to Christ in the first six months of this new church's life! The most recent convert wrote these beautiful words:

I have joined All Nations DC Sunday prayer for over a month and decided to be a Christian in Saint Patrick Day. I am eager and so delighted to follow OUR LORD, Jesus Christ, and I am considering to finish the sacred baptism. Could you please give me further instructions as how to prepare for baptism? I am really look forward to formally join Jesus family.

Many thanks! Blessings.

For ideas about ministry with internationals, contact the Rev'd David Case, at 703-273-1300 x530, dcase@truroanglican.com, and check out the website of InterVarsity Christian Fellowship's international student ministry, www.intervarsity.org/ism, a ministry headed by Lisa Chinn, who, with her husband Leighton, founded the program at Truro many years ago.

The New Wineskins conference was also stirred by the address of Fouad Masri, founder of the Crescent Project, who so effectively challenged us to build relationships with our Muslim neighbors and co-workers. I've now watched his *Bridges* curriculum, available on DVD from the Crescent Project, and found it to be a very helpful and encouraging tool to equip us. All Saints' Church in Woodbridge has used this curriculum and recommends it highly.

The question the Lord would ask us about the lost in our communities is akin to the question confronted by those on the streets of Boston: In the face of pain and brokenness around me, will I retreat? Or will I go forward with the love of Jesus and the good news of salvation in Him alone?

Let's reach out. Let's go to love and serve those whom the Lord has brought to us.

Faithfully yours in Christ,

A handwritten signature in black ink, consisting of a cross symbol followed by the name 'John' in a cursive script.

The Rt. Rev. John A. M. Guernsey