

## Is Jesus the Answer?

If you are my age you may remember a gospel song by Andrae Crouch. The chorus went like this:

*Jesus is the answer for the world today. Above him there's no other. Jesus is the way.*

There were those that would have contested that song after the Rwandan genocide in 1994. Within the space of 100 days between 500,000 and 800,000 Tutsi were massacred, often by their Hutu neighbors with whom they had lived in peace for generations. At the time of the genocide 93% of Rwandans professed to be Christians. Was Jesus really the answer?

Eliya was one of the Hutus who participated in the killing. Among others, he killed the family of the wife of Gaston, a Tutsi. He thought he was doing right and defending his people when he did that. Eliya said later that he had "hunted Tutsis like animals."

Then the impossible happened. Both Eliya and Gaston found themselves in a "Healing Hearts, Transforming Nations" immersive event. The focus of the event was on a fresh encounter with Jesus at the cross. A key moment was the opportunity for participants to bring their wound and wounding of others to the cross. During the event Eliya stood up and confessed the sins of his people against the Tutsi's and his own personal involvement in that. He asked for forgiveness.

When Eliya made his confession something was released inside of Gaston. The miracle of forgiveness occurred. Gaston went up and hugged Eliya. It was a Jesus miracle.

Eliya and Gaston became friends. Eliya even was the best man in Gaston's wedding. They have traveled around Rwanda together teaching others about the healing and reconciliation that can be found in the cross of Christ. Eliya has used his skills as a carpenter to build homes for free for Tutsi survivors of the genocide. ([You can see Eliya and Gaston's story here in a short three minute video](#))

### *A move of God in "ethnic" and "diaspora" ministry*

Many of you know something of my work with our missionaries and partners in Latin America, Asia and the Middle East. What you may not know is that I spend the other half of my time helping to lead Resonate's ethnic and diaspora ministry. Ethnic and Diaspora ministry is one of four priorities of Resonate. Let me explain the terms "ethnic" and "diaspora."



*Bringing wounds to the cross Healing Hearts Europe*

"Ethnic" is a somewhat misleading term because there is no person on the face of the earth that is not "ethnic." In fact, historically most members of the Christian Reformed were Dutch-American. There was a time that we would certainly have been viewed as a Dutch "ethnic" church. But within Resonate "ethnic" has been used mostly to refer to our brothers and sisters who are Black, Indigenous or otherwise People of Color (BIPOC is a popularly used shorthand.)

"Diaspora" is a term which is taken from Acts 8:4. After the stoning of Stephen those from the Jerusalem church "who were scattered went about preaching the word." The noun in Greek for the English adjective "scattered" is "diaspora." We live in a day of a great "diaspora" or "scattering" of people. People all over the world are "on the move." Sometime this migration is voluntary. More often than not it is propelled by economic and political forces beyond their control.

I can't begin to express to you my excitement with what God is doing with "ethnic" and "diaspora" ministry in the Christian Reformed Church (CRC). Let me give a couple of examples.

Recently I had the opportunity to listen to the hopes and dreams of some of our Hispanic CRC leaders. They have an exciting vision for planting new churches both within North America and beyond. They are bringing other Hispanic leaders with a Reformed vision into the CRC. Many have on their own started ministries back to their countries of origin as well. These efforts have even resulted in a CRC of Venezuela!

Or take the example Nassar and Silvie, Iranian immigrants

to Toronto who are members of Willowdale CRC and Resonate missionaries. They have discipled over 100 Iranian Christians who have become members of Willowdale. They also have an online ministry through which Farsi-speaking people across the world are receiving the life of Christ and being discipled.

#### *And the challenge and opportunity*

This move of God in "ethnic" and "diaspora" ministry is taken place at a time when our world seems fractured and polarized as never before. The Covid pandemic is not the cause of these divisions. But it has brought them to the foreground as never before.

Herein is the challenge. But the challenge is also the opportunity. The opportunity is to become a church in which "Jews" and "Greeks" form one body. Could there be any greater witness to the power of the cross today than local communities of faith that bridge the polarizations in our world?

This is how Paul describes the result of breaking down the barriers between Jew and Greek through the cross of Christ: "His intent was that now, through the church, the manifold wisdom of God should be made known to the rulers and authorities in the heavenly realms," (Ephesians 3:10)

The question on my mind and that of others has been whether Jesus can do the same thing in North America as he has done in Rwanda in the lives of Eliya and Gaston. I believe he can and will if we are open. ([See the short 2 minute testimony here.](#))

In the first few months of 2022 Resonate is partnering with others to host the same immersive Healing Hearts, Transforming Nations events in North America that changed the lives of Eliya and Gaston in Rwanda. [You can apply online here.](#)

Will you pray for us? We covet your prayers for these events. Reconciliation is a spiritual battle, and we need to pray for the participants, for the facilitators, for the venues, for all the preparations and details to come together, and for the finances. Please pray that God would gather those who He desires to participate and to use them as agents of healing and reconciliation in North America. And don't forget to ask the Spirit if you might not be one of those people. - Joel

## PRAISE

- For the way the Spirit is moving in "ethnic" and "diaspora" ministry in the CRC.
- For the faithful prayer and financial support that makes our work and that of others with Resonate possible.

## PRAYER

- For the upcoming Healing Hearts, Transforming Nations immersive events.
- Over 1/3 of the annual support for our ministry comes through year end giving. This is also true of other missionaries and mission causes. Pray for generosity on the part of God's people.

## CLIP & SEND RESPONSE CARD

*I (we) would like to support*

**Joel and Jeannie Huyser**

Fund Code 802068

- by becoming their prayer partner
- with a special gift of \$
- with a monthly pledge of \$
- with an annual pledge of \$

## CONTACT INFORMATION

NAME:

ADDRESS:

PHONE:

EMAIL:

*Please make checks payable to Resonate Global Mission and include Fund Code 802068 on the memo line.*

*Gifts are received with the understanding that Resonate Global Mission has complete discretion and control over the use of all donated funds.*

*Unless it is noted, no goods or services were provided to the donor. Every effort will be made to use your gift for the designated ministry.*

*Gifts to ministries that are oversubscribed, or cannot be completed, will be directed to those that have a similar intent or ministry location.*

### UNITED STATES

1700 28th Street SE P (616) 726-1144  
Grand Rapids, MI 49508-1407 P 877-272-6205

### CANADA

3475 Mainway P (905) 336-2920  
PO Box 5070, STN LCD 1 P 800-730-3490  
Burlington, ON L7R 3Y8

[RESONATEGLOBALMISSION.ORG/DONATE](https://resonateglobalmission.org/donate)

**Resonate**  
GLOBAL MISSION



A Ministry of the Christian Reformed Church