

Johanna's page



This year I started as a **partnership development consultant** with Wycliffe. This means helping colleagues find the supporters they need to carry out their God-given assignment. So far I have had a number of meetings with colleagues who are looking to extend their team. It can be quite daunting to trust that your monthly income will increase by £500 or £1,000 in order to carry on with your ministry! Worry can easily overtake you, and it is my role to help colleagues see ways in which we can combine our faith in His provision with practical ways to find the people He has called to support us—applying general principles to each person's specific situation. These principles are explored by Myles Wilson in his book *Funding the Family Business*, the family being God's family, and our business being the task of taking His Word and His practical love to every corner of our planet. *For the book and other information, see [Myles' website](#).*



Someone asked me how I raise funds to help fellow Wycliffe members. Actually, I don't **raise funds** for other Wycliffe members. I help them find ways to **build their own team** of supporters.

Fundraising is finding money for a good cause. The good cause, in many cases, is to provide people with something they need. In His Sermon on the Mount Jesus encouraged us to share our possessions. And in Corinthians Chs. 8 and 9 Paul looks for the willingness of the church to share with needy Christians, "so there may be *equality [of provision]*" (2 Cor 8:13-14) .

But I see this as somewhat different from financing those who work full-time for the extension of God's Kingdom. Financing full-time Christian workers is a way for people to be more directly involved in the extension of His kingdom worldwide. Being part of a missionary or Christian worker's support team leads to *equality of involvement* in the Greatest Commission of all time—and *equality of joy* in serving Him! I prefer to describe what I do as **team-building**.

In the New Testament we see the ministry of Jesus funded by... *women*, out of their own means (Luke 8:1-3). Jesus had the humility to accept being supported by women. He had asked the disciples to leave their fishing nets behind. He could easily have provided in miraculous ways. On some occasions He did: feeding large crowds, or paying taxes on one occasion by getting a gold coin from a fish! But that was not His normal pattern. He involved women in His ministry and relied on them for his daily needs. In this way the women became the enablers, and partners, of the work He and his disciples did. How much it must have meant to them to play such a crucial role in the preaching of the Kingdom!

A similar pattern was later followed by Paul, as we can read in his letters: he was supported by individuals and churches. In this way a **partnership** was established. The letter to the Philippians shows a loving giving-receiving relationship, even though Paul had spent little time with them. He says: "Not that I am looking for the gift, but I am looking to what may be credited to your account". "The gifts you sent ... are a fragrant offering, an acceptable sacrifice, pleasing to God" (Phil. 4: 17, 18). He knew that their giving would result in great blessing for them. They would know the eternal joy of having been co-workers in His Kingdom through what they gave, serving God with "pleasing sacrifices".

When I come alongside colleagues whose support is insufficient, we work on this basis. I help them see that we are not beggars asking for money (though it can sometimes feel that way!); on the contrary, we are inviting others to share our joy in serving God. I encourage colleagues to look at all the contacts they have, in faith, believing that He has already picked out those who will be their "partners in the gospel". Their enablers. *The true richness is in the **relationship** of serving God together.* The money that flows out of it is just an expression of the partner's involvement, though it is also a blessing to both the giver and the receiver, and a "pleasing sacrifice to God". Sometimes God leads us to invite people directly. At other times He lays it on the heart of individuals to support without being asked. It is all about inviting people to move, if that's what God wants, from knowing a little about what we do, to becoming partners in giving, befriending, and praying. By so doing they not only enable us, but play a vital role themselves in extending God's Kingdom.

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So, friends, we invite you to share our joy every time a New Testament or Bible is ready for publication; every time I help colleagues find new supporters. Our ministry flows out of your giving. And so does our thanksgiving to Him when we are provided for! In so many ways!!

Giving is such a joy. I would like to see all of us, including us full-time Christian workers, receiving enough to be generous givers. And so being fully part of the giving and receiving cycle (of money and other blessings!) which I believe He intends for us.

Let me finish by pointing out that it is to **givers** that Paul says: "And my God will meet all your needs, according to His glorious riches in Christ Jesus " (Phil. 4:19)!

Other areas of ministry: For several years already I have had it on my heart to **serve people in responsible positions**, and especially in Africa. Both inside and outside Wycliffe. Just as a friend. Often leaders can feel isolated. So I keep my eyes (and inbox) open and try to live close to Him and be sensitive to promptings in my heart. And respond to needs when they arise: *prayer*, an *email* or *phone call*, finding *funds* for a specific need, and so on. Amazingly, a number of needs have been met in this way; not always directly by me, but I have had the blessing of being instrumental.

For example:

- **Joseph Koabike**, a translator from Togo, had finished working on the Moba New Testament. He was asked to become a translation consultant in his country, and needed top-up funds to do an MA in Bible translation in Amsterdam. I was able to find someone willing to provide those funds, and he is doing very well. (See the picture in our **February 2008 Update**, which is also the first in the **Photo Gallery slideshow**.)
- **Irene Tongoi**, a close friend of mine in Kenya, has set up a ministry in Nairobi called **New Dawn**, with the vision of raising a new generation of young people committed to Christ and to abstinence until marriage. Out of this has grown a High School in a slum, **Huruma**, and from there she seeks to reach out into the slum itself. We are regularly in touch. I may get a text while she is in a meeting asking me to pray! I was also instrumental in finding supporters for the pastor of the main church in Huruma, Pastor Sammy, enabling him to work full-time. He is a very godly man with a vision for Huruma and his ministry has proved to be invaluable.
- One of our own partners has decided to send support to another friend of mine, a **doctor in South Africa** working with **AIDS patients**, as a contribution towards the salary of a local assistant. **Norma van Niekerk** set up the *HIV Hope Project*—see www.hivhope.co.za.



Johanna and Irene at New Dawn

There are many different one-off instances, and a few ongoing friendships. The main thing is that I try to be sensitive to how I can lighten the load, and be a link in a chain for someone.

If you feel you would like to be involved in any of the following (through prayer, gifts, fundraising...) please let me know. Your help and support will be more than welcome!

- Prevention and treatment of AIDS patients in South Africa.
- Secondary education for teenagers of destitute families, giving them a hope and a future (Huruma).
- Further training of people in ministry in Wycliffe or elsewhere in Africa.
- A motorbike and laptop for a godly man who is working alongside Irene Tongoi in the slums.
- Supporting the New Dawn High School teachers.
- Top-up rent and food for vulnerable mothers without husbands, to keep them alive and raise their children until an economic empowerment programme has been set up for them (Huruma). This would come to £20-£30 per mother per month.
- Support for streetboys in Rwanda (our daughter Jen is a trustee for an orphanage which a friend of hers has set up).

Thank you for your interest and prayers.

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The New Dawn High School, built from shipping containers!



Irene washing the feet of the teachers during the opening celebrations of the new school

A **book** that I have found incredibly useful is **David Kiersey's *Please Understand Me***. It is based on the Myers-Briggs personality types that you may be familiar with: ESTP, INFJ, etc.; but it goes beyond those, and shows how they relate to the four major character types that have been identified by thinkers from Plato onwards. This book has really helped me to understand how *I* think, and why others think so differently from me! I can highly recommend it to anyone who has anything to do with people...



(See at Amazon)

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