

# Chapter 47

# Worldwide Proclamation

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The Overseas Ministries Branch of OAC US was established in 1980, following David Wilson's return from a sabbatical year overseas. The goal was to open new branches in developing countries, led by national evangelists. In 1990, it became a separate OAC branch of OAC International, and in 2016, it changed its name to Worldwide Proclamation (WP). Now, with 12 national branches, God is using our evangelists to reach over 500,000 people a year with the good news of salvation. This frontline ministry of evangelism operates entirely by faith in God, trusting Him to provide support for all staff in WP nations through the gifts of His people. Such gifts are used to purchase vehicles, film equipment, generators, and even a boat to reach Indians on jungle rivers! WP is overseen by a dedicated board of directors, all of whom have ministered with our national evangelists. In 2017, David and the board approved Chip Welton as director, and David took the position of field director. Chip has served for over 35 years as an OAC evangelist, and desires to see our WP evangelists reach as many unreached people as they can. Both Chip and David continue to visit the WP nations regularly to encourage and preach alongside our national evangelists.

Born in New Zealand in 1939, David came to faith in Christ on a sheep farm through his grandmother's faithful witness. At age 14, he felt God's call on his life to become a missionary. He began learning to fly at age 17 with the goal of being a missionary aviation pilot. At age 21, he became an airline pilot with NZ National Airways, and while based in Wellington, he saw OAC regularly and effectively proclaiming the gospel in a downtown park. After meeting Elaine at a Youth For Christ (YFC) retreat, he shared his missionary call with her. She shared with him that at age 15, she had told God she would serve Him anywhere. They were married a year later in 1963. Elaine was already involved in beach evangelism with YFC, so David became a volunteer worker with OAC and learned to preach in the open air.



ENGAGED TO BE MARRIED

His vision for future ministry shifted from missionary pilot to missionary evangelist. In 1967, David, now a captain, resigned from the airline, and with Elaine and two little children, left everything to sail from New Zealand to America and attend Columbia Bible College (now called



DAVID & ELAINE AT FIRST WP BANQUET IN ATLANTA

Columbia International University). After graduating in 1970, David joined OAC/USA and was sent to the Baltimore/Washington branch, where he and Elaine served for nine years. Then they took a sabbatical year in South Asia, during which they helped plant a church. During this time, he also held school assemblies, reaching 50,000 students with the gospel, and went to the China border with OM, preaching in villages. It was at this time that he saw the great potential for the OAC ministry in developing nations.

Elaine always had a vital ministry to women through speaking in special evangelistic luncheons, to children in Good News Clubs, and to teaching children in Christian schools. She was also a counselor in our telephone evangelism ministry and taught the follow-up Bible Correspondence Courses for OAC New York.

The ministry David had traveling overseas for a total of 13 years was made possible because Elaine felt God's call to care for their children and hold down the fort at home while he traveled. In 2022, the Lord, in His providence, called her home to heaven after 52 years of faithful service as a missionary. At this writing, David, age 86, continues alone as an evangelist and plans to continue until God calls him home.

The following is David's account of how Steve Nelson was led to help the ministry in the mid 1980s.

"I first met Steve Nelson in New York City at a meeting with a group of pastors. It was a divine appointment. After I spoke about the OAC ministry both in New York and overseas, he showed great interest and invited me to help him in Queens, where he was planting a church. This was about 1984, and when I wasn't overseas, I held open-air meetings in Astoria with his church team. In the winter, we conducted meetings in the subways and saw people come to faith in Christ. In 1990, when I began the OAC Overseas Ministries Branch, Steve became the chairman of our board. He had become involved in a ministry in Kenya and invited me to go with him on his next trip. He was sure the OAC ministry would work well there. In 2005, I flew to Kenya and found it to be a ripe harvest field, where our method of open-air evangelism was very effective. In 2009, OAC Kenya was registered with the government. Today, it is reaching over 90,000 people each year in the interior villages and schools. In 1997, Steve told me about ministry in the Ukraine, where he and some pastors were going to teach students at a Baptist college in Kiev. I recommended that he take some of the students out for open-air evangelism. He did, and later urged me to go the following year and teach a seminar. I did this and found that the students were very excited about our method of evangelism, which proved to be very effective. People came to Christ in every meeting, and I was invited to teach each year. One student stood out, named Anatoly, who would become our pioneer evangelist for OAC in Ukraine (see chapter 42). He graduated and married Yulia, also a graduate,



STEVE NELSON

and both joined our mission. We registered this ministry in the name of Worldwide Proclamation, as the words “Open Air Campaigners” would not translate well. Anatoly had a very effective ministry taking out teams from Baptist Union churches. A Russian man named David attended the seminar in 2002 and invited me to Russia. In 2003, we held open-air and school meetings. Seeing that it worked well, David joined our mission, and we began our ongoing Russian outreach in 2005 (see chapter 33). Today, it continues to reach hundreds of people every week through our new evangelist, Constantine. David is now our chairman. In 2022, Anatoly's ministry changed due to the war with Russia. He became a voluntary Army Chaplain and has a vital ministry of evangelism to the soldiers, widows, and orphans, even at the time of this writing. Sometimes he is on the frontlines and has conducted funerals for fallen soldiers. He also helps those who have lost everything by providing them with food and other necessities every month, using funds that we send.

I do thank God for Steve Nelson, whom He used to guide me into the harvest fields of Africa, Ukraine, and Russia."

Chip Welton grew up in West Virginia. He received his training in Biblical Studies and graduated from Columbia International University in 1984. Tammy came on staff with OAC in 1980 and ministered in the Philadelphia branch until she and Chip were married.

The Lord led Chip into pastoral ministry in 1984 and, in 1990, called him to transition into Open Air Campaigners, where he began his journey as an open-air evangelist. In 1992, he was appointed as national director for OAC Canada, where he led the work until 2001.

In July 2000, Chip and his family moved from Ontario to Alberta. God began expanding his role of evangelism to include not only Canada but overseas locations as well. During this time, he also began serving on the OAC overseas board of directors. Many doors of ministry opened for Chip to minister in various locations around the world, and he faithfully walked through them.



CHIP, TAMMY, ELAINE, AND DAVID IN THE EARLY DAYS



TAMMY & CHIP

Then, in 2011, David Wilson asked Chip to become the associate director of Worldwide Proclamation. This involved continued travel overseas and assisting David in ministering alongside our national evangelists on the field. In 2014, Chip was appointed as the field director. God blessed, and over the next three years, Chip was able to become very familiar with the needs and responsibilities of the ministry of WP in locations such as Bolivia, Brazil,

Paraguay, Peru, Russia, South Asia, and Ukraine. In 2017, Chip was appointed as the director of Worldwide Proclamation, and David Wilson became the field director.

David and Chip both continue to travel on a regular basis to foreign fields where they encourage our established staff, participate in open-air ministry outreach, and seek God's wisdom in adding new staff and ministry locations as He leads.

