

## The Church Porch: A Cool Place

In days past, the church porch was used as a place for settling money transactions, paying dowries, and purchasing estates. Today, an Alliance church plant in an underprivileged area of Spokane, Washington, uses its "porch" to give instead of receive. The new church building, purchased with a loan from the Alliance Development Fund (ADF), had once been a thrift store. Clothes, appliances, furniture, and more remained in the warehouse after the sale.

"To get rid of it all, we had three rummage sales and one giveaway," said Dave Wilkinson, The Porch's pastor. On the morning of the free sale, more than 70 people were waiting outside, and hundreds more came throughout the day. Church members shared Christ with many and invited them to church.

### Community Outreach

Although The Porch is barely a year old, service to the community has been a feature of its ministry from day one. Members "adopted" needy children from area schools, providing Christmas gifts and paying their families' utility bills when needed. In addition, the Spokane AIDS Network contacted The Porch, asking to partner with the church in

raising money to assist HIV-positive children in Africa as well as locally. "We didn't plan any of this," said Wilkinson, "but this is where God has us."

### Jesus Is In the Neighborhood

Church members have a burden to minister to those who feel spiritually disenfranchised, seeking to create a safe place for people to ask hard questions. "We call ourselves The Porch because porches are public places where people connect," Wilkinson said. "As a church, we want to be a constant reminder that Jesus has moved into the neighborhood. He invited the lost into His life and was invited into theirs. He was connected to His neighborhood wherever He found Himself."

A woman who lives across the street came to the first rummage sale, looking for candles because her electricity had been turned off. "We couldn't find any, so a volunteer at the sale went home and got a few," said Wilkinson. "When this neighbor first met people from The Porch, she wasn't too sure about the whole 'church thing.' Several weeks later after she had made friends, she left us a thank-you note that said, 'Jesus is cool.'"

*Men will dwell again in his shade (Hosea 14:7).*

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## Best Christmas Present

In keeping with the Russian celebration of Christmas on January 7, Perry and Lynda Friesen, Alliance missionaries in Russia, hosted a local mime theatre group to perform on Christmas Eve. "We had close to 100 people who attended this outreach," says Perry, "which was the largest attendance we have ever had at one of our church events."

As excited as they were about the successful outreach, the Friesens are rejoicing over one person who came to Christ that night. Vika, a 12-year-old friend of the Friesens' daughter, accompanied them to their home after watching the mimes. Lynda and Sarah were able to answer her questions about salvation.

That night, on Christmas Eve, Vika accept Jesus as her Savior, and the angels rejoiced in heaven. The Friesens also rejoiced, since they have been praying for Vika for more than two years. Her salvation was the best Christmas present they received this year.

*The gift of God is eternal life (Romans 6:23).*

## In His Footsteps

"In Thai culture, feet are the dirtiest and lowliest part of the body," said Jon Chase, an Alliance missionary serving among the Isaan people in Thailand. Jon and his coworker, Jim Sappia, minister at an Isaan prison, where seven inmates recently received Jesus. "Jim and I have been meeting regularly with the men and challenging them with the Word. The last meeting was especially powerful as Jim and I got down on our knees and washed each man's feet, demonstrating servant leadership. The men were cut to the heart, to the point that there were tears in some of their eyes."

TEAM Isaan has a vision to plant multiplying, indigenous churches among the 22 million Isaan people, of whom 99.8 percent do not know Christ as Savior. "We praise the Lord for His blessings upon the prison ministry and for keeping the doors open for the work to continue," said Chase. For more information, visit [www.isaan.org](http://www.isaan.org).

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### Monthly Prayer Focus

*Pray for renewed vision to support Alliance ministries through the Great Commission Fund.*

To receive The Alliance Call to Prayer electronically, contact [webmaster@cmalliance.org](mailto:webmaster@cmalliance.org) or access online at [www.cmalliance.org/pray](http://www.cmalliance.org/pray).



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