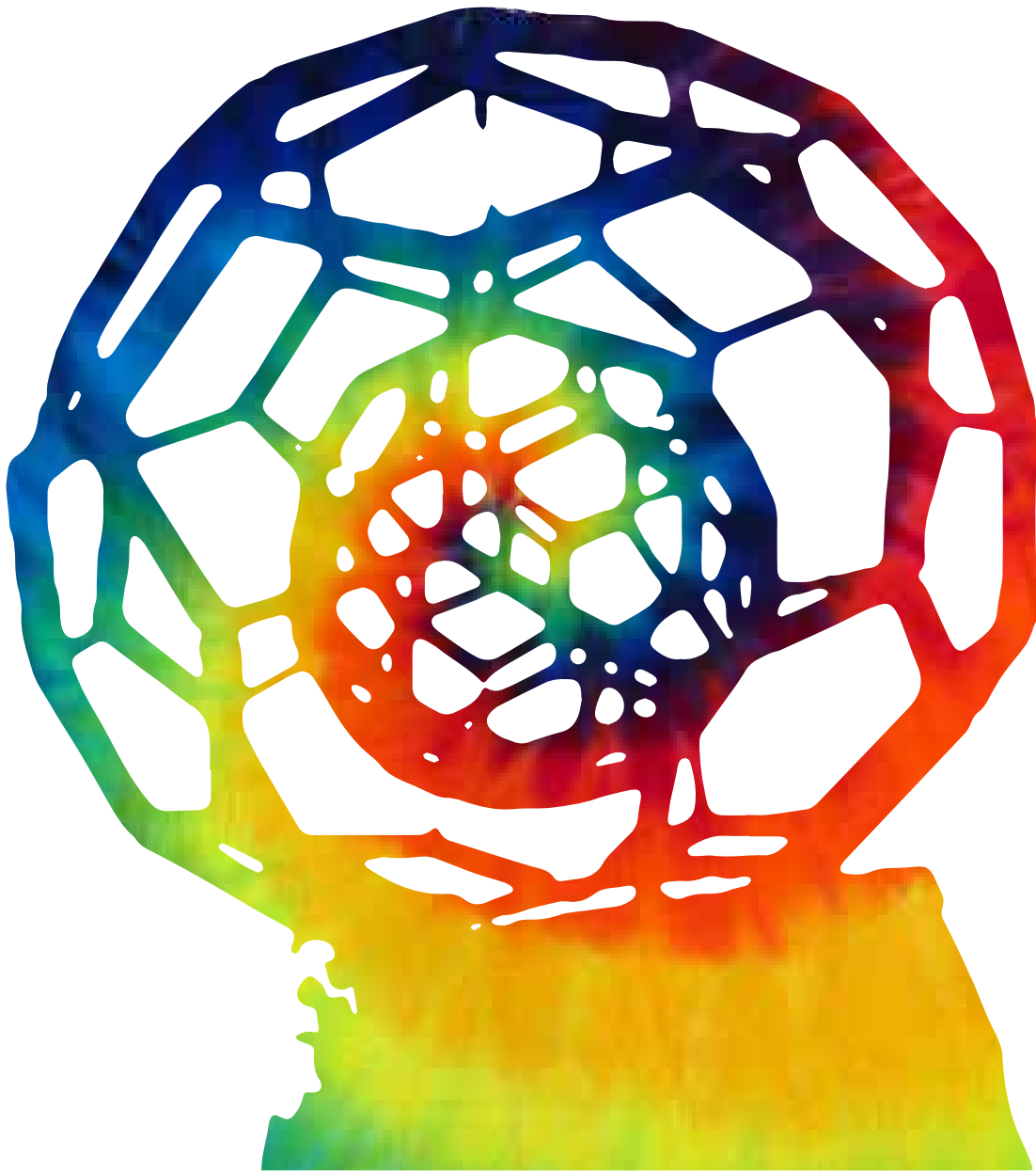


the
WORLD
in northwest arkansas
a guide for prayer and partnership for the unreached



Global Outfitters

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Front cover shape: based on Leo Villareal's *Buckeyball*, in Bentonville, Arkansas. Northwest Arkansas has become an attractive place around the world for opportunities in business, culture, education and transportation.

Flags on back cover (clockwise, 1:00-12:00): Somalia, Turkey, Iran, China, Nigeria, Bangladesh, Marshall Islands, India, Laos, and Brazil

God has ordained to make our prayers real causes of real events. Real causes. The words of James 4:2, "You do not have because you do not ask," do not mean, "You would have had anyway, even if you didn't pray, since God had a plan and your prayers don't matter." "You do not have because you do not ask" means prayer causes things to happen that do not happen if the prayers don't happen. This is breathtaking. And if you neglect this privilege — your participation in God's moving the world — you are acting very foolishly. We pray because it is a staggeringly awesome privilege.

John Piper, December 30, 2007

WE DID NOT INCLUDE every nation in this book that has representatives in Northwest Arkansas, nor did we include the largest ethnic blocs (Mexican, Marshallese, Chinese, etc). The peoples highlighted in this book are from the more thirsty nations, the locations where fewer people have access to what Peter called in John 6:68 "the words of eternal life."

Every day, we relish these words, we encourage ourselves with them, we share them with others and use them to feed our wavering faith. While taking these true words to other nations can be expensive, and though we should not abandon these efforts to nourish these remote locations, we have 'low hanging fruit' right in front of us, at the places where we live, we work, shop, study, dine and worship. They are now no different from our own friends.

Even if you don't naturally have friends from these nations (do you?), pray. Pray for this whole region to become the sort of place where no one leaves without a witness. Pray with an open heart - that you may be challenged specifically to something God is doing around you. If you don't know where to begin praying, look on each page for a specific prayer for people you may meet from unreached locations. Since "faith without works is dead" (James 2:14), read in the section entitled "connections" for ideas on how you might come into closer proximity to each of these people, put a personal face on each group, perhaps even play a part in reaching the nations here at home. In this guide are twelve unreached groups.

Folks, it is up to us. God has prepared these works for us, and if we don't there is the unthinkable possibility that this was their only chance to see or hear the gospel. Let us know how we can help!

The GO Center



tips for praying for the nations

adapted from a list by Jim Hall.



Pray when you first wake up.



When tired, pray simply.



Pray together with your spouse.



Pray when exercising.



Let nature trigger your prayers.



Stay receptive in prayer.



Turn off your car radio to pray.



Pray the name of Jesus.



Keep scripted prayers with you.



Use tools, like the news.



Pray out loud when alone.



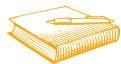
Open the Word randomly.



Keep a prayer notebook.



Pray in the shower or bath.



Journal your prayer to God.



Pray through insomnia.



Pray Scripture and Psalms.



Pray on planes.



Pray for people in the moment.



Be open to unexpected guidance via people.



Pray on the phone.



Model prayer in groups.

how to enjoy this guide

on your own

Keep it by your bedside for a few days, read a passage every once in a while before you go to bed or when you get up, spending a few moments praying for this part of the world. Look up the latest news on your phone, or you can go to "www.prayercast.com" to find a scripted and heartfelt prayer for that nation.

in community

Find someone else who will pray to pass it onto in Northwest Arkansas. Or take it to your community or home group to find out what kind of encounters your friends have had with the World in Northwest Arkansas. And pray together.

every day

Dive into a two week campaign to watch and pray for the nations--every day. Consider even going on-site to the places highlighted in this guide and prayerwalking the grounds (do it within legal and ethical boundaries, of course!). If you are considering an overseas experience, this can be a great way to be in touch with the possibilities here that will prepare you and allow you to personally invite your friends into. Oh, and since there are only six pages per week, you can take Sundays off!

all year

Since there are twelve cultures featured, you can go slowly over a whole year. For busy people, this means just finding one day out of the month to enjoy a meal from that place, or visit a local site, check out a relevant film from the library or the Go Center World Missions Library. Whatever you choose to do, though, make sure you take at least an hour to really pray! Building a regular rhythm into your life that values God's work among the nations will give you a greater appreciation for our multi-ethnic God!

Be sure to check the back of this guide for specific time-sensitive opportunities!

glossary of terms used

unreached people groups

This does not mean merely people who have not heard. A 'people group' is any group that identifies with a shared set of criteria, and differentiates everyone around them based on that. They call us, 'us,' and them 'them.' A group that requires an outsider to come and 'fit in' to know and understand God's Word is an 'unreached people group' (UPG). A group that does not have anyone even trying to do that is an 'unengaged-unreached people group.' There are groups in this guide that have communities and churches here, but the group from which they came may still be considered an unreached people group if the number of informed people among them who follow Jesus is less than 1%.



ten-forty window

A portion of land between 10 degrees latitude and 40 degrees latitude, and about -10 and 100 degrees longitude that contains 90% of the unreached people groups, but only 4-7% of all cross-cultural ministers. You can see that Indonesia and Central Asia and other locations just outside the area are included in this, as are a few tribes in the Amazon and Papua New Guinea.

cultural paradigms



In the book "the 3D Gospel," (© 2016, Time Press) researcher Jayson Georges spells out three different ways of looking at the same gospel. Different cultures have different emphases, sometimes creating misunderstanding in the way the gospel is communicated. Consider the following:

guilt/innocence cultures

Most Western cultures treat our predicament in life as a courtroom, and the solution as a legal pardon. A truth encounter awakens people up to freedom available in Christ.

shame/honor cultures

Many Muslim and Buddhist 'high' cultures see everything through the filter of community (usually their community) and salvation as a need to measure up to the community's values. A community encounter is an invitation to sit in Christ's banquet.

fear/power cultures

Cultures that have insight into the spirit world see life as a battleground and we are the collateral damage. Whoever has the most power is the safest. A power encounter introduces Christ as the greatest of the 'gods.'

To understand
your culture's
paradigm, go
to the following
link and survey:

www.TheCultureTest.com



indians

here for study and for work

POPULATION IN INDIA:

1,367,224,576
(2020 projection)

POPULATION IN ARKANSAS:

3-6,000 Bentonville,
Rogers, Centerton,
Fayetteville (est.)

LANGUAGE(S):

Mostly Hindi, but also Telegu, Punjabi, Kannada, Tamil, Malayalam, and other lesser known languages.

RELIGION(S):

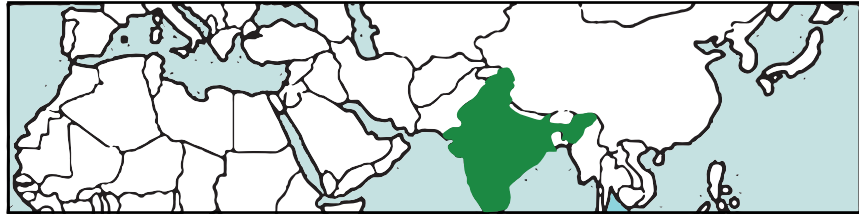
Hindu, Muslim, Sikh (from Punjab), and Catholic Christianity.

CULTURAL PARADIGM:

Fear, power

COMMUNITY NEEDS:

Friendship, transportation, furniture, help with school, extra (legal) income, justice in their jobs.



Almost a third of the unreached people groups in the world are found in India. In fact, of the 2,295 groups of people who consider themselves distinct, 2,077 (90.5%) of these are considered to be “unreached” (they do not have a viable evangelical church that can reach their own people.) These usually lack the Scriptures in their own language and in many cases, haven’t even heard the simplest stories and concepts of our faith.



An easter egg event for the South Asian community at the Link’s Apartment in Bentonville.

At the University of Arkansas, Indians continue to lead the charts in students both in undergrad and post-graduate levels. Fayetteville has dubbed itself the “Startup Capital of the South,” employing some South Asians after graduation and in 2017, the university had 105 students from India.

In the Bentonville / Rogers Area, the Wal-Mart office employs hundreds of young men from the five primary “Information Technology” cities of Bangalore, Hyderabad, Delhi, Mumbai and Chennai.

pray



Thank God for all that he has done for India! The positive contributions to their society made by Christians in their country from the time of William Carey have transformed the nation.



Pray for the new leaders of India, for wisdom, direction and a favorable approach to the religious diversity of India.



Pray for America's reception and the fears brought about by recent shootings in Kansas City. That our Indian friends might feel welcome.



Pray for culturally relevant places to worship Jesus Christ in the Indian style to arise here, led by Indians.



Pray for your personal friends, that they may thrive here and have their needs met by caring individuals from our communities.

connect



Contact the Global Outfitters office for opportunities to be placed with friends from India. Commitments are light, just spend an hour every 1-2 weeks.



The NWA Hindu temple is on 9445-9787 Southwest Regional Airport Blvd in Bentonville, and two Sikh temples are in the area. Also check the mosques in NW Arkansas.



Shop at Indian groceries and restaurants in Bentonville, Rogers, and Fayetteville to find bulletin boards with activities to participate in with your whole family.



'Bollywood' Indian movies are sometimes shown in Rogers Towne Cinema, on 46th.



Uber (on-line taxi service) is a great way to chat with a lot of Bentonville's Indian workforce while driving, esp 6-12 pm.



The one, mostly Tamil 'Indian Fellowship' in Northwest Arkansas meets on Sunday nights at 6 pm at Hope Church, next to the Links Apartments on Moberly Avenue in Bentonville.

...our experiences...

I was sharing with a group of friends about how I work with a lot of Indians at Walmart's home office and how much I would love to reach out to them but my family constraints put us on a tight schedule. We prayed about this. Then, that very afternoon, I ran into someone I knew in the cafeteria (which I never go to but had a meeting in that day) and it felt so natural to invite him over to watch a movie after we put down our kids for the night. About 70% of these seem to be from the city of Bangalore, and most of the men are away from their families. I've decided what they really need is a good friend who doesn't treat them as an exotic commodity, but just as a good friend.

ETIQUETTE FOR SPENDING TIME WITH INDIANS

Always be respectful of the beliefs held by Indians. Please don't stop hanging out with your friend if you find out they are not interested in being like you!

Some Indians, especially women, are still getting used to the casual nature of our male-female friendship. A man only shakes hands with a woman if she offers.

Americans often see the Indian "head bob" and associate it with discontentment or negativity. In actuality, it means "that's a-ok!"

Indians are very respectful of all "holy" items and even Hindus and Muslims are sometimes puzzled (or offended) by the way we treat our Bibles, putting feet on them, or writing in them!

Indian students are often the champions of a big family and are under tremendous pressure to succeed at school, so be respectful of time!

Indians don't always desire to fully embrace lots of American culture, so be patient if your friend doesn't want to go to American concerts or movies, but would rather drink Chai Masala with you and watch a Bollywood film!



bengalis

from Calcutta and Bangladesh

POPULATION IN BANGLADESH:

185,552,357
(2020 projection)

POPULATION IN ARKANSAS:

40 students in 2017.
Several dozen other
families around town.

LANGUAGE(S):

People from Calcutta, Ind. and Bangladesh share the same language, Bangla, but know Hindi because of Bollywood films!

RELIGION(S):

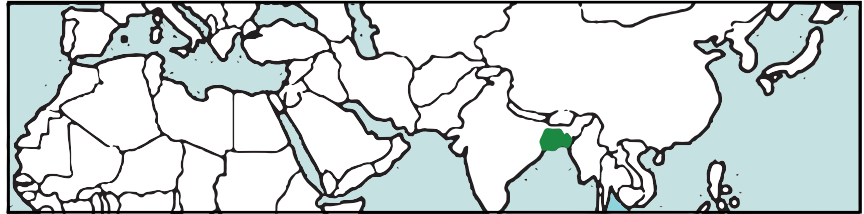
Hindu in India and
mostly Muslim in
Bangladesh

CULTURAL PARADIGM:

Fear, power (Hindu)
Shame, honor (Islam)

COMMUNITY NEEDS:

Friendship, trans-
portation, school,
extra (legal) income,
homesickness.



The combined areas of Bangladesh and Calcutta (in India) are almost exactly the size of Arkansas, but contain one hundred times the population. Bangladesh used to be 'Eastern Pakistan' and became independent through a painful war over the right to speak the language in 1971. The Bengali church is made up of mostly converts from Hinduism. Most Bengalis who hail from Bangladesh are Muslims and represent some of the world's most unreached.



An open fair to celebrate the New Year together at agricultural park in Fayetteville, April 8, 2017.

At the University of Arkansas, E. Indians and Bangladesh citizens rub shoulders as one-time 'frenemies.' In 2017, forty students are currently enrolled at the University of Arkansas and many alumni are from Bangladesh. In town there are others who have remained, but most return home after graduating.

In the Bentonville / Rogers Area, the Wal-Mart office and other I.T.-powered companies like J.B.Hunt employ many from the major "Information Technology" hubs of India, including Calcutta and a few from Dhaka, Bangladesh.

pray



Not everything about Bangladesh is miserable! It has been one of the best cases of poverty-alleviation and continues to look for new ways to stay above water.



Natural disasters strike from time to time and even a minor disruption in the balance of life might set people back years.



Pray for each student you know who comes to Fayetteville, Arkansas to study. Ask God to give them community skills useful in their nation, but also new ideas that will fundamentally change it for the better.



Pray for culturally relevant places to worship Jesus for Bangladesh residents.



Pray for some Bangladeshis in the religious community to experience dreams and visions of Isa (Jesus) the Messiah.

connect



Contact the Global Outfitters office for opportunities to be placed with friends from Bangladesh. Commitments are light, just spend an hour every 1-2 weeks.



The Bengali Student Association of the University of Arkansas hosts an "International Mother-Language Day" on February 21 to celebrate the early martyrdoms of Bengali-language users.



Bengali New Year is on March 12th. Look for celebrations and fairs that offer lots of tasty morsels like the one recently held at Fayetteville's agriculture park.



Around October, a condensed one-day version of the Durga Puja is held by Bengali Hindu's to celebrate a renowned victory by the goddess Durga over her foes in the heavenlies. It usually takes place in Bentonville.

...our experiences...

Rushdi and his family from Bangladesh live and work in Bentonville. They regularly attend the mosque near the Walmart Home Office. Our kids are classmates at school. Once they invited us over for an authentic meal on a Friday night. Their home was filled with grandparents, cousins, and children. We talked about culture, spicy food, jobs, and more. Rushdi, his family, and other Bengalis live and work right around us, but we never took the time to see the joy it would bring to know them until now.

ETIQUETTE FOR SPENDING TIME WITH BENGALIS

Bengali culture is often a fine dance between Hindu and Muslim neighbors. It's even to the point that they participate in each others' festivals! So you'll often find them open-minded.

Be indirect if you have to refuse an offer from a Bengali friend. "We'll get together one of these days" would be better than "No, I can't."

Be mindful of the oldest person in your group. This is almost, by definition, what fulfills the Bengali culture. Use respectful titles with their elderly people and wait for them before eating.

Extreme casualness often exhibited by Americans might be seen as disrespectful if you are in a situation that demands respect.

Bengalis don't smile very much (Americans do). This is because the general consensus where they come from is that a stern look is a sign of maturity.

Becoming hot-headed and emotional will make you 'lose face,' basically lose someone's respect. They'll look away.



hmong

resettled in NW Arkansas

POPULATION IN S.E. ASIA:

4,837,600
(2020 projection)



POPULATION IN ARKANSAS:

About 3,500 in
Springdale and
surrounding farms.

Nintey-five percent of the world's Hmong people still live over in Southeast Asia. Displaced numerous times, they were hired by the CIA to fight a secret war in Laos during the Vietnam conflict. After that they were mostly forgotten. Hmong people have had movements of people coming to Christ in various places, but like our native Americans, they risk falling away if their treasured culture is not taken into consideration. About 2/3 of Hmong in the U.S. still stick to shamanism.

LANGUAGE(S):

The Hmong speak Laotian or their own language, but many speak only English.

RELIGION(S):

Primarily shamanistic folk religion, and Buddhism is second

CULTURAL PARADIGM:

Fear, power

COMMUNITY NEEDS:

Business acumen, acceptance (in the public schools for example), respect, American friends.



Ying Chang's Hmong and Chinese Hot Food Cart at Lake Fayetteville (near Lewis & Clark)

A borderless people who prefer the mountains, when many of the Hmong were displaced after the Vietnam War, some moved to the Ozarks because they love the clear air mountain streams. Many purchased private chicken farms in areas surrounding Fayetteville and Springdale, but some have had their businesses fail because they didn't fully understand all the in's and out's of American poultry standards. Today, they're renowned for their contributions to agriculture and a sense of gratitude and patriotism toward America.

pray



The word "Hmong" is a fairly general term denoting dozens of smaller people groups sprinkled throughout Southeast Asia, some of them more aware of the gospel than others.



Praise God for the Hmong People Movement in Northern Vietnam that was brought about through radio alone.



Pray for young people living in the United States who are wrestling with the loss of their tradition and the desire to be a normal American.



Pray for the Hmong Americans living here in Northwest Arkansas, that they might have a thriving, culturally-relevant church.



Ask whether or not God would have you reach out to this fun-loving, hard-working community of fellow Americans.

connect



If you become a regular at one of the Farmers' markets on the squares of Fayetteville and Bentonville or in downtown Rogers and Springdale, you are sure to have frequent engagements with the Hmong sellers. Visit a friend's farm!



Once a year around November, the Hmong in the area hold a big festival for their New Year. They don't always keep it at the same location, so see local bulletin boards for details.



There is a Hmong Association listed in Siloam Springs on 2450 Highway 412 E, Siloam Springs. There is also a student association for the Hmong at the University of Arkansas.



There is a lot written about the Hmong in America and their admirable service to our country is a fascinating untold story. A local film called "Home at Last" is linked below.

...our experiences...

My mom's a shaman and I have to do a lot of things that most kids don't have to do. I know I question sometimes too, it's like "Do I really have to do this?" I mean, we're in America now. Things are different, laws are different, and I really do love our culture! It's unique, it's rich. But, is it what I want for me and for my kids? And I think that's what everyone asks themselves. It's what every young person asks themselves.

(quoted from a local film by Judy Luna and Steve Sevic, available for purchase on their website: <http://ozarkhmongfilm.com/> and on YouTube.)

ETIQUETTE FOR SPENDING TIME WITH HMONG

Traditionally, handshakes do not occur. Persons greet one another verbally. Holding hands too tightly during a handshake will embarrass Hmong women, though now many men have gotten used to our ways.

Hmong kids have been taught for many generations not to look directly into your eyes.

Older Hmong people have a spiritual outlook on life and so your Hmong friends may play along, even if they see these things as being superstitious. An example is not to make cute comments about a baby - if you do, they think, a bad spirit might overhear the conversation and snatch the child's spirit.

It is considered bad form for men and women who aren't married to sit too closely together.

Hmong still use a lot of charms and traditional medicines, so one should not be too surprised if you see marks on the body or strange colorations.

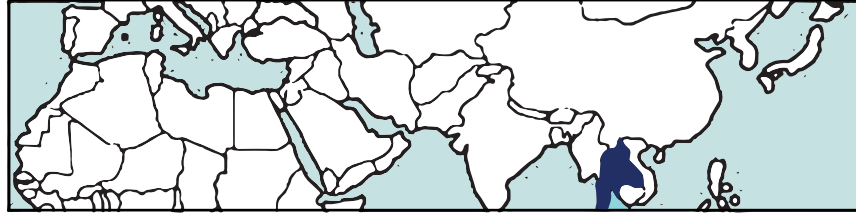


thai/lao

resettled in NW Arkansas

POPULATION IN SE ASIA:

1,367,224,576
(2020 projection)



POPULATION IN ARKANSAS:

2-800 in Benton and Washington Counties (estimate)

Laos is a nation of nations, like Oklahoma. Historymakers' website lists 147 distinct people groups living there (aside from mainstream Laotians). 134 of them are considered 'unreached,' and most of those are 'unengaged*' In addition, Thailand remains a tough missionary field that has seen disappointing results, given the degree of attention it has received. The church has yet to transform a nation mired in the occult and all kinds of trafficking.

LANGUAGE(S):

Lao and Thai, but most people have assimilated and speak English.

(*See Operation World, or <http://www.historymakers.info/missions/laos.html> and pg. 3)

RELIGION(S):

Theravada brand of Buddhism, and a hint of animism.



CULTURAL PARADIGM:

Fear, power

Wat-Thepnimith Xaimongkoon Buddhist Temple. 604 N. Old Missouri Road Springdale, AR

COMMUNITY NEEDS:

Normalcy, respect of local culture, a church that can present the gospel discernably to the Thai or Lao mind.

Sebastian County (Forth Smith) was the doorway for many Southeast Asians arriving in the aftermath of the Vietnam War, some of whom have since moved up to Northwest Arkansas. While not an enormous population, their presence shows up most prominently in the Thai Restaurants throughout the region, many serving Lao food as well. Despite the Thai brand, it is Lao culture that is represented far more here, and many still speak Lao. Most people under the age of eighteen have never been back, but they've kept up the Buddhist culture rather well.

pray



America's first missionary was Adoniram Judson (to Burma). Since then, there has been much to be thankful for in Thailand, especially in Chiang Mai in the north, from which many good works are launched.



The Buddhist background has served as a hindrance to the gospel going forth. So pray for good teaching on sensitive topics.



Pray for the Thai and Laotians in our midst, for their success and spiritual enlightenment.



Pray for end to the structures that allow for the evil slave-trafficking of all kinds in Thailand, and for destructive spiritual forces.



Pray for the students from Thailand and Laos to the University of Arkansas and other schools, that they will be served by a few good friends.

connect



You may best connect with Thailand through food. Although almost too obvious, the numerous restaurants around town are usually family-run establishments with friendly folks at the helm. Ask them for information.



Locals meet at the Wat (Buddhist Temple, pictured) from 9-Noon every Sunday. Consider a drive to Fort Smith for a larger group.



School programs remain one of your best bets for Thais and Laotians coming from these places.



Myanmar (Burma) is another Southeast Asian nation that has emerged as a connection to the unreached peoples. In this case, some have just arrived and are working in Noel, Missouri (see the section on Sudan / Somalia).

...our experiences...

It can be harder for a person who has left a certain country to go back and try to make friends there. People think you have real money now, and if they assume you have more opportunities they might be right. Envy, feelings of betrayal or just a sense that you are an outsider now can take their toll. But for me, going back to my people and working on development projects has been a great way to use my education here for good and break some of these barriers before they become too big.

ETIQUETTE FOR SPENDING TIME WITH THAI AND LAOTIANS

The head is the most sacred part of the body for Theravada Buddhists. Consequently, don't casually pat even little kids on the head, and be careful to keep your feet (and shoes) low toward the ground.

Southeast Asians are extremely kind and gentle but this can drive some Westerners crazy who prefer firmness and directness.

The Thai "Wai" or greeting that presses hands together and bow the head is unlikely to be used here much and will probably look silly in the wrong context. Observe or ask your friends before you do this in public!

Even though the king has just passed (Thai are observing a year of mourning that ends in Oct), to joke about even the office of king is offensive.

Please don't ask an Asian who has been living here for years how their English is!

Like so many cultures in this book, family is a huge part of culture in and out of the United States and you can never overdo it, asking a lot of questions about family both here and abroad.



Vietnamese National Flag



USA Vietnam Flag

vietnamese

NW Arkansas residents and students

POPULATION IN VIETNAM:

98,011,415
(2020 projection)

POPULATION IN ARKANSAS:

About 2,000 established residents, and 45 students at the U of A in 2017.

LANGUAGE(S):

Vietnamese (spoken in Northern and Southern dialects)

RELIGION(S):

Most Vietnamese call themselves (Mahayan) Buddhists, but more accurately adhere to the cult of worshipping ancestors.

CULTURAL PARADIGM:

Fear, power

COMMUNITY NEEDS:

For students, a friend against homesickness and practical logistics.



Painful memories of the Vietnam War are evident across our landscapes, but a brighter legacy has been a hard-working class of immigrants who came in waves, starting in 1975. While these peoples may be considered “reached,” there is another wave coming from the country they left, 8% Catholic but with a very fledgling body of evangelical believers who have endured much. Vietnam is home to about 120 distinct people groups.



The Student Union at the University of Arkansas, where both Vietnamese flags make an appearance.

Until the arrival of new workers serving the Information Tech sector, the Vietnamese were the largest group of Asians in the area. “Fort Chaffee” in Fort Smith was responsible for processing them, and because there were jobs available, many stayed here and thrived.

At the University of Arkansas, you’ll meet fresh arrivals from all around Vietnam who bring us a new perspective. Most or all of these were born after the war and grew up in the robust boom of the 1990s, when the war was less on peoples’ minds. Now, Vietnamese students are just interested in all things ‘USA.’

pray



One hundred years of work among the Vietnamese has been difficult, but has yielded much fruit.



Pray for healing from the wounds of war and a redemptive conclusion to so many years of anguish and conflict.



Pray for Vietnamese students and visitors to Arkansas, for their studies and their reception here, and for people to reach out to them.



Pray for the Vietnamese community here, that it would not grow bitter toward the home country, but would seek redemption.



Pray for the millions of people in Vietnam who have not heard the gospel of Jesus, which has turned trial and heartache into rejoicing for those who have been found.

connect



Contact the Global Outfitters office for opportunities to be placed with friends from Vietnam. Another program in town is through Holcomb Hall, called "ifriend."



Take a culinary tour of pho restaurants from MLK in Fayetteville to Walton Street in Bentonville. Huong Que Cafe/Market on Dixieland in Rogers is a hangout spot.



Venture to Fort Smith to visit the Pho Minh Pagoda (Chua Pho Minh) for a cultural experience.



The University of Arkansas is one of the flagship locations of a growing national program called "CEO Global." This is an excellent way to make a professional connection, share your particular skills, and be a nation builder for foreign infrastructures without leaving town.

•••our experiences•••

I met a friend playing basketball who invited me to church. When I saw that 'church' was being held in a huge athletic club, I had to send a picture of it back home to my friends in Asia! I said, 'Can you believe that this is ...a church?' People at home know what a church is, but they think only of stained glass windows and tall steeples. Jesus has (since) come to be a special part of my life, and God has even allowed me to go back home and use my gifts in sports. It's all because someone cared enough to hang out with me and walk me through it.

ETIQUETTE FOR SPENDING TIME WITH VIETNAMESE

Be aware of the rift between the overseas Vietnamese community and those coming from the country. It is often subtle but profound and may cause misunderstanding.

Vietnamese language dictates hierarchy so it would make sense that culture does too. It usually (but not always) has to do with age, so be respectful of elders.

Overseas students usually have only one sibling and are expected to make the grade in order to care for parents in their old age. Therefore be mindful of their need to study.

Vietnamese love a good (simple) joke, but often don't get sarcasm and other American forms of humor, be patient and try to keep your concepts concrete to communicate well.

Most of the rules for other Asian nations apply. Hallmarks of Vietnamese culture are hospitality, filial piety and resourcefulness. If you compare these with American values, you will see that we sometimes fall short on the first two of these.

Vietnamese appreciate song, art and beauty and of course, English football (and also good ol' American football if you explain it to them).



japanese

students at Arkansas Universities

POPULATION IN JAPAN:

123,664,363
(2020 projection)

POPULATION IN ARKANSAS:

46 students at the
U of A in 2017.

LANGUAGE(S):

Japanese

RELIGION(S):

Polytheistic Shinto-
ism, Buddhism,
athiesm

CULTURAL PARADIGM:

Shame, honor

COMMUNITY NEEDS:

Friendship, trans-
portation, furniture,
help with school,
being treated as
a normal friend
(very soft friend-
ship evangelism)



There are strong believers from Japan, but with 123 million citizens, they make up the world's most homogenous and largest unreached people group. Even without the resources of large nations, Japan has a powerful export economy and a world-class work ethic. Although freedom of religion is guaranteed in the constitution, over 70% of them claim no personal religion. Culture kind of begs to differ with many elaborate ceremonies honoring the dead and a combination of Shintoism / Buddhism expressed through ancient customs.



Fayetteville's one "temple" to all things Japanese on 2577 College Street.

Japanese culture is driven to succeed, so you may not have a lot of time to spend with Japanese students, but they love Arkansas and the outdoors and you will find them kindred spirits. The number of students goes very much up and down from one year to the next, so if you'd like to get to know Japanese people, inquire at Holcomb Hall (i.e. 'ifriend') for availability and ideas.

pray



God has pursued the Japanese without ceasing, bringing many of them to Christ in the aftermath of devastation from World War II. Since then, He has blessed them, but it so often goes unrecognized.



Pray for good, safe, trustworthy friendships with the Japanese students who come here. That they will receive honor just for being themselves, and sense God's pursuit of them.



The concepts in the Bible can be highly unrecognizable to the Japanese world-view. Christians who work with Japanese need a lot of training and understanding.



Pray that God will work with the families of those who come here, on both sides of the ocean. Pressures to conform to the norm in Japan can be so great that many returnees who find Christ end up compromising.

connect



Contact the Global Outfitters office for opportunities to be placed with friends from Japan. Commitments are light, just spend an hour every 1-2 weeks.



The Japanese student association puts on great connecting events at the University of Arkansas, but you really need to watch for them or you will miss them. Keep an eye on the University website.



If you want to see Japanese pop culture in action, the Arkansas Anime Festival in Bentonville will descend on Nov. 10-12. Pay attention to the way in which a plethora of Japanese 'kami' (or spirit gods) have begun showing up in worlds of play.



Even though there is no central meeting point for enthusiasts on Japan, you can often find their Facebook pages and on-line message boards. As you explore Japanese culture, you should find a lot of people in your area who share your love of it. Find them and learn together!

...our experiences...

Hinata came to the U.S. and quickly became friends with my community group. He loved spending time with us, but was extremely weary when we invited him to church. Over time, he saw our love and opened up about his fears of church. He thought we were trying to secretly convert him to be a member of our church and abandon his culture. Over time, we were able to address these fears and help him see how Jesus loves all countries and cultures and is not simply a "Western God."

ETIQUETTE FOR SPENDING TIME WITH JAPANESE

In some cultures, people will stand a few inches away, but Japanese culture is just the opposite. Friends will appreciate you giving them lots of relational space!

Your Japanese friends will have trouble initiating (activities). Don't treat this as an insult, just keep putting opportunities out there for them, and they'll grow bolder.

Japanese people don't expect Americans to know how to bow properly and a proper handshake will do.

Don't give gifts featuring the color white or the number four. Personal gifts are good.

Japanese culture is 'rule-based' which is why a lot of people love it. We recommend you google it to learn as much as you can.

Sorry, but loud, ostentatious behavior often exhibited by Americans in public tends to rub Japanese the wrong way.

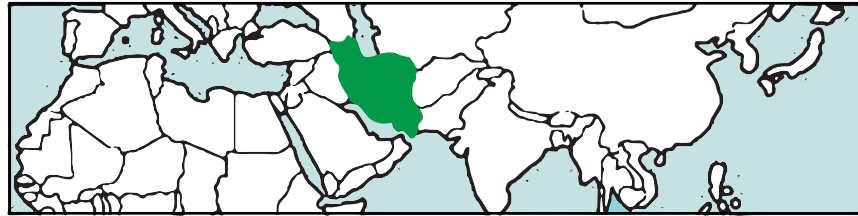
Even if it's weird to you, taking off shoes at the door will help friends be at ease.

It's more important to demonstrate your faith authentically before talking about it to a Japanese than for other students.



iranian

students at Arkansas Universities



POPULATION IN IRAN:

83,740,317
(2020 projection)

POPULATION IN ARKANSAS:

56 Students enrolled in 2017. A few more residents in town.

LANGUAGE(S):

Farsi, which they often call "Persian."
Some may speak also Dari or Tajik

RELIGION(S):

Shite Muslim.

CULTURAL PARADIGM:

Shame, honor

COMMUNITY NEEDS:

Friendship, transportation, furniture, help with school, extra (legal) income, help in tough times.

Ancient Persia, but not all Persian, Iran has a long history of hardship and is currently still a difficult place for Christians. But that does not mean God is not at work among approximately 100 ethnic groups and the greater body of Persians and Azerbaijanis, both at home and abroad. Frequently ostracized by the West, Iranians are warm and usually open to new ideas. When tensions are high on the news, we need our Iranian friends all the more!



Reinactment of the Iranian New Year last March, as part of University of Arkansas' "immersion" series.

The University of Arkansas has had a spike in the number of Iranians enrolling and that is despite the travel ban that stopped at least two students earlier this year and a growing stigma against Iran. Those we know are delightful people who usually break the stereotypes pretty fast. For example, most Iranians say they are Muslim since their country tells them they must say this, but some coming to the U of A are not committed Muslims. Most of the young Iranian ladies at the U of A dress like Westerners with no head covering. If you have the time, do yourself a favor and befriend Iranians!

pray



Thank God huge numbers of friends from Iran are deciding to follow Isa (Jesus) and forming communities, even here, where growth is happening.



Pray for the new believers who have yet to share their experiences with any family or friends back home. Pray that the righteous will be bold as lions.



Pray for peace and stability in the relationship between our nations and for a reasonable government to remain in power.



Ask that God will bring new workers up who are passionate about the nation of Iran, as well as regular prayer warriors.



Many of the young people who come from Iran have never left home before and become very homesick. Pray for people to reach out to all 56 at the U of A.

connect



Contact the Global Outfitters office for opportunities to be placed with friends from Iran. Commitments are light, just spend an hour every 1-2 weeks.



According to the U of A's website: "The Iranian Student Association aims to Celebrate Iranian and Persian customs and ceremonies. Propagating Persian culture and Teaching Persian language and culture for the people interested in is also pursued."



Bentonville residents may find Iranians playing soccer at Memorial Park.



Iranian culture is every everywhere and nowhere. There are restaurants from a lot of other middle-eastern nations, news and travel articles and wonderful movies by Iranians to keep connecting to Iran if you can filter out some of the bias!

...our experiences...

I was invited to have a meal with someone I met who was from Iran and was here as a student. When we were talking, he mentioned casually that most Iranians couldn't pray at the Islamic Center because they weren't Sunni Muslims, they wouldn't even let them in! He was really curious who could and couldn't come to certain Christian churches and when I told him that my church allows all people to come, he was really surprised! "My church allows all people to come! Catholics, Protestants, even Muslim friends!" This all seemed very revolutionary to him.

ETIQUETTE FOR SPENDING TIME WITH IRANIANS

There seems to be something in the soul of an Iranian that loves to express hospitality and generosity. Because so few of us pay them much attention, it may delight a friend to have you over and serve tea.

Belittling one's own accomplishments is a common expression of humility and respecting you and your accomplishments.

Never initiate any physical touch or contact with a member of the opposite sex. With a friend of the same gender, though, a gesture of affection is normal and appreciated.

Iranians practice 'meeting together' ('ta'arof') and visitors new to the country will decline an offer like tea, even if they want it. Be sure to offer something three or four times, in case.

Be sensitive about inviting Muslims from different countries to hang out together. Like the story above suggests, a tension exists between our melting pot and their social incongruencies.

Most Americans don't realize that Muslim friends expect you to talk about your beliefs, the more the better!



afghan/ pakistani

at Arkansas Universities

POPULATION IN CENT. ASIA:

265,771,529
(2020 projection)

POPULATION IN ARKANSAS:

A few students and
refugees, but most-
ly short-term visitors.

LANGUAGE(S):

Urdu (in Pakistan)
Pashtu, Dari, Uzbek,
Turkmen, Hazara,
Balochi and Pashayi

RELIGION(S):

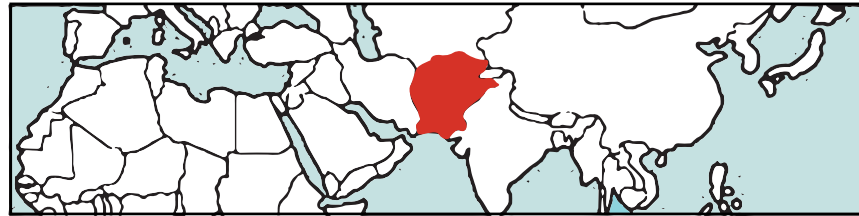
Mostly Sunni Mus-
lim, though a per-
secuted minority
called Hazara are
Shite.

CULTURAL PARADIGM:

Shame, honor

COMMUNITY NEEDS:

Small business skills,
Sustainable agricul-
ture, volunteers to
help with visits, for
students - friends.



It is helpful to understand that conflicts are generally not between Islam and the West but between various factions of Islam. Sadly, the war in Afghanistan has claimed many lives of the citizens of both our countries and our histories are all forever entwined. Pakistan is the fifth most populous nation in the world and these two nations make up several of the most hard-to-access unreached people groups in the world.



An 'EPIC' workshop for Afghani visitors to the UofA, posted on @StateDept/pic.twitter.com.

At the University of Arkansas, Afghanistan has been re-
presented more in short-term protected programs such as
the recent "Fulbright Afghanistan Enrichment Seminar" held
now for two years in a row. Local businesses were given a
chance to impart skills that people could take home with them
to Afghanistan. There are a few full-time students from both
these nations as well, but perhaps the best way to reach out
and touch these countries is through much constant fervent
prayer that God will bring peace and light to Central Asia!

pray



According to Operation World, few countries, if any, present a greater challenge than Pakistan. Delve into the multifaceted mosaic of nations in this part of the world.



Pray for the students who hear the gospel and can't resist its power, that they will not have to compromise their cultural heritage, but will see it improved!



Pray for more interested young people to arise who will dedicate their lives to this purpose, that all nations within these two countries will have redemptive communities in them.



Pray for the stability to take in Afghanistan, and Pakistan, so that good works may abound and the people's lives improved in every sphere of society after so many years of hopelessness and difficulty.

connect



Contact the university or local international education groups if you have a strong desire to help Afghanistan. They might not have any opportunities now, but they might contact you for help on an upcoming short-term event.



Friends in the military don't always have the luxury of 'hanging out' with Afghans while on duty, but they are invested deeply and would love for you to care about their Afghan tours.



Afghanistan is featured heavily in magazines like National Geographic and well-reported on, if still hard to access.



Consider taking a trip to Germany or Greece, where hundreds of thousands of Afghans are in limbo and easy to meet and spend time with and help with their English.

...our experiences...

I have had a lot of experiences with Latin American cultures and that is the group of people I feel most comfortable with. So when someone asked to set me up with a young woman from a culture known for Islam and war, I was frankly a little bit nervous. However, when I met her, we really connected and we enjoyed some sweet exchanges. I learned that she was from a very prestigious family there and she had so many interesting stories. Suddenly, one day, a civil disturbance mandated that she return home prematurely and without warning. Then I realized how many blessings both she and I would have missed had I turned down this opportunity.

ETIQUETTE FOR SPENDING TIME WITH AFGHANS AND PAKISTANIS

Both of these countries are certainly proud of their heritage, and don't often appreciate their nations being a byline for war. So questions about culture and lifestyle should generate better dialog.

The most popular sport in Afghanistan is on horseback, with a goat-carcass as a ball. It is called 'Buzkahzi.'

It would normally be unusual for a woman to offer a handshake, but might occur here because anyone who makes it to Arkansas has been taught our ways and probably comes from a more 'liberal' class of citizens. A handshake is a common greeting for men.

Direct eye-contact between a man and woman should always be avoided, if possible.

Refrain from asking a man questions about his wife or daughters, 'How's your family?' is ok.

If an Afghan or Pakistani friend comes to your home and you have a dog, it would be polite to secure it in another room.

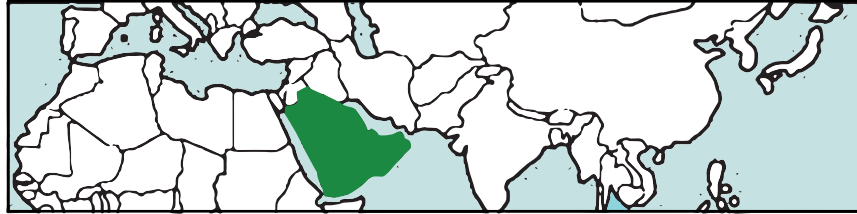
If given a gift, someone would expect you to quickly hide and not make a big deal about it. 'Gushing' or thanking profusely won't impress.



gulf arab students at Arkansas Universities

POPULATION IN THE GULF:

1,367,224,576
(2020 projection)



POPULATION IN ARKANSAS:

96 Students were enrolled at the University of Ark. in 2017 and a few at NWACC.

An American ally and uneasy bedfellow, Saudi Arabia has a big influence on the rest of the Middle East, and is the focus of five daily prayers and a once-in-a-lifetime pilgrimage. American tourists are not allowed to travel to Saudi Arabia apart from business, but it's easy to visit nearby and similar places. One way that Saudi Arabia overlaps generously with the United States is in the area of education. The Saudi government scholarship fund was created by the late Saudi King Abdullah in 2005 and this expires in 2020, so time is limited.

LANGUAGE(S):

Arabic

RELIGION(S):

Sunni Muslim

CULTURAL PARADIGM:

Shame, honor

COMMUNITY NEEDS:

Friendship, 'hang out time' with same gender, respect, travel partners, insight into our lives.



A family day in Fayetteville to celebrate a holiday in Razorback Garden, Oct. 1, 2016.

Saudi Students at the U of A tend to be good students and not as rigid as you might expect. Respecting Islam is a must, but open two-way dialog and enjoyment of each others' faith is almost an expectation. The Saudis want to see you demonstrating conviction, but they also relish the freedom they have here and want to have a good time.

pray



The best thing you can do is to pray for people who are called to embrace this God-given opportunity to simply be friends with Gulf Arabs. It is limited and time is so ripe as the Kingdom is becoming educationally independent.



Pray for anyone out there who might have positioned themselves to follow Jesus. How this is presented at home can be the difference between life and death.



Pray for the future of Saudi Arabia and its king and citizens. Pray also for Yemen, which is facing famine and steeped in civil war. As for Oman, Kuwait, Bahrain, Qatar and the United Arab Emirates (UAE), each have unique situations but are all home to unreachable citizens.

connect



Contact the Global Outfitters office for opportunities to be placed with friends in the Kingdom. Commitments are light, just spend an hour every 1-2 weeks.



Fayetteville has two Islamic Learning Centers that double as a mosques, an old one and a new one near the Bud Walton Arena on MLK. Bentonville has another one on SW 2nd Street.



The Muslim Student Association at the University of Arkansas hosts occasions from time to time as the "Meet a Muslim BBQ" that took place on April 1st, 2017. These kinds of events are a great place to practice sharing your life and breaking down stereotypes!

...our experiences...

It's 1:45 on Friday afternoon. The Muslims at the UofA walk briskly down "The Hill" past the HPER. After crossing Razorback road, they step into an overlooked tan building, take off their shoes, and begin their prayers. I stick out sitting in the back watching my friends arrive late. The women look down hidden from above. Ahmed makes eye contact and smiles at me as he enters the room of about 200 men. My heart breaks for these friends as they bow to the ground in unison. I'm reminded of my conversation with Ahmed about Isa al-Masih (Jesus the Messiah) being the Lamb of God. I pray for him and his country Saudi Arabia to experience the freedom of Jesus Christ. Ahmed is praying beside Muhammad from Pakistan who started avoiding me ever since I referenced a Bible story. The cultural barriers are high. Slowly, through authentic friendship and Christ's love, I have walked on a 3 year journey with Ahmed to discover Jesus for the very first time.

ETIQUETTE FOR SPENDING TIME WITH GULF ARABS

It is common for an Arab to metaphorically hold up two 'fists' in their mind, one to put up a fight when you malign the prophet Muhammed, and another one for maligning the Koran. When you do NOT disrespect these as expected, even a devout Muslim is almost completely disarmed and suddenly intrigued in you.

In some countries, eating in public during the day is forbidden on the month of Ramadan. Muslims will tell you 'it doesn't matter,' but inside they are pleased when you don't eat in front of them during that month, and they may even invite you to an 'Iftar' dinner (fast-breaking), which is very much an honor.

Economically, Arabs are often wealthy on par with Americans and this can remove a lot of money barriers. Paying your own way may not be comfortable, but you could insist.

Arab men are big 'futbal' (soccer) fans and you can make a friend easily if you are willing to become a fan too.

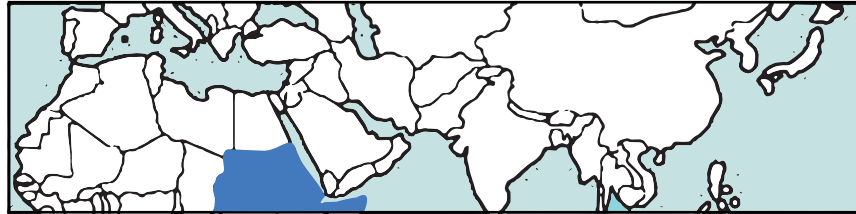


somalian/ sudanese

refugees in Noel, Missouri

POPULATION IN EAST AFRICA:

55,439,115
(2020 projection)



POPULATION IN ARKANSAS:

None-few, but an estimate has 550 in Noel, Missouri.

LANGUAGE(S):

Somalian, Sudanese, French, and other tribal dialects

RANKINGS ON OPEN DOOR'S PERSECUTION TOP-50 INDEX:

#2 (Somalia),
#5 (Sudan)

CULTURAL PARADIGM:

Honor, shame

COMMUNITY NEEDS:

English Education, Christian witness done in a culturally sensitive way, security, and much prayer.

Sometimes thought of as the “Afghanistan of North Africa,” Somalia, on the horn of Africa and neighboring Sudan have been at war with themselves for decades. Missionaries once labored in what is now Somalia from 1897 to 1974, until a new Marxist regime sealed up the country, leaving a few hundred believers behind. In more recent years, nearly six million people have dispersed across the globe from these broken nations, but rarely do they assimilate into society.



Hang out with Somalians at Durdur Grocery and Restaurant, at 217 Main Street in Noel, Missouri.

Just over three miles from the Arkansas Border, and a twenty minute drive from Bella Vista sits the little town of Noel, Missouri, one of America’s most diverse small towns. 500 Somalians and 40-50 Sudanese are employed by Tyson Chicken’s processing plant, largely keeping to themselves as a community within a community. Most of us will not ever set foot in Somalia, but kingdom-minded individuals can do basically the same thing without leaving the Ozarks. Whether or not someone sees this as a threat or an opportunity might depend on how much of a kingdom mindset one might have!

pray



Pray for the country of Somalia to once again become a free and safe nation.



Pray the same thing for South Sudan, which is experiencing horrific genocide and war at this moment.



Pray for the six million-strong diaspora across the globe that the hearts of all who God calls will be softened and they will turn and be saved.



There is a strong perceived threat among Mexicans and Whites in Noel that the African residents might take their good jobs (while in fact, it tends to be the kind of work they don't want to do). Pray for the physical and emotional safety of every person in Noel.



Ask God to put on the hearts of a few people in Northwest Arkansas to be called to one of the world's most neglected and often hated people groups.

connect



The prospect in becoming friends with a Somalian / Sudanese refugee is much more likely in Missouri than in Africa, but it is not without unique challenges.



Contacting, and perhaps visiting, local churches may be a good start to understanding the town, its history and hidden opportunities.



Contact the home office of Tyson in Springdale for possible programs and HR possibilities that would help worker morale and put you close to the residents.



Offer your services as an English Teacher, as one resident put it - "I wish there were opportunities to learn English more than just three times a week (at the church)."



If you visit Noel, a fairly inconspicuous mosque and an African grocery are on Main Street. You can combine a cup of cardamom-inspired tea in there with a visit to the charming 'Cliff-Dwellers' Cave or a float trip. Be sure to pray for Somalia.

...our experiences...

When I attended High School in Noel, I found the Somalians girls extremely hard to get to know. They only wanted to hang out with each other and tended to speak only their own language together in the cafeterias and in class. Later, when I moved to Fayetteville and started working at the Boys & Girl's club, I was astounded to find Libyans and Moroccans and Brazilians (etc) hanging out as if they didn't even think of ethnicity! I guess small towns are just different. If I could do it over again, knowing what I know now I might have tried to reach out to those Somalian girls, but you know, High School has it's own sort of preoccupations!

ETIQUETTE FOR SPENDING TIME WITH AFRICANS

Expect extreme shyness or suspicion among Noel's immigrant community. Unless you can prove otherwise, some might assume you are causing trouble if you are white, so be careful.

An African view of borrowing denotes closeness. Africans frequently share resources, so if someone you know requests money, it is both at once a compliment and a caveat.

Somalians and Sudanese will shake hands to a stranger (always the right), but don't try their cultural greetings unless you have established an understanding and a good relationship.

Africans are wordsmiths and make abundant use of proverbs and tongue-twisters with each other. Ask one to share a poem with you if you get any significant time together.

Most observers attribute the lack of Somalian assimilation to the rigidity of their Muslim faith. As a friend, you can help break down some of these barriers by respecting their faith and earning their respect for the diversity of American culture.

Many Americans are surprised to find out that Muslims (around the world) want you to talk more about your faith if it is important to you.

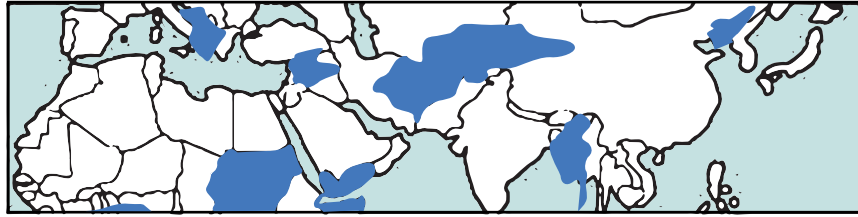


refugees

resettled in Northwest Arkansas

POPULATION ON THE RUN:

21,300,000+
(63 mil. displaced from their homes).



POPULATION IN ARKANSAS:

Only a few asylum seekers are allowed to settle in Arkansas, but there are many from previous eras.

LANGUAGE(S):

A wide range, from African languages to Arabic.

RELIGION(S):

Muslim, but due to unconventional experiences, true allegiance varies.

CULTURAL PARADIGMS:

Varied

COMMUNITY NEEDS:

Emergency housing, the right kind of jobs, patience, a sense of security, mental-health services, funding.

Some of us were caught off guard mid-way through 2015, which could definitely be called 'the year of the refugee.' A stream of distressed peoples emerged from the Syrian conflict into Europe causing confusion and prompting a variety of responses. Assylum seekers are not a recent phenomenon. Sadly, the numbers will probably only increase. It is a mistake to allow political rhetoric to dull our compassion, and this forces us to look at our own hearts. How can we as a community embrace the refugee crisis going on in the world head-on, and not pretend like it doesn't exist?



A mock refugee camp from a new student association for refugees in the Gardens on April 23, 2017

The state of Arkansas took a total of fourteen refugees in 2013 and '14, making it the fifth least welcoming state. Recently, a few people have sought to change that by forming a local agency, and silently taking in a few more from less spotlighted countries like Zambia and the Congo. In contrast, Missouri takes in large numbers of asylum seekers and towns from the Kansas City metro area to little Noel, near the Arkansas border are brimming with foreign culture. In both states, there is significant controversy, with a dearth of funding for veterans, education and the local homeless.

pray



There are strong Biblical arguments for caring for refugees. But even without it, the fact that so much blue shows up on the 10/40 window (map, opposite) is evidence for God's 'shaking the nations.'



All (yes, 100%) of places where refugees hail from were once countries and locations that Christians prayed to get into but couldn't access. God answers these prayers!



Pray for the most desperate cases. The Yazidi in Iraq, the Rohingya in Burma, and those who have lost it all in Syria. For human and divine intervention and help in troubled times.



Pray for civil unity and a strong consensus on behalf of local Christians, that we may overcome political differences and unite.



Pray for each family who comes to live with us in Arkansas, that they will be appropriately loved and given what they need.

connect



See what your church is doing first in the area of refugees (well, all of these topics, really). What can you do together that is more powerful than individual actions?



Seek out facts, not opinions. Most people do not know that refugees are required to pay all of their own resettlement expenses, there has never been an act of terror from any of the thousands of cases. Do a Bible Study on the subject with a few friends. Use Operation World to read about the refugee nations. You can read use the news to pray for refugees on the move, whether or not you are able to help.



Contact Canopy Northwest Arkansas (www.canopynwa.com) for practical opportunities to learn and to help.



Consider joining one of many trips to Jordan and Northern Iraq with Refugee Aid Mission, an organization that was started by Terry and Melissa Rhodes.

...our experiences...

Tonight I sat with people in our community, legal members of our community, from places like Mexico, Pakistan, Palestine, Lebanon, Syria, Laos, and India. Christians, Muslims, Buddhists, and Hindus all represented. It is absolutely heartbreaking to hear the stories, feel the trembling in their voice, and see the concern in their eyes for their families. One refugee from the Middle East was quivering in her voice when she said about a recent administrative decree, "(This means) your family can live, but mine cannot." Even after all she'd been through, she felt fearful here. I believe now is the time to change that by advocating for those who are living in the shadows of our community.

ETIQUETTE FOR SPENDING TIME WITH REFUGEES

Keep in mind that personal attention is not always the best way to help. These are people who need personal space like you do!

Pray about whether or not it is a good idea to ask a refugee to tell a story of fresh or recent trauma. This is healing, but also risky and sometimes intrusive.

Never forget that refugees were once very normal professionals in their society. They are not here because they wanted to be or because they hate their country. Give them the respect and dignity you would offer to a friend at work.

Share your faith genuinely. Refugees appreciate help, but may be guarded against anything too direct, but don't be any less than who you are.

Look for simple activities that relax the mind to do together if you have a friendship with a refugee. Let them open up to you and do not press them with lots of 'interview' type questions.

Ask about what life was like in 'the good 'ol days,' - try to learn from them about the places and cultures where they came from.



tibetan culture

found all over Fayetteville, Arkansas

POPULATION WORLDWIDE:

2,200,000 in Tibet
199,080 in India
13,650 in the US

POPULATION IN ARKANSAS:

Very few Tibetans live here, but more than 200 teachers have visited Fayetteville.

LANGUAGE(S):

Tibetan

RELIGION(S):

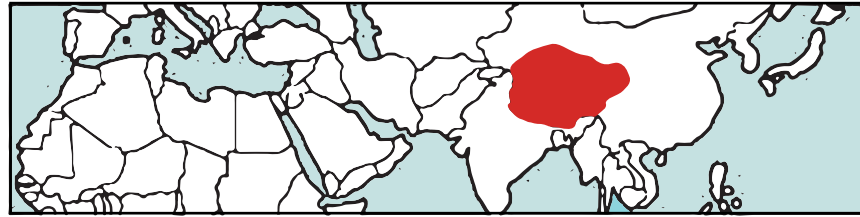
A specific form of Buddhism mixing Buddhist philosophy with a form of demon worship called "Bon."

CULTURAL PARADIGM:

Fear, power

COMMUNITY NEEDS:

Interest in Tibet gives us a picture of the spiritual longing that is found among Fayetteville's residents.







Tibet was a synonym for 'mysterious, intriguing and forbidden,' by Europeans for centuries and virtually impenetrable. But all that was turned up on its head after 1950, when the country was broken and a diaspora quickly spread across the world. Most people lost interest and forgot about Tibet until 1973, when a Christian mystic writer named Thomas Merton paid a visit to the country and wrote about it. Since then, "Tibet" has captured the imagination of the West, no longer as a 'lost continent' of unreached peoples, but as a source of enlightenment and a symbol of peace politics. But Tibet remains lost.






A festive ceremony at the half-constructed "Land of Infinite Bliss Retreat Center;" (2011, from their FB page).

The esteemed fourteenth Dalai Lama requested a visit to Arkansas based on divination for the auspicious day of May 11, 2011. Thousands gathered in Bud Walton Arena to hear him. This was also partially due to the tireless work of the venerable Geshe Thupten Dorjee, who has built a retreat center just outside Fayetteville in Crosses, Arkansas and another one near the Buffalo River. The Ozark beauty appeals to many Tibetans who are moving from big cities. Since this high profile visit, the University of Arkansas has become a leader in the 'Free Tibet' movement, exposing the suffering of Tibetans.

pray

-  Most people hang on the Dali Lama's words of living in peace and love, but they do not understand the deep demonic ties that Tibetan Buddhism has. The Tibetan monks who teach at the U of A say they are teaching relaxation methods, etc. but everything they do and say has Bon or Buddhist beliefs in it. American Buddhists don't have a clue to the dangers of Tibetan Buddhism.
-  Pray for Geshe Thupten Dorjee, whose life is documented in a recent local film called "Tibetan Footprints." Pray that he may understand the truth and be free.
-  Pray for western students who are considering Tibetan concepts as an alternative to their forgotten faith, that they will have an encounter with the living Christ.
-  Pray for the gospel to come to Tibet.

connect

-  To actually spend time with Tibetans, you may have to (prayerfully) attend speaking events and film festivals lionizing Tibetan gurus, such as sometimes put on by a local Episcopal Church in Fayetteville. (see www.artibet.com)
-  A program created by the University of Arkansas called "Tibetans in Exile Today" (TEXT) sends students to areas of exile to document the lives of Tibetans and make friends with them. You can 'meet' these Tibetan people by viewing their online portal and praying for those interviewed.
-  The 'Land of Infinite Bliss' Retreat Center just outside of Fayetteville near Crosses, Ark, is one of two* offering us an extension of Tibet. Prayerwalk the grounds if you can gain an invitation as if you are visiting Tibet, which is still a 'forbidden land.' Those forbidding entry into Tibet now are not Tibetans, but the Chinese.

(* the other is Katog Rit'rod Buddhist Retreat Center, County Rd 170, Parthenon, AR 72666 Buffalo River, near Ponca)

...our experiences...

After local entrepreneurs running Fayettechill's Dickson Street store launched a T-Shirt campaign with chanting Buddhist monks and a sand mandala, 'Ozarks at Large' (NPR) reported the community response as 'nothing but positive.' As a Christian, I don't want to antagonize myself with this precious and fragile community. I believe truth can stand up on its own and I welcome them here. But I do resonate with a friend who tried to steer a younger protégé away from applauding these activities. After one such sand mandala was completed and dumped into a stream, a local woman who had once served the Tibetans in their own land was prompted to conduct a prayer ceremony at an exact spot to counter the demonic influence that was affecting the momentum of her local ministry.

ETIQUETTE FOR SPENDING TIME WITH ANY TIBETANS YOU MEET

If you are fortunate to have a Tibetan friend, treat them as you would other cultures in Asia, with a soft gentle approach.

Tibetans really do respect all forms of life, including ants and mosquitos. Do not exasperate them by swatting flies and making jokes about this.

Tibetans will probably not be argued in any way into the kingdom of God. If they feign interest, it is probably out of respect to you. However, "nothing is impossible with God." Demonstrate patience and care and prayer and you may find the spiritual barrier can be broken through.

Do enjoy the good parts of Tibetan culture!

Tibetans have suffered unjustly under the Chinese now for decades. Any Tibetan friend you make here will appreciate your caring sympathy of their collective trials.

If visiting a Tibetan place of worship, don't be sneaky or trespass. Ask about customs and always walk around things clockwise.



HINDI



BENGALI



TELEGU



TAMIL



PUNJABI



KANADA



NEPALESE



THAI

tips for building international friendships

dive in!

Bill Moeller can connect you with an international friendship partner during the academic year cycle. He also collects furniture for temporary residents. Contact: billmoeller@gmail.com or 479-466-8436

The University of Arkansas' "ifriend" program is also always in need of friendship and conversation partners. The advantage of this program is that there are regularly scheduled activities for you to do with your ifriend. Contact: ifriend@uark.edu or Karen Beitle, 479-575-6665

Residents of Bentonville or Rogers who want an international friendship partner but don't have time to drive down to Fayetteville can contact the International Student Club at NWACC. Contact: Jeremy Youmans, jyoumans@nwacc.edu

calendar

Northwest Arkansas will blow your mind as to how many opportunities there are to connect with the world. These are just a few, and be sure to double-check the dates!:

- FEBRUARY** Chinese New Year (Feb 16 in 2018, Feb 5 in 2019)
(Note: Losar Tibetan New Year, and TET for Vietnamese.)
- MARCH** Holi Festival (India, March 2 in 2018, March 21 in 2019)
Nowruz Festival (Iran, March 21 every year)
Univ of Ark, Immersion Series, nations vary.
usually held sometime around March/April.
- APRIL** Bentonville Square's International Festival,
replaced NWACC's Int'l festival, last held April 7.
Crystal Bridges Multicultural Celebration
(held annually now around early April)
- MAY** Songkran Festival (Thailand, Cambodia, & Laos, April 13)
"Golden Week" in Japan, several holidays coincide.
Bentonville International Film Festival, early May.
- JUNE** Ramadan (2017: May 26-Jun 25 & 2018;
May 15-Jun 14; & 2019: May 5-Jun 4)
- AUG/SEPT** Best time to apply for 'ifriend,' or similar programs.
Chinese Mid-Autumn Festival
Enkutatash Festival (Ethiopia, September 12)
- OCTOBER** Durga Puja Festival (Bentonville),
check drikpanchang.com
- NOVEMBER** Diwali (India, November 7 in 2018, Oct 27 in 2019)
Hmong New Year Festival, usually early November.
- DECEMBER** Thanksgiving and Christmas Season

dealing with food & drink

In our age of allergy-sensitivity and interest in vegetarianism, food limitations may be easier to accommodate than they once were. In general, recipes with fewer preservatives that are free of beef or pork will be well received. Students will come with a mindset of being adventurous, but some who come on a work visa may be really reluctant to delve into the unknown. If that's the case, let them determine their comfort zone and it may be better to let them cook for you first! Some Muslims avoid alcohol and some do not.

people, not projects

It has been reported a number of times that people have lost interest in their friend when they didn't want to follow Jesus. While we are to look for a 'person of peace,' it doesn't mean we should be this way! Be a friend because you want to be a friend and don't treat your international friend like a 'missions trip.' Show them that you love them for who they are, not for who you want them to be.

patience and empathy

Don't be agitated if your friends show up late, don't want to do something, get angry with you or are just hard to stay in touch with. Cultural unknowns can be part of the fun for everyone who remembers to keep a learning attitude!

bring them to church

As a regular part of your life, international friends often want to visit your church and small groups. Just explain everything you can to them first, and never push them to do anything they don't want to do.



HMONG



**MID-EAST/
N.AFRICA**



CHINESE



ARAB



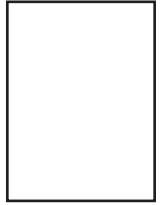
REFUGEES



TIBETAN



JAPANESE



OTHERS!

suggested activities with internationals

things you can do

Go fishing or canoeing at one of the Marinas at Lake Fayetteville or Beaver Lake (note: check on proper licensing before you fish or hunt!)

Check the library bulletin board for simple free presentations and activities like Ozark music demonstrations, 5K runs or lectures.

Hang out at one of Northwest Arkansas' Farmers Markets or berry farms and have a family brunch back at home or in a park.

Check local outdoor stores for upcoming workshops on photography, backpacking or rock climbing skills. Learn together!

Ask your international friends if they know about the numerous thrift stores in NW Ark. Due to transportation constraints, they may like to go treasure hunting or garage-saling.

Organize a game night with friends so more of your other friends can get to know your international friend in a non-threatening way.

Have your international friend teach you how to cook some ethnic food in your own kitchen. You may need to take them to buy the material at one of the ethnic markets.

Go to one of the Puzzle Rooms with a group to solve a Sherlock-Holmes styled mystery.

Visit the County Fair or one of the summer concerts in the park. Big-tickets like an AMP concert would be a thrill but keep in mind that treating friends this way may make them nervous as they may feel a need to reciprocate.

places you can go

EDUCATIONAL

Prairie Grove Battlefield State Park
506 E Douglas St, Prairie Grove, AR 72753

Arkansas Air Museum
U.S. Highway 71, Drake Field, Fayetteville, AR 72701

Crystal Bridges Museum of American Art
600 Museum Way, Bentonville, AR 72712

Amazeum Childrens Museum
(sometimes they have discount nights)
1009 Museum Way, Bentonville, AR 72712

Shiloh Museum of Ozark History
118 W Johnson Ave, Springdale, AR 72764

NATURAL

Botanical Garden of the Ozarks
(esp. for Asian/Pacific/Japanese)
4703 N Crossover Rd, Fayetteville, AR 72764

Lake Wedington Recreation
15592 Lake Wedington Entry Rd, Fayetteville, AR 72704

Lincoln Lake Trails
Rheas Mill Township, AR 72744

Hobbes State Park (and War Eagle Mill)
20201 East Hwy 12, Hindsville, AR 72738

SPORT

Gator Golf Miniature Golf
2692 N College Ave, Fayetteville, AR 72703

The Jones Center (Ice Skating / Swimming)
922 E Emma Ave, Springdale, AR 72764

Memorial Park & Lake Fayetteville
for running, basketball, baseball, etc.

Fast Lane Bowling & Entertainment (Rogers/Lowell)
1117 N Dixieland St, Lowell, AR 72745

Don't forget that family occasions like little league games, dance or piano recitals and birthday parties are excellent things to invite your international friend to!



fpr fayetteville prayer room

The Fayetteville Prayer Room exists as a place for the unified Body of Christ in our community to come together in constant intercession and worship; that the presence and Love of Christ might flood our hearts, our churches, our community, and our world.

HOURS OF OPERATION:

Monday - Friday, 5 am - 8 pm.
Saturday, 6 am - noon

COME AND PRAY WITH US!



Sign up for Spring 2018!

WANNA BE INVOLVED?

January - May, 2018



Perspectives™

on the World Christian Movement

Fayetteville, Rogers, Siloam Springs (inquire about other times and locations)

Different days of the week, 6:30 - 9:00 pm
Find the time and location that fits your schedule.

Perspectives is a fifteen week course that will open your eyes to God's purposes for the world in a way that no other course can!


Register online at www.perspectives.org



Global Outfitters




Mobilizing and Equipping the People of Northwest Arkansas to Fulfill Their Role in the Great Commission.

-  Regular training classes to grow your faith like "The Holy Spirit," "Your Identity in Christ," and specific skills helpful for working among people of different faiths and contexts.
-  World Missions Library
-  Free Missionary Office Space
-  "Foundations" is a nine-month training course to prepare you for the rigors of overseas living and local outreach opportunities.
-  "Perspectives on the World Christian Movement."



Join us each week at 2:00-3:30 p.m. on Tuesdays to exchange ideas, stories and encouragement. For the whole Northwest Arkansas Community.

Global Outfitters ("The GO Center") is located on 2844 N. College, Fayetteville, AR 72703, next to Mama Carmens. www.global-outfitters.org



*Let the nations be glad
and sing for joy,
for you judge the peoples with equity
and guide the nations upon earth.
Let the peoples praise you, O God;
let all the peoples praise you!
The earth has yielded its increase;
God, our God, shall bless us.
God shall bless us;
let all the ends of the earth
fear him!*

Psalm 67, ESV