


Annual Review 2022



Oh, magnify the LORD
with me, and let us exalt
His name together!

— Psalm 34:3, English Standard Version

“**There has never
been a time like this.**

*There is more unity and
more collaboration and
more coming together
[in the body of Christ],
and because of that we
are seeing absolutely
amazing things.*”

— David Hamilton, international associate provost,
University of the Nations and YWAM®

Jesus Film Project® exists to see everyone, everywhere hear the life-changing story of Jesus—in their heart language and their heart medium.

Since 1979 we've translated *JESUS* into more than 2,000 languages. Now with more films, digital ministry tools and strategies than ever before, we won't stop helping believers share the gospel the world over.

“Are you just a bot? I want to talk to a real human.”

These are the words of a young seeker in the Middle East after seeing a Scripture about Jesus on social media. Like so many of us today, he was fed up with getting responses over the phone and online from a machine. Still, he opted to start an online chat to learn more and was met with the comforting words of a believer—a partner of Jesus Film Project—a real person, on the other end.

This type of interaction reflects the nature of God: Jesus is a real person. He is God, He is love, and He wants to be near, connecting with us in person. As His body on the earth today, we continue His mission of serving the world when we invite others to experience the transforming nearness of His love.

Together, we do that by translating the story of Jesus into heart languages. Technology is our tool and film is our medium of choice because when people see and hear Jesus speak their language, the very real message of Jesus—and often Christ Himself—comes close and becomes real. And He wants to come close and become real to everyone, everywhere.

As you read the stories in this report, you’ll get a glimpse of what Jesus does when He’s welcomed into people’s lives so that, whether they watch the *JESUS* film at an outdoor showing or on their private mobile device, they can interact and learn from other local believers. And in that way, they can learn to know the real Jesus.

Because you’ve faithfully invested what God has given you, reaching people personally and digitally through heart-language media is possible. You are near to every person who comes to know Jesus, even if you never meet them. Thank you for your compassionate generosity.

Let's thank God together for all He did in 2021.

Some identifying details have been changed for confidentiality throughout this report.

Lives are changed when
you fuel gospel-centered
social media campaigns.



38,220
people just
like Hanna

“You are pummeling me with new believers to follow up with,” one local mentor told Samson. During eight months of the TESFA social media campaign in Ethiopia, 38,220 people indicated they chose to follow Christ and were offered follow-up meetings with a local believer. From what the ministry team has been able to track, 6,400 of those people are still actively involved in a local church.

HANNA'S STORY

Hanna wanted to escape. As hard as she tried, she could hardly hide her physical pain and emotional anguish. What she really wanted was a new life. Like many of us often do, she escaped by mindlessly scrolling on social media.

Among the endless posts of glamorous faces, showy talents and internet humor, Hanna's eyes fixated on a post from someone called "TESFA." She wasn't quite sure who ran the social media account, but she had been following it for a while because of its positive messages. She needed something positive in her life. **And *tesfa* means "hope" in Amharic, Hanna's heart language.**

On this particular day, Hanna saw a post about our animated short film, *Chosen Witness*. It focuses on Mary Magdalene, who—like Hanna—had a troubled life. Mary experienced the compassionate love of Jesus Christ, and she was the first person to witness the resurrected Christ.

Being able to see and hear the love of Jesus in her heart language made all the difference for Hanna.

TESFA advertised an option to contact a live, local person to learn more. Hanna selected the option, which started the live chat that would change her life.

"What is love?" she asked.

Samson, a local believer helping run TESFA as an on-call live chat responder, was out and about on a normal day. Then his phone buzzed—a chance to share Jesus.

After messaging each other a few times, he and Hanna talked on the phone.

"Jesus is the definition of love," Samson told her. What Hanna saw in the film was real. Jesus truly loved her like that.

Samson didn't know it at the time, but Hanna was the victim of domestic abuse. She married young, and her husband was sometimes harsh with her. She tried to hide the bruises on her neck. As a 20-something her future felt bleak; watching the short film gave her hope.

She gave her heart to Christ. "I can feel the joy coming even as we prayed," she proclaimed.

Next Samson offered to connect Hanna to a mentor from a nearby church. "Please don't call me back," Hanna cautioned. She insisted Samson text her the mentor's number and that she contact him on her own time. Four hours later, Hanna had already met in person with the mentor to learn what it means to follow Jesus.

In the following months, Hanna continued to meet with the mentor regularly but in secret, for fear of her husband. That is, until Hanna's husband gave his life to Jesus too. Their relationship transformed into a picture of the love of God. Hanna joined the choir at church and later helped her sister learn how to follow Jesus.

With innovative partnership like this, in one day people can go from seeing an ad online to knowing Christ and being connected to a local church. This is the fruit of your partnership with Jesus Film Project—all glory to Christ!



Together
we're sharing Jesus in
rural regions of the world.

THE DONKEY RIDER'S STORY

For weeks, villagers scrutinized the family of Jesus followers who had recently arrived in their isolated region of East Asia. These unwelcome outsiders traveled from village to village, showing the *JESUS* film in the local language and telling stories about Jesus—and most unusual of all, they had attempted to start a dairy business. But the villagers weren't interested in anything they were offering. They didn't care about the stories they were telling or the movie they were showing. And they definitely weren't interested in their business—after all, no one in the village liked dairy milk.

The family often watched the *JESUS* film together in the evenings. After several weeks some of the villagers started murmuring: *What is this family still doing here? What is this movie that they watch so intently every week?* It was the only film in the local language.

Stirred with curiosity, two men from the village decided to investigate. One evening the men sneaked to the family's home and secretly watched *JESUS*.

The next day the men visited the family, saying, "We want to talk to you about the movie you were watching last night!" After confessing what they had done, the men asked the family to explain one detail that captured them.

"There was a scene of a man riding on a donkey," they recalled. "Do you know how important donkeys are here?" The family was confused.

The men explained that donkey milk was very popular in their area, so they proposed the family start a donkey milk business. "When you start that business, everyone will want what you have," they assured the family.

"If you tell us the story of the man on the donkey, we'll help you with your business."

With joy, the family members shared their faith in Christ.

Villagers began to take their donkeys to the family, and the donkey milk business quickly flourished. It drew more and more villagers, and soon everyone wanted to know the story of the man riding a donkey. In the span of 18 months, the family had the opportunity to show the *JESUS* film to 7,864 villagers. Now over 70 house churches have been planted in the area as hundreds have started following Jesus—the man who rode on a donkey.

**Your generosity mixed with
ordinary gestures of love
radiates the light of Christ.**



SHARBAT'S STORY

Having fled her home in Afghanistan was just one struggle threatening Sharbat's future. Trying to make a new life in Europe was difficult enough, but something else haunted her more: She was a divorced woman, a blemish that in her culture guaranteed her hardship, disregard and shame.

The stigma of being a divorcee also meant Sharbat found no solace in the company of other refugee women. She wondered how they could take her seriously. She spent most days alone with her children, often claiming nobody loved her.

She despaired in self-pity until the day an Iranian woman in the camp showed her the kindness of Christ. Love radiated from this woman, and it moved Sharbat. She finally felt seen and wanted by someone. Sharbat gratefully accepted the woman's invitation to watch a film.

The day of the showing—hosted by a partner ministry called Elijah21—a bus transported Sharbat and other refugees to a church, which offered a friendly meal before screening the

JESUS film. On screen, the man named Jesus told powerful stories in Sharbat's language to the crowds that followed Him. In one scene, He calmed stormy seas. That caught her attention.

Sharbat reflected on her life in relation to this Jesus and her beliefs. *Why must I believe that I should always only remain Muslim?* she pondered. As she watched, more questions filled her mind: *Who is Jesus? Who am I? Why am I here?* Then a sudden calmness came over her, followed by a wonderful peace.

When the movie ended, the team asked if anyone was interested in learning more.

"I would like to know more about this wonderful Jesus, attend church and be baptized," Sharbat stated. She opened her arms to the One who knows her shame but holds her even closer. With joy, she attended the first follow-up meeting at the church.

After making her decision to know Jesus, Sharbat proclaimed, "I want to radiate this same love that the Iranian woman had as she extended this invitation to me."

"I would like to know more about this wonderful Jesus," she said.

In 2021 we saw story after

764,281,813

People viewed Jesus Film Project® media

Total views of gospel content include online views, media broadcasts and in-person film showings. Some reported statistics include estimates.

18,741,460

**People indicated
decisions for Christ**

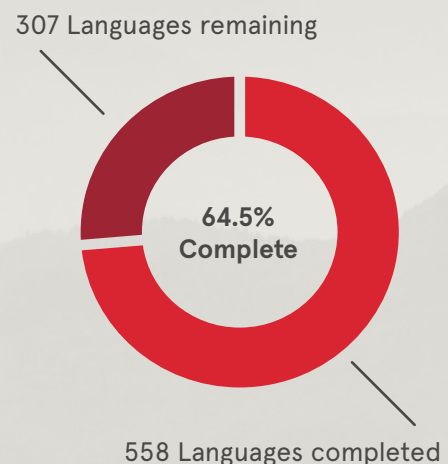
113,477

**New churches
were established**

Mission 865™

Mission 865 is an initiative to dub the *JESUS* film in 865 of the most-spoken languages in the world, representing 99% of the world's population.

By the end of 2021, 558 Mission 865 languages (64.5%) had been completed.



story change **together.**

JESUS in Kyiv

“ Just giving you an update of the Jesus Film equipment in Kyiv. Our church is showing the JESUS film twice a week. Through the showing of the film, food distribution, and preaching in the streets, they have seen about 130 people come to Christ each month. They are limited to show the film only inside because of curfew after dark but are looking forward to when restrictions are lifted. Thanks again for your help with the equipment. ”

— Email from a partner in Ukraine, July 2022

Every Day Online

On Average

Plays of our gospel media

217,926

726,086

Languages

135

954

■ In Top 12 Countries*

■ Across the World

*Bangladesh, East Asia, Egypt, India, Indonesia, Japan, Pakistan, Persia, Russia, Thailand, Turkey, Vietnam. These 12 countries have the greatest need for access to the gospel and hold 75% of the world's unreached people. These people have no neighbors who can share Christ with them and no church within walking distance.

Technology

&

and heart-
language
media given
by gospel
patrons like
you make

Jesus

available even while we sleep!





AMAN'S STORY

At midnight Aman, the local religious and community leader, heard a knock at his door. Six people stood outside his home, weary and seeking shelter. They had been providing food, blankets and support to people, but they needed a safe haven now that a radical religious group had grown in power. In Aman's culture and religion, showing hospitality to strangers is customary. So, as a faithful follower of the majority religion in his Central Asian country, Aman invited them into his home, offered them food and prepared a place for them to rest.

After the visitors ate and went to sleep, Aman's curiosity about his guests compelled him to look through their bags. Ignoring the risk of waking them, he continued to rummage and found a book. Thinking it was the holy book of his religion, he began to read it. "But the words were different," he later recounted. "I was reading about Jesus!"

With great intrigue, he continued searching their bags and found a microSD card. When he inserted it into his phone, a movie, *JESUS*, appeared on his screen. Suddenly Aman was face to face with a portrayal of Jesus, the man whom he had known only as a prophet—until now. As he heard Jesus' words in his heart language, the message resonated deeply inside his heart, and he "felt the glory of God" like never before.

As a cleric for nearly four decades, Aman had been studying, teaching and memorizing the words of another holy book, but after reading from the New Testament and finishing the movie, he said to himself, "I have never felt this power!"

Immediately he woke up his guests, eager to tell them what he had discovered. At first they were afraid they had been found by radicals. But their host reassured them, "Your Jesus, your God, came to my heart and soul!" So he asked the visitors to tell him more about Jesus. That day the cleric decided to become a "holy man for Him."

Thank you for sending 4,426 sets of equipment to 75 countries last year, including Aman's.

When God Weaves It All Together



THE PFOHLS' STORY

Jesus Film Project®
Ministry Partners



Unraveling

Poland 1991. Brenda and Warren Pfohl arrived as a missionary family with their two sons. It was the fulfillment of a dream, and they planned to stay for decades.

“We thought we’d do it together for the rest of our lives,” Warren said.

Suddenly, after the birth of their third son, Brenda became ill. They tried to endure it, but her condition worsened.

“It was a very hard thing to leave Poland,” Brenda said, emphasizing her struggle. “I was so exhausted I could barely lift my head after two in the afternoon, and I had three little kids to take care of.”

They cried, prayed and sought godly counsel together—and in the end they knew they had to move back to the U.S. after only six years in Poland.

With only boxes of books and toys to their name, their church set them up in a little apartment with mismatched furniture: an orange couch, a green chair, one lamp, six plates. Through the generosity of 25 different families, they experienced God’s provision.

They struggled to make sense of it and see what was next. God soon opened the door for Warren to join the church leadership—ultimately as missions director and an assistant pastor—and they settled in.

Almost immediately, they noticed their second son, David, was having vision trouble. After trying eyeglasses and even larger print text, they saw a specialist. Eventually, David was diagnosed with a rare genetic mutation called Batten disease. The fatal degeneration typically begins with vision loss and then causes other neurological damage.

God took care of the Pfohls—from money for doctor visits to joy amid the sadness. And their church community rallied around them to encourage and support them.

Looking back on that time, Brenda remarked how

many of her journal entries were “little glimpses of awareness of God’s incredible goodness.”

Sorting the Threads

About six months after moving back to the States, when Brenda and Warren had begun to tire from the attentive care David required, their head pastor offered them a free couple’s trip. They jumped at the chance for respite and reconnection. As God would have it, the pastor sent them to Branson, Missouri, for a Jesus Film Project briefing—Warren attending as the church’s missions director.

“It was eye-opening,” said Brenda. “It was the first time we really heard what God was doing through Jesus Film Project. And that’s when we made a little prayer: God, if ever in our lifetime we could fund a translation of the *JESUS* film, we would be so thankful.”

They knew it was a wild prayer because they didn’t have that kind of money. They had been missionaries, supported by the financial partnership of other believers, and now Warren was a pastor.

Warren likes to joke that Branson became the most expensive free vacation they’ve ever taken.

“Never in a million years did we imagine we would give like we’ve been able to give to God’s kingdom. Why didn’t we do this before?”

The Pfohls admit that giving beyond their standard tithe was not normal for a long time after that briefing, even after they came into some money unexpectedly. Over the years, the Holy Spirit has used a few key experiences to develop their hearts for generosity.

One was from their time in Poland, when the Pfohls had a financial supporter who increased his giving year after year. When they asked him how he could do that, he simply told them that he had enough to live and decided to give more away. His example has stayed with them.



Even as those tangible expressions of God's care continued back in the States, Warren and Brenda struggled with the reality of David's impending death. They processed the grief differently and had to wrestle with God through it.

"One night, Brenda was just weeping," Warren recalled from a particularly painful memory. "I had nothing in me to help her, so I just covered my ears. Horrible"—the regret choked his speech—"it was horrible, but I just didn't have anything to give her."

Their hearts ached as they watched their son lose physical abilities and independence. A decade of slow degeneration took a toll on their family. Amid this muck of life, they were introduced to books by Randy Alcorn that they said helped them see earthly situations from a heavenly perspective. By God's grace, the fatal situation became an opportunity to look forward to David's eternal life and their eventual reunion with him in the arms of Christ.

David died 13 years after they left Poland, just before his 21st birthday.

These days, the Pfohls spend their summers coordinating a local ministry to international students who are around the same age David was when he died. Warren and Brenda spend time with the students, provide American cultural experiences and share the hope they have in Christ.

"God weaves everything together," Warren said.

In view of eternity, their impulse to live for this temporal life has faded more and more.

God Weaves Everything Together for His Glory

Brenda and Warren focus on stewarding five things for the Lord: "time, talent, treasure, truth and relationships." They believe God is glorified when they bear good fruit in these areas.

Prayer is a big way the Pfohls love to invest their time, truth and relationships. They have a binder full of monthly letters from each ministry and missionary they support. It's divided into seven parts, so each day they can focus their prayers on one ministry. Jesus Film Project's day is Tuesday. Warren and Brenda begin their morning quiet time praying together for their partners. Afterward they will often send an email or text to the missionaries or ministry leaders to encourage them.

"I don't ever want to be seen as the cow that you get milk from," Warren smirked, "and I realize part of that is my responsibility." For the Pfohls, partnership involves more than writing a check.

"We love Jesus Film Project because it is something we can do as a couple together," Brenda said. "You

Inside Brenda's wedding ring from 38 years ago is their life verse:

"Oh, magnify the LORD with me, and let us exalt His name together!"

— Psalm 34:3, ESV

feel like you're part of the whole ministry. ... We feel very engaged and involved."

One way the Pfohls have given of their treasure is through a three-year financial commitment to Jesus Film Project that was relatively large for their household. The commitment was bigger than they originally planned, but they followed God's leading.

During that time period, they were having trouble selling a house. None of their tactics worked. That was when someone from Cru Foundation helped them understand how giving from the sale of the home would have tax benefits.

"It made so much sense," Warren said. It reminded the Pfohls that God owns it all anyway, and they are just stewards. "So why worry how much money we're going to get [from the sale]?"

They gladly utilize a Donor Advised Fund with Cru Foundation, which provides up-front tax benefits and time to consider where to direct funds—whether to Jesus Film Project or an unaffiliated ministry.

God provided a buyer, and the Pfohls were able to say goodbye to the house and give what they had purposed together.

They haven't been missionaries overseas since the mid-'90s, but their commitment to the Great Commission has not waned. The Pfohls have been faithful ministry partners with Jesus Film Project since 1999, at first giving a little, and then more as God has provided and directed.

"We are literally partnering with a person who is in some country right now setting up a screen and getting the projector to work," Warren said from their home in Wisconsin.

It's a picture of a spiritual reality: We are the one body of Christ, spread across the earth, making use of the time, talent, treasure, truth and relationships God's given us. We are sharing the powerful truth of the story of Jesus with everyone, everywhere, and God is weaving the threads together for the glory of His name. Your generosity helps weave the beautiful tapestry of eternity.



CRU FOUNDATION™ AND YOU

Unleash the full potential of your assets to advance the gospel, care well for your family and avoid unnecessary taxes through custom charitable solutions from Cru Foundation.

Discuss your options with a Cru Foundation planning professional without pressure or obligation.

Connect with them confidentially today at 800-449-5454 or info@crufoundation.org.



Dear Friend,

As I reflect on this past year, one thing that stands out to me is a real sense of togetherness across the body of Christ. More and more, the Lord is opening doors for us to solve missional challenges in partnership with other believers. Our partnerships used to sound a lot like this: “What do you need? We’ll send it to you.” And we still often serve in that way. But more than ever before, our conversation is, “Hey, let’s bridge the missional gap together.”

Hanna’s story on Page 4 is a great example of that. Jesus Film Project digital strategists got together with brothers and sisters from another ministry, identified where people still don’t know Jesus and created solutions to reach the unreached. Even more exciting, the collaboration is continuing whether the teams travel or meet virtually. There are more people to reach, so there’s more opportunity to innovate, and in the process the two teams are creating a model that can be replicated in many places across the globe.

Another example is the translation and production of the *JESUS* film in more languages. Several partner organizations are enthusiastic about getting the story of Jesus to the ends of the earth, and we’re all working together to figure out how we can produce accurate film versions faster. The Holy Spirit is clearly moving, and we want to keep in step with Him.

And then undergirding all this effort is a massive, unprecedented catalytic prayer movement. Believers across ministries are lifting their voices to the Lord in unison, asking Him to break through barriers to the gospel. This is taking many different forms—organized and spontaneous, large groups and small, individual partners like the Pfohls (Page 14) and you.

Friend, we are so thankful for you. Your generosity is inspiring partnership among other believers and ministries. The Lord is responding to your prayers in amazing ways. You are making an eternal difference around the world that you—and we—don’t even know about.

You’re with us on mission. With us in prayer. And we’re all-in with you.

Together in Christ,

Josh Newell
Executive Director
Jesus Film Project

Oh, magnify the LORD
with me, and let us exalt
His name together!

— Psalm 34:3, ESV



A scene from Chosen Witness, an animated short film about Jesus from the perspective of Mary Magdalene. Hanna (see Page 4) was led to Christ after watching it.



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Jesus speaks

through your
generosity

to everyone,
everywhere

through
partnership

The *JESUS* film is now available in over 2,000 languages. It'll take around 200 more for 99% of the world's population to have the story of Jesus on film in their heart languages.

Together let's give the whole world access to the story of Jesus in this generation.

Connect with us    

jesusfilm.org