

STEPPELAND DREAMING INITIATIVE

encouraging indigenous forms of liturgy and worship among the Tuvan people of Central Asia



a collaborative effort of Jesus People USA, Hope in Transit, & Heart Sounds International (OM Arts)

SPRING 2012 UPDATE

Our role in Tuva is to take the form of encouragement and advocacy; creating a space for God's spirit to move among the indigenous Tuvans and allowing them to formulate culturally appropriate expressions of the Gospel message which will then organically propagate into unreached areas via the witness of changed lives experienced through already existing relationships. Surely there will be times when we will be able to share from the experiences we've gathered in our own walks with the Lord as we develop our own friendships with the indigenous Tuvans, but we really want to stay "in the background" in support roles and really allow the Tuvans to take leadership so that it will be the growth of an authentically Tuvan church rather than an extension of "Western" church traditions.

This approach closely mirrors the methodology of the Apostle Paul, who time and again was unwilling to allow cultural "stumbling blocks" to be placed between his listeners and the pure message of the Gospel of Jesus. In more modern times, the contextual approach was championed by founder of the China Inland Mission, Hudson Taylor. When veteran missionary William Burns encountered Hudson Taylor in the first few years of his work in China he immediately recognized the effectiveness of "going native" in appearance and quickly joined Hudson in packing away his English suit and donning Chinese robes. At that time, this approach was virtually unheard of. Interestingly, Hudson Taylor never made a big issue of taking this approach, it just struck him as the obvious and natural thing to do if one was primarily concerned with effectively spreading the Gospel message. Taylor and Burns were also pioneers in coupling evangelism with practical acts of compassion, as well as really coming along side and experiencing living in the same ways as those you are "ministering" to.

So, in like manner, we will defer to the indigenous Tuvan Christians as to what are the greatest needs and where our efforts should be focused. Eventually, we hope to be in Tuva long term supporting ourselves with the "tent making" approach, working at the same sort of jobs as those we are sharing our lives with. Until that time comes we will need to raise support to do short term trips to stay connected with people there as well as saving the capital to finance our initial launch to Tuva. We would love to get Brian and Leah to Tuva for a month this summer, as Leah's never been before. She could glean valuable perspective regarding what it would take to live in Tuva as a family longer term.

Your spiritual and financial support are welcome:

<http://www.uskhomeizhi.org/Initiative/help.html>