

How it all Began: A History of Partners International

At the time, it was a revolutionary idea. The thought that indigenous (local) Christians could share the Good News - in word and deed - without North Americans running the show was a new concept back in 1943.

The idea of a locally-run Christian overseas outreach was brought up in the Seattle living room of a man with a heart for China. N.A. Jepson, businessman and lay leader in his local church, concluded, along with four of his friends gathered together one night, that if the Good News was going to impact China, the work was best done by Chinese Christians.

The seeds of a revolutionary partnership were planted. Calvin Chao, a gifted Chinese evangelist, took the Good News into China's interior, respected and empowered by a small group of North Americans who believed that he was the best person for the job.

Chao's work was made possible by the support of Jepson and his friends, who sensed that their simple, common-sense model of partnership held an incredible potential to impact the world.

They were right.

Through the years, Partners International has been known as the China Native Evangelistic Crusade (CNEC) and the Christian Nationals Evangelism Commission (CNEC). In 1985, the name Partners International was chosen to reflect the commitment to global partnership that had existed all along, since that night in Seattle.

In 1963, Partners International Canada was formed, to give Canadians the opportunity to be full partners with their peers around the world, sharing the Good News of Jesus and meeting the needs of the poor with local and sustainable development projects.

Today, Partners International is a global alliance that partners with 104 ministries in 57 countries on four continents.