



# good idea!

*One good idea. Once a month. From the Institute of Evangelism*

January 2014

## Impossible odds. Creative faith

By Brian Stiller

*Brian Stiller, former president of Tyndale University College and Seminary, is now Global Ambassador for the World Evangelical Fellowship. For the second time, we thought good idea! readers would appreciate one of his monthly blog entries about the church in different countries. Here he writes about the influence of a British Christian soccer player on China.*

It seems unlikely that an imposing former professional British football (soccer) player would end up as a social worker. And even more unlikely, is that he would be appointed by the Chinese government to help solve one of their most pressing problems – over a million orphans left on streets or languishing in countless orphanages. Not only has Robert Glover led in placing 250,000 Chinese orphans in Chinese homes in the last few years, he has signed an agreement with the King of Thailand to do the same there. This story tells of the mystical and sure guidance of the Holy Spirit in building out of personal gifting and skill to solve a seemingly intractable problem in places where we assume the name of Christ is unknown



Signing up as a professional footballer with Portsmouth and Norwich City, Rob eventually ended up studying social work, taking one of his first jobs in Guernsey. A visiting speaker at the church they attended said “Robert, I sense you will be father to children like the stars in the sky.” Thinking it rather over the edge, he continued in his social work, focusing on orphans and their needs.

In 1996 while in China studying the problems of orphans, he was given tickets to the Chinese Special Olympics. Sitting next to him was a member of the Chinese Politburo . . . [READ MORE](#)

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## More on the Upcoming Vital Church Conferences

They're coming soon! The Vital Church Planting conference (Toronto, January 30th till February 1st) and the Vital Church Maritimes conference (Halifax, February 3rd till February 5th) will be here before you know it, whatever the weather! If you haven't registered yet, and are wondering whether to come, here are more details of the workshops at each conference, just to whet your appetite:

### **Vital Church Planting, Toronto**

Picking up on the theme of Church for Every Context (also the title of Mike Moynagh's "big book"), the workshops will cover an amazing range of topics shaped for different groups, such as:



#### **For congregational leaders:**

***Church at the Kitchen Table:*** Building home groups that incarnate the Gospel.

***Church at the Boardroom Table:*** Exploring the shape and content of faith in the workplace.

***Church at the Shared Table:*** Growing new roots in shared spaces, such as laundromats, cafes, pubs, daycares and more.

#### **For pioneer leaders, seeking to start something new:**

***Pioneering New Christian Community from Home***

***Pioneering in the Workplace,***

***Pioneering in Third Spaces.***

#### **On the Saturday we will be joined by church teams.**

Workshops that day will look at a range of often neglected contexts in which church can happen:

***Church taking root in the family; in Institutions; on Campus; as Sanctuary; Through the Arts; After A Disaster; and in Neighbourhoods in conflict.***

An introductory video, more details and registration information can be found at

[www.vitalchurchplanting.com](http://www.vitalchurchplanting.com).

## Vital Church Maritimes, Halifax

The theme here is **Groundhog Day** (the conference starts on February 3<sup>rd</sup>, after all!): **Looking for Signs of Hope**. Mike Moynagh will once again be the plenary speaker.



Workshops at the Halifax conference will also address a wide range of issues including:

***Leading in changing times; Revitalize your church;***

***Get wired!—electronic media;***

***Seniors—the forgotten potential; Engaging the young;***

***Prayer and spiritual fitness; and***

***Old church buildings: love them or leave them.***

More details can be found on the website of the Diocese of Nova Scotia and PEI [here](#). (Click on the Groundhog Day logo!)

**We look forward to seeing you at one of these exciting conferences. And if you are not able to come, please pray for God's Spirit to be at work during these conferences.**

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**[Director's Diary](#). January - February 2014**

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