

COUNTRY

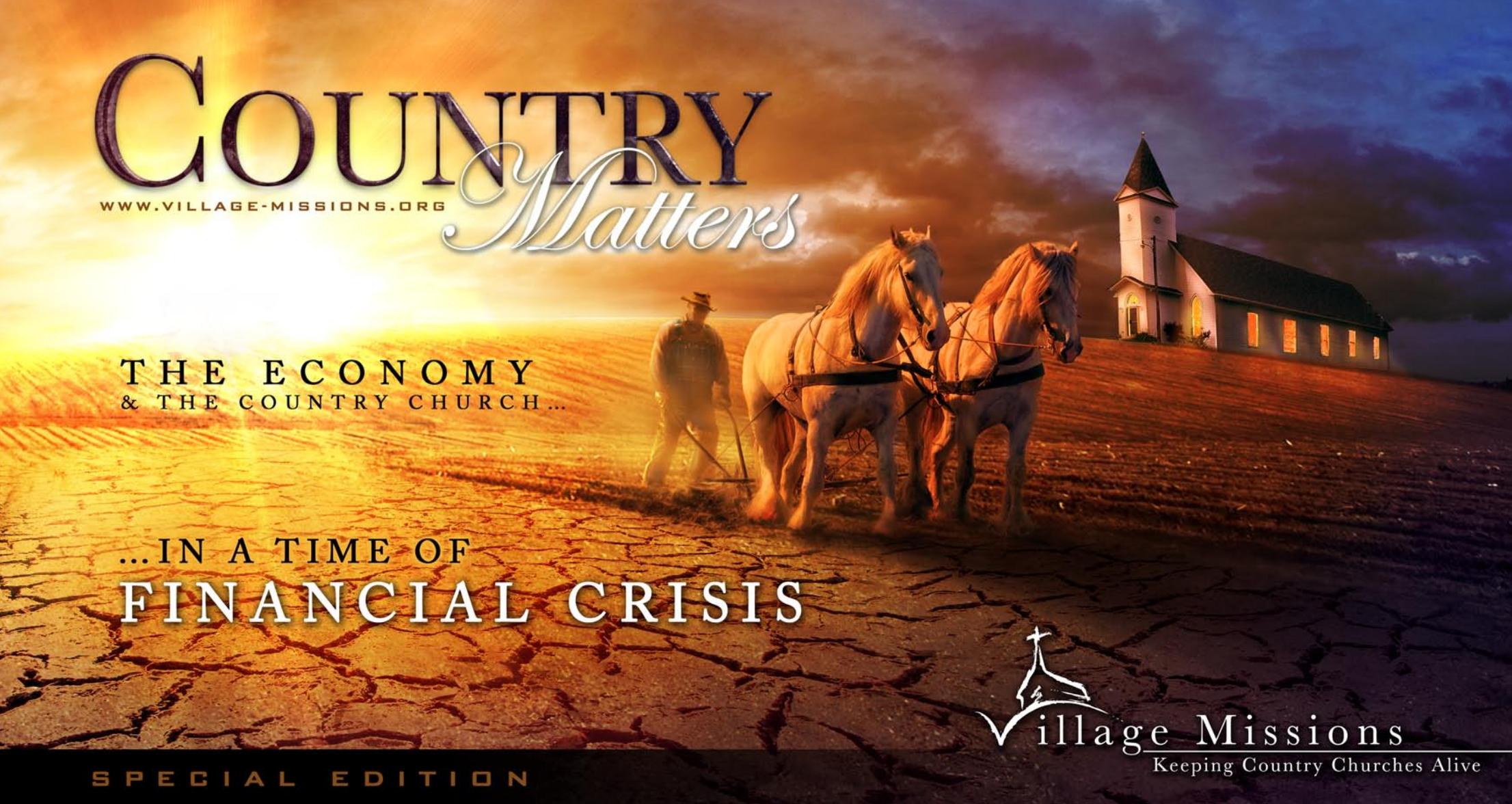
WWW.VILLAGE-MISSIONS.ORG

Matters

THE ECONOMY
& THE COUNTRY CHURCH...

...IN A TIME OF
FINANCIAL CRISIS

SPECIAL EDITION



illage Missions
Keeping Country Churches Alive

A View From the Country

with Brian Wechsler, Executive Director

The old country preacher was talking to two farmers after church...



There'd been no rain for months. The preacher and the farmers all knew that without rain everyone in their valley would be in trouble. They talked about a few things before getting around to the biggest thing on their minds, rain. The old preacher asked the farmers if they believed God could bring rain. They both nodded. They believed.

A few days later the preacher was driving home when he saw the same two farmers standing at the boundary of their farms. He stopped, got out of his truck and asked them how things were going. One of the farmers pointed to his dry land and said sadly, "Still no rain, Preacher."

The other farmer motioned in the direction of his field and said, "I'm plowing the fields, Preacher. Gotta' be ready when the rain comes!"

That's faith in action, acting on the substance of the unseen . . .

I wonder if that wise old pastor had been preaching from Paul's letter to the Philippians? You probably know the verse I'm talking about. It's one of those great promises from God . . . "And my God shall supply all your need according to His riches in glory by Christ Jesus." (Philippians 4:19)

Paul was commending the Philippian followers of Christ for helping with his financial needs. They were partners with him as he went around sharing the Gospel. Paul knew these friends got it. They'd aligned their hearts with God's heart. And Paul was reinforcing the truth they understood. They were in sync with God, and He would take care of them.

It was true in the small town of Philippi, and I know it's true for you and me.

"And my God shall supply all your need according to His riches in glory by Christ Jesus." (Philippians 4:19)

Right now, we're all feeling like were in a drought . . . The serious economic drought. We need to weep with those who are down and rejoice with those who are doing fine.

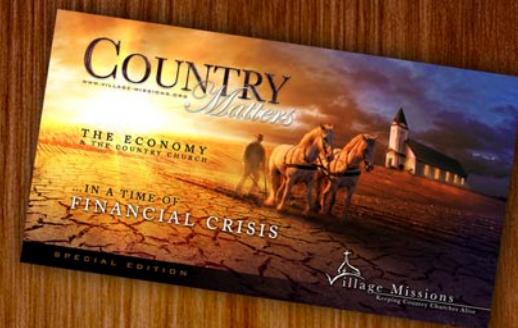
Here at Village Missions we're praying . . . and we're plowing.

Thanks for standing with us in every way you can. Folks in small towns are feeling the drought!

Keeping Country Churches Alive,



Brian Wechsler



Dear Friends,

The format of Country Matters has changed. By making it smaller we will reduce our postage costs substantially. Every penny counts!

Inside this issue of Country Matters you'll find . . .

SPECIAL ANNOUNCEMENT:

For more than 60 years, Village Missions has been receiving much-needed support from **Stoncroft Ministries**. In February, Stoncroft's board notified us that it will stop all support effective March 31. This will reduce our income by \$40,000 each month. Please read more about this on page 4 . . .

Village Missions Income to Be Reduced by \$40,000 Monthly

In mid-February, Stonecroft Ministries leaders met with Village Missions to tell them of the decision to stop all financial support of Village Missions.

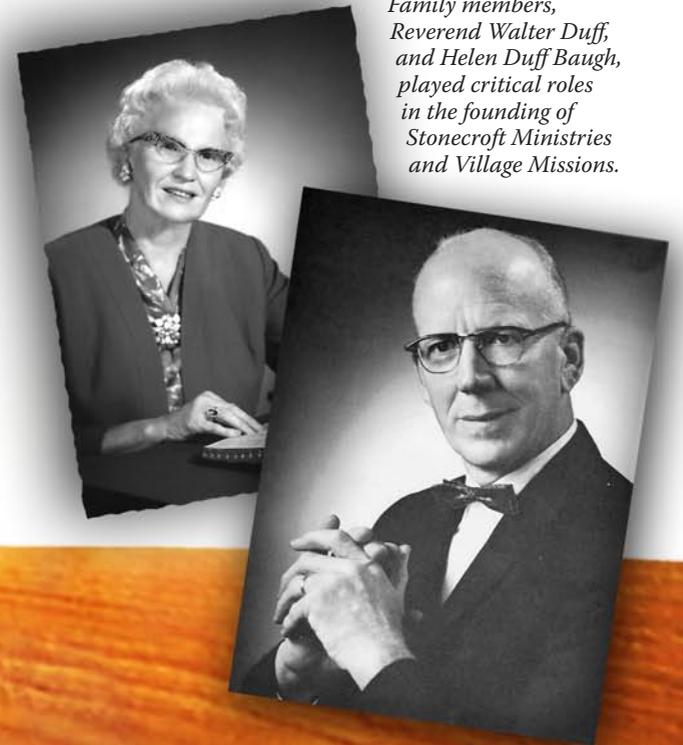
Even though Stonecroft gradually had been decreasing its support of Village Missions for several years, this reduction of \$40,000 per month, with such short notice, was a shock.

This reduction could have a substantial negative impact on ministry in more than 80 rural communities. These are communities where Village Missions subsidizes a Village Missionary because the local community is unable to fully support a pastor.

For more than 60 years, Village Missions and Stonecroft have been like family. In fact, the founders of both ministries were family.

“ . . . after much prayer and discussion, and even tears, the Stonecroft Ministries Board of Directors decided to discontinue financial support of Village Missions effective March 31, 2009.”

*- Stonecroft News Release
March 2009*

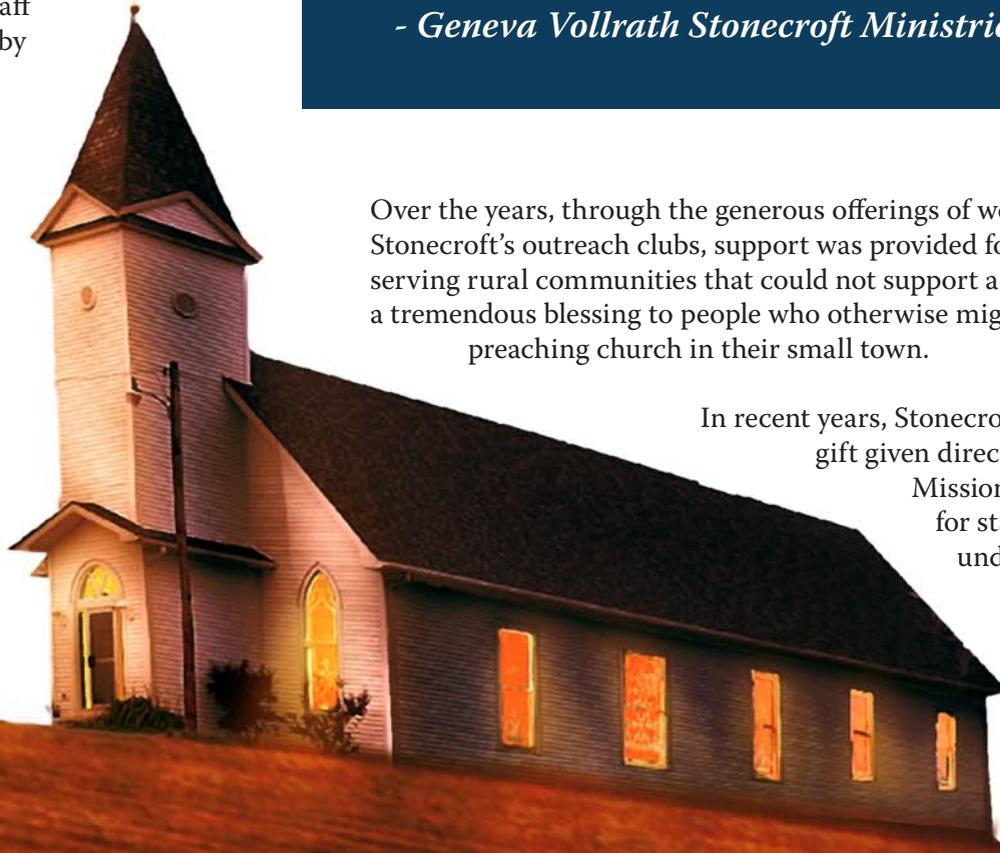


Family members, Reverend Walter Duff, and Helen Duff Baugh, played critical roles in the founding of Stonecroft Ministries and Village Missions.

Through the years the ministries have worked closely together . . . praying for each other, and supporting each other in ministry. Many Village Missionaries have come from the ranks of Stonecroft volunteers, and many Stonecroft staff have come from the ranks of churches served by Village Missions.

Both ministries shared a common vision—seeing people come to know Jesus Christ, grow in their faith and pass it along to others.

Village Missions has been keeping country churches alive, ministering to people in communities where they might otherwise have no local church. Stonecroft has been encouraging and equipping women to impact their families and communities for Christ.



“Because of the emphasis placed upon Village Missions in our monthly Project Reports and at area conferences for a number of years, some thought that Village Missions was a program of Stonecroft.”

- Geneva Vollrath Stonecroft Ministries CEO

Over the years, through the generous offerings of women involved in Stonecroft’s outreach clubs, support was provided for Village Missionaries serving rural communities that could not support a pastor. This has been a tremendous blessing to people who otherwise might not have a Gospel-preaching church in their small town.

In recent years, Stonecroft ended the Christmas gift given directly to Village Missionaries, which also paid for staff conferences. But understanding the urgent



“I believe the decision to stop supporting Village Missions will be painful news to many Stonecroft volunteer leaders.

“These women have faithfully prayed and supported Village Missions for decades. I can’t begin to adequately express my gratitude to these wonderful ladies, for all they’ve done to help people in small towns come to Jesus Christ and grow in Him. I was one of those people!”

- Brian Wechsler, Village Missions Director



needs of rural communities, Stonecroft graciously continued to support Village Missions at a reduced level.

Today, facing demanding economic times, Stonecroft’s leaders felt they had no choice but to focus only on their vision . . . the spiritual needs of women...

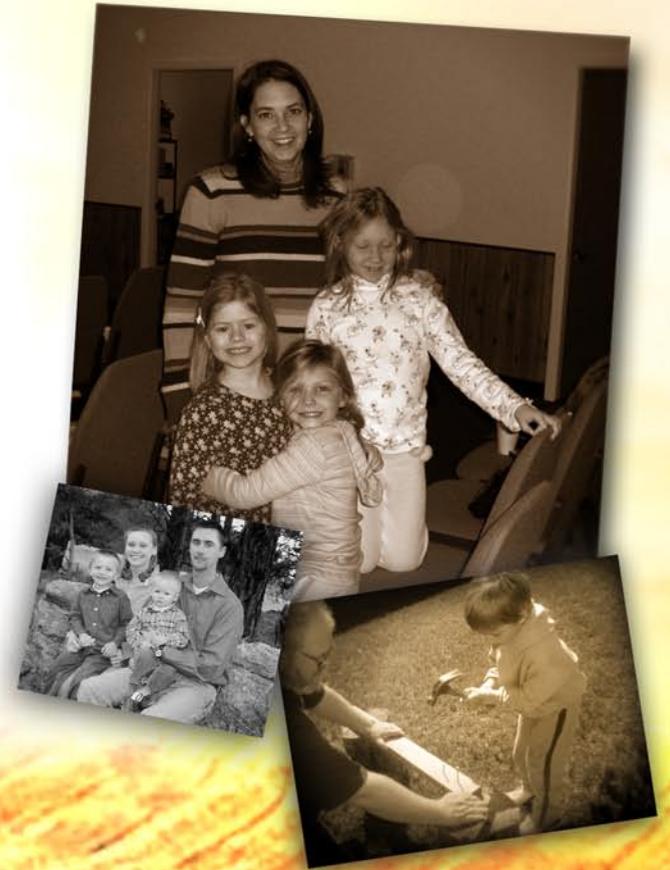
. . . even if it meant completely ending its support of Village Missions and rural communities. Stonecroft’s vision is to provide global leadership in reaching women with the saving knowledge of Jesus Christ. This year they will be focusing resources to develop a stronger outreach in the marketplace, cross-culturally and in rural areas.



Village Missions will stay on course, keeping country churches alive and vital. We are trusting God to enable us into the future. The needs are great across rural North America.

We believe missionary statesman Hudson Taylor had it right when he said,

**“God’s work
done in God’s way
will never lack
God’s supply.”**





Urgent Prayer Need:

Stonecroft Ministry's decision to stop assistance to Village Missions was a difficult decision for them. Their decision to reduce their support from \$40,000 each month to zero has created an enormous shortfall for us. Their notice requires us to earnestly seek God's wisdom for ways to increase income and reduce costs.

We had already cut programs to the bone to balance our 2009 budget, including eliminating staff conferences for the first time in our history. The last thing we want to do is stop serving a community that desperately needs our help.

Please pray for these communities and help us in any way you can to close this serious financial gap. And please pray for Stonecroft as they seek to minister to women around the world.



Keeping Country Churches Alive