

PREFACE

WHY THIS “BOOK” IS ECO-FRIENDLY

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This is a green book. We chopped down no trees in order to produce it. In fact, it’s not even a book, strictly speaking. In contrast to the traditional “festschrift,” the editors decided early on to publish these essays as part of an on-line journal, thus making them accessible worldwide. Generosity is a green virtue.

There is another reason why we call this collection of essays green. We offer it in honor of Betty Sue Brewster, whose maiden name just happens to be Green. In some way all of the writers reflect the influence of Betty Sue’s life and contributions.

A deeper reason for calling this volume green runs beneath the surface, an underground stream feeding its roots. I’m reminded of a song Kermit the Frog used to sing: “It’s Not Easy Being Green.” Our family sang along with Kermit, partly because of a metaphor circulating in the missionary community, a teaching tool to help missionary kids understand and accept the tensions of living cross-culturally. Our children, David and Kristin, found insight and comfort knowing that they were a unique combination of the culture they grew up in and called home (Bolivia) and the culture their parents came from (the USA) and drug them back to periodically on those unnatural vacations known as “furloughs.” It’s like what happens when you combine the primary colors, yellow and blue. You end up with green. Our kids came out neither totally Bolivian (yellow) or totally of the USA (blue), they’re green. And while it may not be easy being green, it’s good for all pilgrims are green.



Tree frog photo by G. Shaw 2010

The metaphor doesn't apply just to children of missionaries. All people who work incarnationally in cross-cultural mission become changed. Incarnational mission is a concept and practice that Betty Sue and her husband Tom pioneered, practiced and passed on to following generations. It's a concept that is fleshed out in the essays in this collection. It reflects the lives of people who have integrated home culture with the cultures of the world as they seek to live out Kingdom values in mission practice. It reflects people who have become green.

There is yet another link to the color green. You'll notice that all the authors are women, and this is intentional. Betty Sue championed women as leaders in mission. Granted, she did this in her own quiet, gentle manner. But gentleness does not equate weakness. In the case of Betty Sue, and the writers of this collection, gentleness expresses itself in strength, identification, relationship, creativity, narrative and the deep values of the Kingdom of God. Some would say that these feminine traits are more naturally green—conducive to walking gently over the earth—than are the aggressive masculine traits sometimes associated with mission. These stereotypes bear more than a grain of truth (but are probably not always fair to men).

At any rate, this is a green "book," full of stories written by women in mission, encouraging us to walk gently, thoughtfully and respectfully as we journey cross-culturally. And it aptly honors one who showed us how.

INTRODUCTION

Relationship as Mission: A Tribute to Betty Sue Brewster

This project evolved and morphed in the same organic way that relationships are formed. When it came time for Betty Sue to retire from her years on faculty at Fuller Seminary's School of Intercultural Studies, a few of us began to muse what we could do to honor our remarkable colleague.

We began with the idea of a festschrift, the traditional way the faculty in the Academy have been honored and remembered. "Traditional," however, is not a word that captures Betty Sue Brewster. It seemed unlikely that a festschrift would capture her as a person, or her contribution to global missiology.

Those of us at Fuller know she spent as much time involved with the grassroots of mission as in the academy teaching or researching. Thus our challenge became, what kind of project would be a fitting tribute and capture the essence of Dr. Betty Sue Brewster?

From the early days, Betty Sue and her husband Tom used alternative media, experimenting and innovating with the new. They were the first School of World Mission faculty to use a computer. They began with a North Star, and later transitioned to a Kaypro, helping other faculty learn this new technology. Thus we thought that a unique approach to this "festschrift" would be appropriate, one that reflects newer technologies and one that would be readily available to Betty Sue's global community.

We approached Enoch Wan, editor of the on-line journal, Global Missiology, about dedicating the October 2012 issue to the life and legacy of Betty Sue Brewster. His enthusiastic response matched our own excitement and we were on our way.

In the innovative spirit that is Betty Sue, we offer you this tribute to honor the life and on-going contributions of Dr. Betty Sue Brewster.

Retirement Dinner, May 30, 2012

After 35 years on faculty at Fuller Seminary, Dr. Betty Sue Brewster has retired. She was the first woman to join the faculty of the School of World Mission at Fuller Seminary, and now she leads the way in being the first to retire.

Betty Sue was a pioneer in other ways as well. She chose to teach part time, so that she could continue her global travel and grassroots teaching in many countries around the globe. LAMP pioneered an entirely new way of learning language through relationships. The concept of bonding has guided many cross-cultural workers who desire to build friendships with those of another culture. Betty Sue's understanding of incarnational mission among the poor flowed from her heart for the forgotten in our world, and led the way toward a relational approach to sharing life with the poor.¹

Chuck Van Engen, in his tribute to Betty Sue at her retirement dinner, divided his reflections into four areas: being, knowing, doing and serving. Each of these areas gives us a window into the life of Betty Sue.

Being – Betty Sue's way of being is marked by her love for God, her compassion for the poor, and her humility. She has a way of being that is always herself, cheerful, thoughtful, comfortable in her own skin, at peace. She has a refreshing, no-nonsense approach to life. She is comfortable with herself, thus those she encounters feel valued. Most profoundly, her deep love for Jesus permeates everything else in her life

Knowing – The Brewster/LAMP method of language learning revolutionized language learning and cross-cultural mission. It rightly put relationships at the center of mission. This was a profound insight and the best of creative missiology. But knowing is never enough. For Betty Sue, we must go out and live what we know. Her missiology is never in the abstract but is lived out in the trenches of everyday life.

Doing – Betty Sue is always somewhere out in our global world, in the early days with Tom, later on with her son, and now on her own. Betty Sue, gifted as a teacher and in cross-cultural communication, has been able to teach in over 80 countries. She has taught the do-ers from many cultures working at the grassroots, always in ways that empowers others to learn and teach. She does not sit still and wait for life to happen to her and we look forward to the new things she will continue doing in her retirement.

¹ J. Todd Billings, writing in *Christianity Today*, raises the issue of "The Problem with 'Incarnational Ministry.'" He believes that incarnational ministry obscures the richer concept of "ministry in union with Christ by his Spirit" (p. 60). In the ways that Betty Sue explains and lives incarnational ministry, it indeed is ministry in union with the Spirit. Betty Sue does not pretend to "be Jesus" but teaches that we walk in humility and live as neighbors among those the world has forgotten (CT July/August 2012:59-63).

Serving – Betty Sue is a missionary servant, consistently investing in people’s lives at Fuller and throughout the world. Testimonies abound of the ways she takes time for people. She is never too busy for her students—walking with them, listening, encouraging, praying with and for them. Hers is a ministry of accompaniment. Her servant heart does not expect to be acknowledged, and may not be comfortable with too much attention. Betty Sue often referred to the importance of Philippians 2, and also lived it. Serving cross-culturally as well as in her own culture is second nature to Betty Sue.

In Betty Sue’s own remarks at the close of the dinner, speaking out of the humility that has marked her, gave glory to God for all her life has been and will be. The brief biographical sketch before her Vita, gives more details on her life and ministry. We, too, echo the words and life of Betty Sue in giving glory to God for Betty Sue’s life and her contribution to the global missiology movement.

Our Theme – Mission as Relationship

Many words describe Betty Sue Brewster, but most can be summed up in the word “relationship.” This theme of relationship runs through each of the stories in this volume, as well as through the life of Betty Sue. There are no “objects of mission” for Betty Sue, or people to target, only friends and potential friends with whom to share faith and life. Language learning happens through relationships when we share life with others.

Moving in and bonding with people leads us to build healthy attachments. Walking with the poor is not a walking above but alongside. The Japanese theologian Koyama, speaks of the difference between an ‘answer theology’ and a ‘relationship theology’. Betty Sue lives a relationship theology, a theology lived out in her everyday life and relationships. At the source of all relationship is relationship with God. This Betty Sue models in every aspect of her life. Everything Betty Sue is and does comes from the deep well of her relationship with God. Without this source, there is no relationship. This relationship is lived out in everyday life, an everyday holiness.

Our Form – Communication Through Narrative

While our theme is relationship and mission, our form is narrative. Betty Sue loves stories and is a wonderful storyteller. She values and makes time for the story of each person she

encounters, and also values the stories of the cloud of witnesses who have gone before us and led the way in mission. Her teaching is rich with her own stories, as well as the stories of Amy Carmichael, Kagawa of Japan, Jackie Pullinger and many others.

Betty Sue has a deep love for the narratives of scripture that have formed her and sustained her throughout life. She has allowed God to be the author of the story of her life, a life lived within God's big story and for his glory.

Thus it seemed fitting that this tribute to Betty Sue would present the untold narratives of the lives of women in mission—women writing their own stories. The fifteen authors represent different corners of the globe, from various generations, some single or widowed, some married, in both rural and urban contexts.

There are many more, of course, untold stories of women that followed God's call to places and in ways they never imagined, believing in the God who does more than all we ask or imagine. But we begin with these fifteen.

Introduction to the Chapters

This volume is divided into three sections, or windows, representing various contributions from the life of Betty Sue Brewster. Windows look into the world of who Betty Sue is, and out to the world whom she serves. Each story carries the theme of learning from others, but reflecting a different facet. Betty Sue modeled much about how to enter a culture not knowing the answers, but coming with the posture of listeners and learners as we enter the holy ground of another culture.

Learning from different cultures provides the lens into Window A. The first chapter is by Georgia Grimes Shaw, who tells her journey through the theme of “for such a time as this,” living with a First Nations tribe in Canada, and then years later, finding herself again with a tribe in Papua New Guinea (PNG.) In the second chapter Aretta Loving, through the lens of motherhood, shares about translation work among the Awa in PNG while raising two daughters. Jean Van Engen relates her re-entry and grief experience, an inspiring story of how she learned to sing the Lord's song in her homeland after years in Mexico. Rie Manabe-Kim represents a younger generation of mission workers, sharing her story of coming to faith, and her heart to see Betty Sue Brewster's insights into relationship and language learning applied in her home

country of Japan. With Joy McCarthy we journey back to PNG, this time through the eyes of a single woman translator and literacy program developer.

Looking through Window B we continue our learning posture, but focus on learning from those on the margins of society. From Lisa Engdahl we learn that mission belongs to learners, not experts, in working with the urban poor. Roberta Woodberry, who has spent years in the Muslim world, shares a story from the Afghan border. Sue Chung, relates how the Mongolians made their way into her heart during her eighteen years with them. Hope in action is Juanita Evans Leonard's theme as we follow her through various seasons of her rich life. In the final chapter we journey to the city of Los Angeles with Jude Tiersma Watson's story of obedience to joy.

Window C is learning from people in ministry. Marguerite Kraft shares insights she has gleaned over the years about women in mission. Roberta King shares her musical story, as she has helped people to sing their own songs. Marit Landrø from Norway shares the unexpected journey of a thirteen year old who promises everything to God, with no regrets. Betsy Glanville shares about her journey into leadership, while also reflecting of the recent loss of her husband and partner, Lew. Finally, Nancy Thomas relates her life and work as a trainer of writers, writing in and from their context.

We would like to acknowledge and thank those who encouraged this project along the way. Our deepest gratitude goes to God, who is the Creator of all our stories, weaving our pieces into his great salvation story. Special thanks to Enoch Wan, who made it possible to publish this through the Global Missiology website. Juanita Evans Leonard encouraged the project long before it took shape, and first suggested having women tell their own, often untold stories. Chuck Van Engen was our coach and consultant, sharing his wisdom and enthusiasm in each step of the process. We appreciate our husbands for their gracious support. We are grateful to all the women who took the precious time to share their lives and stories included here.

Now, with a cup of coffee, set back, put up your feet and get comfortable as you open these windows and journey the world with women telling their own story to honor Betty Sue Brewster.