

# THE NOMADIC PEOPLES NETWORK (NPN) A NEW BREED

By **RON & KIRSTEN AHLBRECHT**

The Shepherd used nomads to move **Ron & Kirsten** in Asia for 20 years. Then He moved them to Europe to learn from nomads globally.

In the early 1970s, Malcolm and Jean Hunter saw clearly that nomads “will be the last to hear the Gospel simply because they are nomadic.” Nomads were feared, despised, or just plain invisible to missionaries and national churches. Likewise, nomads tend to be wary of “Christian” social structures composed mostly of unrelated individuals bound to a building. How could these two worlds be brought together? A Somali herder challenged the Hunters: “When you can put your church on the back of my camel, then we will think Christianity has something for us!”

The Hunters realized nomads would need a specialized breed of emissaries who can invest years of service in harsh climates in order to gain access to the heart of nomadic communities. They would need to walk with nomads through the Scriptures and re-imagine *ecclesia* on the move with whole clans and tribes of nomads following Jesus, their true Shepherd King.

There are no experts in nomadic ministry. The Hunters saw a need for a community of workers able to learn from Scripture, from the Holy Spirit, from nomads, and from one another. To this end they began to network with national and international workers, at first through correspondence and field visits. In the 1990s, this fledgling network began to gather face to face to share what they were learning, to pray, care for, and encourage one another. They rejoiced with those who rejoiced, and they wept with those who wept.

The purpose of the Nomatic Peoples Network (NPN) has always been three-fold: Walking with Jesus the Good Shepherd in partnership with one another to:

1. Learn from nomads as we invite them to walk with Jesus
2. Care for existing workers so that they thrive long-term among nomads
3. Multiply new and effective workers connecting with nomads

To accomplish this, we:

- connect with nomad and expat fieldworkers.
- conduct “regional and rolling gatherings” to encourage and learn from workers.
- connect relevant resources to needs on the ground.
- send out *NPN News and Views* by email.
- collaborate with sending agencies and churches to recruit and equip new workers through our Nomad Connect training program.
- advocate through articles and other media on a wide variety of themes.
- conduct field surveys to see where the gaps are in workers and/or resources.

NPN has three kinds of members—experienced laborers in the field, learners preparing to go, and supporters of all types helping to send and keep workers thriving on the pathways with nomads.

Get involved:

- Invite nomads to follow Jesus.
- Begin your journey alongside nomads.
- Learn how you can support those who are walking with nomads.

Contact us at [info@npnet.net](mailto:info@npnet.net) about joining and **Let Nomads Move You!** 

