Christian Aid Mission
written by | July 27, 2017

Meet Your Nonprofit, a weekly profile of nonprofit organizations in our community, is brought to you by the Center for Nonprofit Excellence.

Describe your nonprofit's mission.
Christian Aid Mission is an evangelical missionary organization based in Charlottesville that assists indigenous missionary ministries overseas through prayer, advocacy and financial support. Since 1953, Christian Aid Mission has identified, evaluated and assisted more than 1,500 ministries in more than 130 countries that are reaching the unreached for Christ in areas of the world where there is no witness for Christ, where Christians suffer from poverty or persecution, or where foreign missionaries are not allowed.

What need in our community brought about the creation of your nonprofit?

Our nonprofit was founded in 1953 to to establish a witness for Christ in every tongue, tribe and nation. Our mission is to assist independent indigenous missionary ministries establishing a witness for Christ among every unreached and least reached people group, giving priority to ministries based in areas of poverty and persecution. Charlottesville residents who have shared our vision have been helping our mission from the start. Our founder is Charlottesville native and UVA graduate Robert Finley.

How has your nonprofit made a difference in our community?
Christian Aid Mission has allowed Charlottesville residents to give to a local organization that is reaching every corner of the world. People from Charlottesville are responsible for providing aid to Syrian refugees, wells in Africa, chickens and sheep in Latin America, Bibles in Ukraine, bicycles in Sri Lanka and buildings of worship in India and Nepal.

How can community members help you achieve your mission?
Community members can learn what is going on around the world by signing up for our Missions Insider newsletter or follow us on social media. Residents can also give a donation to a country, ministry, missionary or need of their choice and 100 percent of their gift will go to that ministry. We also have needs for volunteers for office work, moving equipment, etc.

Tell us a story that has come out of your work.
In India, with a total population of 1.2 billion people, there are an estimated 15 million blind, with an additional 52 million visually impaired, according to . Cataracts are the leading cause of blindness in India, while refraction error and glaucoma are the second and third leading causes of blindness, respectively. Cataracts account for 62 percent of blindness in India.

A cataract is formed when the natural lens of the eye, responsible for focusing light and producing sharp images, becomes cloudy and hardens, resulting in a loss of visual function. For the surgery procedure, the surgeon removes the eye's crystalline lens, which has lost its transparency, and replaces it with a clear artificial lens.

Medical ministry in India is combating both the physical and spiritual blindness in the poorest areas. In the northern part of Karnataka State, a medical ministry team reaches out to the poorest people and helps them find a diagnosis for their health problems. They bring ostracized lepers into a community and give their children a home, food, clothing, medical treatment, and spiritual nurture.

While the hospital welcomes the poorest cases, this team also reaches out to the community through eye camps. Around 10,000 patients are screened annually in about 50 eye camps, and about 2,000 receive cataract surgery. The chaplain always presents the gospel, and a church planting team starts fellowships among new believers in their own communities. Often it's the kids struggling in school who finally realize they could read if they could see.

Lamikant, age 6, was suffering from developing cataracts and couldn't see to read. When his parents brought him to the eye hospital he received eye surgery and a pair of glasses. He now wants to be an engineer. "We are giving sight and a bright future for these people," a ministry leader said.

Learn more about Christian Aid Mission

Meet Your Nonprofit is a special feature brought to you in partnership with Center for Nonprofit Excellence.

Strengthening nonprofits to realize the potential of our community.

Charlottesville Tomorrow's Community Voices

The content in this Meet Your Nonprofit profile is provided by the organization and should not imply endorsement by Charlottesville Tomorrow. The organizations are members of Center for Nonprofit Excellence. The goal of the Meet Your Nonprofit feature is to share information about the many local organizations working on behalf of a wide range of community interests. We encourage readers to contact the nonprofit directly for more information.