

## SIM History

SIM has a rich history of founders who journeyed to difficult places to share the Gospel. Landing in Africa, Asia, and South America, these pioneers formed missions committed to reaching people who had never known the love of Christ.

A union of several organizations founded in the late 19th Century, SIM works today with the same passion that its founders began with over a century ago.

### Mission in Africa

The **South African General Mission (SAGM)** was founded by Martha Osborn, Spencer Walton, and Andrew Murray in 1889. Murray, a well-known author who founded a university and a seminary, always considered missions “the chief end of the church.” After Martha Osborn married George Howe, they formed the **South East Africa General Mission (SEAGM)** in 1891. SAGM and SEAGM merged in 1894. Because their ministry had spread into other African countries, they changed their name to **Africa Evangelical Fellowship (AEF)**.

**Soudan Interior Mission (SIM)** began in 1893. Canadians Walter Gowans and Roland Bingham and American Thomas Kent had a vision to reach the 60 million unreached people of the Soudan in sub-Saharan Africa. Unable to interest established missions—most of which said reaching the Soudan was impossible—the three set out alone.

Malaria overtook all three. Gowans and Kent died of the fever, and Bingham returned to Canada. On his second attempt, he caught malaria again and was forced to go back home. Unable to return to Africa, Bingham sent out a third team. They successfully established a base 500 miles inland at Patigi in 1902. From there, the work of SIM began in Africa.

### Mission in Asia

In 1893, the **Ceylon and India General Mission (CIGM)** began work among Ceylon’s Singhalese Buddhists and Tamil Hindus. The mission founded by Scottish businessman Benjamin Davidson expanded from Ceylon into South India. Eventually CIGM’s ministry reached across the subcontinent and to the Philippines.

Also in 1893, Charles Reeves and M.E. Gavin left their homes in Australia for India. A Eurasian Christian from Poona had come to Australia in search of missionaries to work in his home area. Reeves and Gavin answered the challenge and set sail under the name **Poona and Indian Village Mission (PIVM)**.

In 1968, these two India/Asian organizations merged to become the **International Christian Fellowship (ICF)**.

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### Mission in South America

In 1893 British Keswick evangelists visited South America and published a report called *South America: The Neglected Continent*. New Zealanders George Allen and Mary Stirling read it and felt God calling them. In 1907, the newly-weds landed in Bolivia to minister to the Quechua Indians. Allan's **Bolivian Indian Mission** grew in the years that followed to become the **Andes Evangelical Mission (AEM)**.

### Serving in Mission Together

In the 1980s, AEM, ICF, and SIM joined forces to become SIM, which then stood for the "Society for International Ministries." AEF joined with SIM in 1998. In 2000, SIM adopted the trade name (or slogan) "Serving In Mission," for English-speaking countries, but our official name around the world today is simply SIM.

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