

**“BROADENING OUR VISION”
OCTOBER 2006**

A few days before writing this article, I received two e-mails from Ina Groeger in Germany. Ina was an exchange student two years ago and lived with our family. Our son, Jeremy, stayed with her family when he was an exchange student in Germany. Our two families just swapped teen-agers for awhile. It was quite a mixing of cultures. Ina’s e-mails informed us that she is going to visit Florida in October with her parents and she wants to spend some time with her American “host family.” She wrote that she cannot wait to feast on a home-cooked meal prepared by Helen. Those family meals were one of Ina’s good memories of her time as an exchange student.

Needless to say, Helen is eagerly awaiting the arrival of her “German daughter.” When our whole family would get together, Ina would be outnumbered by three boys. I’m sure that at times it wasn’t easy being the only “daughter.” However, Helen certainly enjoyed having someone to go shopping with and she enjoyed those late-night talks with Ina.

As we prepare for Ina’s visit, we are reminded of how small the world has become. There is so much more contact between people of different countries. It is very common today for people to travel and to spend time in other lands. The internet and global satellite television have changed how people experience the world. News of a hurricane in the Gulf of Mexico is today instantly known throughout the globe.

Rapid changes in communication and travel have broadened our vision of the world. We are more connected with people who live in different cultures and who speak other languages. The Christian Faith has always celebrated the global reach of the Gospel. The Good News of Christ is for men and women of all lands. This theme is stressed in the words of Peter,

*“The promise is to you and to your children and to all that are
far off, every one who the Lord our God calls to him.”
(Acts 2:39)*

This global perspective is a central part of our faith. The living God of the Bible can never be limited to one country or culture.

We celebrate God’s grand vision every year on World Communion Sunday. This special event always takes place on the first Sunday of October. As we break the bread and pass the cup, we are reminded that God’s arms are open to all people. There is a place at the Lord’s Table for everyone who humbly comes in faith.

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