

Avant®



PRESIDENTIAL SEARCH

OPPORTUNITY PROFILE

Presented by The Dingman Company

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Evangelizing the Unreached since 1892

Planting Churches where there are none



ABOUT AVANT MINISTRIES

Avant Ministries is an interdenominational, multinational missionary sending organization that has focused on planting and developing churches in the unreached areas of the world since the 1890's.

Avant defines *unreached* as places where less than 2 percent of the population is evangelical Christian.

The vision is to make a difference in time for eternity by rapidly planting and developing churches where there are none. More than 2 billion people still need to hear the gospel!

Avant trains, sends and serves missionaries in 50 countries. 60% in the Americas and 40% throughout Asia, Europe, Africa, and the Middle East.

Avant is a well-managed organization that is fiscally conservative and financially stable. It is governed under the Carver Policy Governance® model. This means the Ends and Policies are set by the board of directors who give management the tools to keep the organization on track and operating efficiently. Functioning within those policies and procedures, management has the freedom to determine the means necessary to reach the Ends. The Ends (vision and purpose) are set by the board and the tactical plans, “the means,” are decided by the leadership team.

The focus is on church planting along with other types of ministry that would effectively contribute to that end.

OUR PASSION

His Church

Planting churches among the unreached is Avant's driving passion. Our mission statement captures this foundational reason for existence while our vision statement compels us to boldly pursue transformational ministry outcomes around the world. Four core organizational values inform, inspire and involve our missionaries and ministry partners in our joint efforts to plant and develop churches globally.

Our Values

At the heart of Avant is our deeply rooted belief that our Creator has allowed us to be part of His redemptive plan. In honoring Him and each other through the process. We hold firm to these core values which are the epicenter of how we conduct ourselves, engage in relationships and approach our work.

There are additional values which are honored and expected within Avant, but these four are differentiators for our organization:

Care

We are a mission that recognizes the **pastoral** heart of the Creator. In our pursuit of and obedience to God, we will relentlessly care for others. We will also care for those in our mission and in our team, while not neglecting those in need around us.



Community

We are a mission that recognizes the **people** of the Creator. We are committed to authentic, loving relationships characterized by interdependence, generosity and submission to one another. Due to our relationship to Christ as the Head of the Church, we will connect with one another, love each other, and commit ourselves to unity amidst diversity.



Creativity

We are a mission that recognizes the **power** of the Creator. His wisdom and power are the source of our creativity and ability. As stewards of the time God has given us, we will use innovative methods to creatively engage with people whom God brings across our path, sharing His redemptive plan to plant the church where there is no church

Collaboration

We are a mission that recognizes the **plan** of the Creator. God allows us to participate with Him to redeem creation. It is through partnerships with other believers, united in the common task, that we see God's kingdom expanding. In our pursuit to obey God and make Him renowned we will receive an eternal reward.



HISTORY

1892 - World's Gospel Union

For more than 125 years, Avant has maintained a strong commitment to taking the gospel to people living in the unevangelized areas of the world.

Avant emerged out of the missionary movement of the last two decades of the nineteenth century, a movement that brought into being numerous foreign missionary societies. Through the evangelistic efforts of the YMCA, young men of Kansas were challenged to Christian service. The Secretary of the Kansas State YMCA was George S. Fisher, whose parents had been missionaries in Jamaica.

Fisher's conviction was that the gospel must be preached in all the earth, wherever Christ was not named. In 1892, Fisher and other Kansas leaders resigned from the YMCA and formed a new independent organization called the World's Gospel Union.

1901 - Gospel Missionary Union

The name was changed in 1901 to Gospel Missionary Union. Avant was the first evangelical Christian mission to enter Ecuador in South America and the Republic of Mali in West Africa. Many of Avant's first missionaries worked to translate the Bible into Quichua, Shuar, Berber, Bambara and Arabic in order to bring the Bible to those people groups in isolated areas. They suffered illness, persecution, separation from family and friends, and sometimes death in order to share the gospel with people who had never heard it.



Avant missionary Roger Youderian was one of the five missionaries killed in the Ecuadorian jungle on January 8, 1956. He had been working with four other missionaries to make initial contact with the Waodani (Auca) tribe, a story famously recounted by widow Elisabeth Elliot in her book, *Through Gates of Splendor*.

Today in Ecuador strong, nationally-led churches exist among three different ethnic groups: the Shuar in the jungle, the Quichua of the Andes Mountains, and the Spanish-speaking communities living in cities and on the coast. The Malian national church is now a respected and growing presence in a country where Islam and animism has a stronghold. Our passion is to see these stories repeated in communities around the world.

1975 – Union with EUSA

The Evangelical Union of South America (EUSA) was inaugurated at the Keswick Convention in Liverpool, England, in 1911. The society formed from three existing missions operating in South America: the sections of Regions Beyond Missionary Union working in Argentina and Peru; the South American Evangelical Mission working in Argentina and Brazil; and the Help for Brazil mission, which joined EUSA two years later in 1913.

The North American Board of the EUSA merged with Avant in 1975, adding some 150 members serving in Argentina, Bolivia, Brazil, and Colombia.

2003 - Avant Ministries

On October 22, 2003, Gospel Missionary Union changed its name to Avant Ministries as a reflection of its 21st century innovative advance in church planting methodology, and a refreshed vision to make a difference in time for eternity by rapidly planting and developing churches where none exist.

2019 - Union with Camino Global

Camino was founded in 1890 as the Central American Mission. C.I. Scofield's vision for the mission flowed from his conviction that the growing 19th century missions movement had "passed over our Samaria." He noted that it was a time when other missions were focusing attention on far away Africa and Asia, to the neglect of relatively nearby Central America. The mission's first ministry field was Costa Rica.

Camino Global and Avant Ministries were born at nearly the same time, at the start of the closing decade of the 19th century. Some of the same leaders were involved in the founding of both ministries, including C.I. Scofield and Luther Rees. A.E. Bishop, a co-founder of Avant in 1892, was also Camino's pioneer missionary to Honduras in 1896.



In 1917, the Central American Mission was a founding/charter member of the Interdenominational Foreign Missions Association (now MissioNexus), of which Avant has also been a member for most of its history.

Its members primarily planted churches among Spanish speakers, but a number of Camino missionaries also focused ministry on scripture translation to bring God's Word to the indigenous



Kaqchikel, Q'anjob'al, and Mam peoples of Guatemala. Among them was Cameron Townsend, who served with the Central American Mission during the 1920s before founding SIL in 1934 and Wycliffe Bible Translators in 1942.

The Central American Mission became CAM International in 1975. In 2012, CAM became Camino Global, its rebranding focusing on serving the global Church, journeying with Spanish speakers everywhere to transform communities, equip believers and reach the world. Camino became Avant on July 1, 2019. Learn more about the merger at <https://avantcamino.org>

Today

Avant is always seeking new, more effective ways to see churches planted and souls saved. While the focus is on planting churches, it also engages in various other types of ministry that support those efforts. For example, there is a camp in Alaska which Avant operates and many children are saved through that, with some going on to become church planting missionaries. Additionally, Avant has also added some BAM projects.

The latest innovation, a truly exciting and major work, involves the almost 9,000 churches that Camino Global and Avant planted in Latin America. Capitalizing on that, Avant has now created **Avant Español**, working with and through national workers to train pastors and lay people, training up nationals who become missionaries in other countries. As a result, there are now Latino missionaries doing church planting in Malaysia and Italy. As this new and exciting program gains success and momentum, it will likely will be applied to other regions of the world. See [Avant Español](#), [Obrero Fiel](#) and [Red de Iglesias Misionales](#) to see how this is being implemented.



ORGANIZATIONAL STRUCTURE

Avant Ministries is comprised of both a Canadian entity and a U.S. one, each having its own board but they function together as the International Board with six Canadian members and six from the U.S.

The Board's governance methodology is Policy Governance® with written policies expressing both direction (ends) and protection (circumstances and conditions prohibited) and regular monitoring by the Board for compliance. The president reports to the Board of Directors. Reporting to the President are 7 Vice Presidents (Public Ministries & U.S. Director, Member Care, Field Ministries-East Region, Field Ministries-West Region, Global Engagement, Executive Director-Avant Canada and CFO & Shared Services) plus an administrative assistant. There are 49 working in the Kansas City headquarters and another three who work remotely. A small staff works in the Canadian office in Winnipeg, Manitoba under the direction of the Executive Director-Avant Canada. The annual U.S. budget is \$26 million. There are healthy reserves and no debt.

Key Skills and Experiences Desired in the Avant President

- Proven effectiveness in bringing doctrinally sound, mature spiritual leadership, to a diverse group of people, even in complex, crisis situations
- Effective executive management leadership in a multi-dimensional organization, preferably international in scope
- Cross-cultural living or working experience in strategic plan development and oversight to accomplishment in a complex organization
- Leading in a time of transformational change, especially within our current cultural and world environment
- Effectiveness in collaborative leadership, partnering with different entities toward a common objective, while retaining their unique integrity.
- Is an effective speaker who can prompt contagious enthusiasm
- Willingness to learn and function under Policy Governance®.

Personal Attributes Desired in the Avant President

- **Deep reliance upon God:** His or her priority on personal study of God's Word and passionate pursuit of God will inspire and permeate our organization spiritually.
- **Disciple-maker:** As he or she lives a contagious Christ-honoring lifestyle, others will be drawn to know and follow Christ.
- **Tender-hearted:** The people of Avant will know our president loves them, prays for them, is compassionate, and responsive to their concerns.
- **Empathetic:** Cross-cultural workers should know our president understands the stress, pressure, risks, and personal sacrifices of life and ministry far from "home."

- **Spiritually mature:** Our global endeavor places our members on the front lines of confronting spiritual darkness and religious confusion. His or her spiritual maturity will contribute to their spiritual vitality and will lead with biblical clarity.
- **Self-awareness:** Our president will know him or herself, be aware of how people respond to him or her, and alert to the Holy Spirit's continual refinement of him or her.
- **Endearing:** As our president represents Avant to churches, foundations, organizations, and a wide array of people globally, he or she will bring a sense of God's presence, communicate effectively, and build trusting relationships in widely diverse settings, including internationally through linguistic translators.
- **Family:** If a family man or woman, our president will faithfully model a God-honoring home, marriage, and biblical parenting/grandparenting, as with biblical overseers.

JOB DESCRIPTION

The president's job description will be clearly defined in the Avant Board Policy Governance documents and the president's success will be based on regular monitoring of his or her compliance with those policies and fulfillment of the Ends. The president's performance will be reviewed annually by the Board of Directors.

- Reports directly to the Board of Directors and is the organization's representative/spokesperson.
- Evaluates strategy results and provides periodic monitoring reports to the Board according to the schedule in the Board Policy Governance documents.
- Provides the overarching leadership to the organization in a servant leadership, transparent style as well as the strategic leadership needed for the effective functioning of the ministry in reaching its Ends. Casts the vision for the ministry's mission.
- Determines the annual budgets, capital expenditures and obtains approval of such from the Board as required in the Board Policies, and ensures through quarterly monitoring reports to the Board that finances adhere to such budgets.
- Assures that the fundraising, financial management, stewardship, and human resources are consistent with Avant's policies, projections, and objectives.
- Ensures that communications (website, internet communications, mailings, printed materials, videos, etc.) reflect the ministry's high standards of excellence.
- Engages in public relations activities for the sake of increasing awareness of the Avant brand and mission, and the creation of synergistic relations in philanthropic circles, and with sending agencies, churches, and other like-minded ministries.

Qualifications and Expectations

- Masters or doctorate-level degree in Theology or Christian ministry-related field strongly preferred, or
- Masters or doctorate-level degree in business, organizational leadership, or related field (an asset but not required)
- Is in full agreement with Avant Ministries [Statement of Faith](#)
- 10+ years' experience in upper-level leadership of a ministry, non-profit organization or business
- Availability for domestic and/or international travel 20-30% of work time
- Collaborative leadership style
- Has excellent relational skills (Emotional Quotient)
- A strong work ethic that also reflects health/life balance
- Strong organizational and planning skills
- Has at least 5 and ideally 10+ years to give to this role

KANSAS CITY

For those not acquainted with Kansas City they are surprised, even amazed, to find how enjoyable a place it is. The Kansas City Chamber of Commerce says: "It is a vibrant city with flourishing suburban communities, rolling hills and tree-lined boulevards, a thriving economy driven by thousands of small businesses, tech start-ups, medical research, and headquarters of companies like Hallmark and T-Mobile."

"Ours is a community of good schools, cultural amenities, acclaimed dining (particularly our BBQ), and affordable living. Most importantly, it is a community with a heart — friendly, easy-going, and forward-thinking. That is why Kiplinger Magazine and other publications have rated Kansas City as one of the 50 Smart Places to Live!

"Many outsiders are confused that there's a Kansas City, Kansas, and a Kansas City, Missouri. Simply put, we are one big metropolitan area that happens to have a state border down the middle. Each side has its bragging rights but we Kansas Citians treat it as one."

The Avant/Crossworld shared campus and offices are in a lovely residential area about 15 minutes each from the city center and the international airport (MCI). Area schools, medical facilities, and cultural attractions are among the finest in the region.



THE SEARCH AND SELECTION PROCESS

Bruce Dingman of The Dingman Company, an executive search firm with a successful track record of similar searches (see: dingman.com) is conducting the search. This opportunity will be shared with people who might be potential candidates or who might know potential candidates. The search firm will establish a list of interested and qualified persons, ask for a thorough resume, a response to a questionnaire, conduct follow-up telephone calls and do a Zoom interview with the candidate and spouse.

Those candidates holding strong promise will prepare a detailed resume and respond to a Candidate Questionnaire. The search consultant will then conduct personal interviews via Zoom of the strongest, most appropriate candidates and the candidate's spouse will be invited to join in that interview. The next step will include checking candidate's references, verifying degrees, and completing a background check.

In a normal search process in collaboration with Avant Ministries, the list of candidates will be narrowed to approximately four individuals who will then be interviewed comprehensively by the search committee. Hopefully, interviews will take place in Kansas City, MO in October 2022.

The Dingman Company, Inc. is a retained executive search firm devoted exclusively to serving its clients in matters of executive selection.

Avant Ministries and The Dingman Co. are committed to a process that represents equal opportunity employment and does not discriminate in any way based on gender, race, age, color, national origin, veteran status, medical condition, or physical or mental disability. However, for searches on behalf of religious organizations, candidates will be evaluated based on that organization's theological beliefs and religious practices.

We fully respect the need for confidentiality of information supplied by interested parties and assure them that their backgrounds and interests will not be discussed with anyone, including Avant Ministries, without their prior consent, nor will reference contacts generally be made until mutual interest has been established. Reference checking will require the candidate's permission to access third parties. The search consultant and the search committee will be cautious and sensitive as needed in trying to preserve any candidate's anonymity.

For further information on this position, please contact:

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