

Annual Report 2013

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ODYSSEY<sup>SM</sup>  
NETWORKS

*People of faith and good will engage the world to nurture compassion,  
justice and hope.*



ODYSSEY<sup>SM</sup>  
NETWORKS

# Stories changing the world



AURASMA

*augmented reality experience*

Aurasma is an augmented reality app that is changing the way we see and interact with the world. Download the app to your smartphone and follow Odyssey Networks to view some videos mentioned in the 2013 Annual Report.

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# Dear Friends



The inspirational power of faith and the power of video to move hearts and minds is one powerful combination. Together they can bring about the change we urgently need to create a just and compassionate world.

That's where Odyssey Networks comes in, delivering quality video to millions, telling the stories of the change-makers, inspired by faith and by belief in the potential in every one of us to do good and create change.

And why video? Well, "If a picture paints a thousand words then one minute of video is worth 1.8 million". (Forrester Research)

That line caught our eye from some of the latest research done into the power of video and the web. There's simply no escaping the fact that video and digital media is one of the most powerful tools to influence us and our world.

Just take a look at what we achieved in 2013 with your help.

When the world's media focused on the horror and pain of the Newtown community left

devastated by a gunman who killed 20 children and 6 adults at the Sandy Hook Elementary School, we began to tell the remarkable story of the path to healing. Millions watched the stories of faith-inspired compassion and witness that were part of the record-breaking The American Bible Challenge show on the GSN cable network, and hundreds of thousands more used our online videos and commentary delivered weekly through ON Scripture – The Bible™ that gives Scripture a voice in the issues that fill the headlines and dominate our world.

Our TV movies reached millions, using the power of stories to reach deep down into people and change hearts and minds. From cable networks and web distributors, to smartphones and tablets, Odyssey Networks delivers the story of change, inspiring others and delivering hope.

Together we can tell the story of the power of faith to create the change we need.

**Nick Stuart**  
President & CEO

**The Rev. Dr. James Wind**  
Board Chair

# NEWTOWN: A DOCUMENTARY

In a world with so much pain and hurt, stories of healing are crucial.

When a gunman killed twenty children and six adults at Sandy Hook Elementary School in Newtown, Connecticut, the mass media reported on the horror and grief - and then left. Odyssey Networks' production team immediately saw the story that wasn't being told and began filming a documentary that would tell the story of community resilience and healing through the lens of the town's moral and spiritual leaders, the clergy.

Over the weeks and months following the shooting, Odyssey forged deep relationships with the people of Newtown. We began to document the stories of several faith leaders as they worked together across denominations to begin healing their heartbroken community, and themselves.

Some found a path towards healing through a cause, and our film crews tracked how they mobilized to join the broader fight against gun violence in America. Others embarked on a more personal journey to heal from trauma and reconcile their

roles as spiritual leaders of the community. With the direction of award winning filmmaker Kim A. Snyder (Welcome to Shelbyville), we kept cameras rolling in Newtown through the 1-year anniversary of the Sandy Hook shooting. Prior to the anniversary, the town's leaders held a press conference requesting all media to stay away, but they allowed only Odyssey Networks to document the events surrounding that sensitive day.

Odyssey Networks' take on the story of Newtown is truly unique. The trusting relationships that our director and crew built throughout 2013 have allowed us exclusive access to interviews and locations that were unavailable to other media. The people of Newtown bravely opened themselves up to this documentary knowing that we would tell their stories in a compassionate, faithful and meaningful way.

The Newtown Documentary will be completed in 2014.



# STORIES OF FAITH ON FILM

The most effective way to inspire change is through the power of stories.



Odyssey Networks continues to change hearts and minds with our values-based films. The films that we provide our network television partners are a crucial part of what we do.

In May of 2013 more than one million households tuned in to the Hallmark Channel for the premiere of Beverly Lewis' *The Confession*, our latest adaptation of New York Times bestselling Christian author Beverly Lewis' novels. Directed by Michael Landon, Jr., this emotional and inspiring sequel to our 2011 production (*Beverly Lewis' The Shunning*) was the #1 movie in all of cable TV on the day of its premiere. Beverly Lewis' *The Confession* continues the story of a young Amish woman (Katie Leclerc) on a journey to find her birth mother (Sherry Stringfield).

It is crucial that the transformative power of storytelling doesn't end when the credits roll. To encourage audiences to fully explore the major themes of Beverly Lewis' *The Confession*, a study guide was created on the subjects of deception, faithfulness and wisdom. The guide highlights areas of intersection between Scripture and story, giving audiences a deeper understanding of the film.

Through films like Beverly Lewis' *The Confession*, Odyssey Networks continues to set a high standard for faith-based films on network television. We are already working on three more TV movies for 2014, and we plan to continue raising that standard. These stories inspire millions of viewers, and nurture the positive values that fulfill our mission, and we are proud to bring them to television viewers everywhere.

**"It's remarkably satisfying to find an inspiring film where right triumphs over wrong."**

*– Phil Boatwright  
Blogger, The Movie Reporter*

**"An extremely heartwarming film."**

*– Kathryn Cummins  
Blogger, Cummins Life*

**"Touching, fun, and very family friendly."**

*– Nicole R. Elliott  
Amazon Reviewer*

# THE AMERICAN BIBLE CHALLENGE

Ordinary people can be extraordinary when they put their faith into action.

Millions of Americans saw this when season two of The American Bible Challenge returned to the Game Show Network, shining a bright light on what people of faith are capable of when they live out their beliefs.

The second season of The American Bible Challenge was bigger and better, drawing more than 1 million viewers for its season premiere. Season two also welcomed Grammy Award winning gospel musician and choir director Kirk Franklin as musical co-host to returning host Jeff Foxworthy. 18 teams of contestants amazed audiences with their

knowledge of the Bible as they competed on behalf of the charities closest to their hearts.

Teams shared inspiring stories of how faith moves them to help those in need through disaster relief efforts, construction of literacy centers, and providing resources for the sick, addicted and abused. Wagner Warriors, the winning team for season two, received \$140,000 for their ministry that brings food, clothing and shelter to people in the poorest areas of the world.

Odyssey Networks is proud to work alongside Executive Producers Tom Forman (Relativity Television) and Michael Davies (Embassy Row) to bring this incredible, impactful program to the airwaves. We look forward to 2014, when The American Bible Challenge will return to GSN for its third season.

**“Whatever your religious beliefs--or lack thereof--The American Bible Challenge is good for the soul.”**

*– Ed Bark, TV Critic*

**“Chock full of faith and fun for families.”**

*– Christian Broadcasting Network*



# ON SCRIPTURE - THE BIBLE™

A unique pastoral and prophetic resource that approaches the Bible through the lens of current events.



Shanell T Smith



Verity Jones



David Lewicki



Greg Carey



Sacred texts have always informed how people of faith view and debate the issues of the day, and how they view the world around them. With ON Scripture – The Bible™, we have merged Odyssey’s media expertise with the wisdom of Scripture and excellent scholarship to create a truly unique multimedia resource for pastors and lay leaders, breathing new life into these ancient texts.

The ON Scripture method approaches a weekly reading from the Revised Common Lectionary through the lens of current events, combining excellent and accessible Biblical commentary with a short topical video. In 2013 we made ON Scripture more useful for congregations through the introduction of small-group discussion questions and resources for further reading.

The series reaches hundreds of thousands of people every month through our distribution partnerships with The Huffington Post, Sojourners, Textweek, Day1, The Christian Post and Insights Into Religion.

Since 2011, ON Scripture – The Bible™ has been made possible by a generous grant from the Lilly Endowment. In 2013, the Henry Luce Foundation became the project’s second major funder. The two-year grant from Luce will support the expansion of ON Scripture – The Bible™ into seminary classrooms. By bringing ON Scripture to the next generation of church leaders we can begin to close the technology gap that is evident in so many churches across the country, which will help deliver even more effective and forward-thinking ministry.

# FAITH ON THE RECORD

Lifting up the voice of faith in a 24-hour news culture that often ignores it.



**Brad Hirschfield**



**Hussein Rashid**



**Obery  
Hendricks**

In 2013 Odyssey worked to give people of faith a powerful and relevant voice in the public square. We introduced Faith On The Record, a weekly series of video blogs featuring leaders from different religions and faith groups providing commentary on the headlines of the day.

Rabbi Brad Hirschfield, Hussein Rashid, Obery Hendricks and Tony Jones have all lent their voices to this ongoing series.

# ON SCRIPTURE -THE TORAH

ON Scripture – The Torah applies the ON Scripture method to the weekly Torah portion, connecting sacred readings to world events and issues that affect our lives today. Produced in cooperation with Hebrew College, ON Scripture – The Torah features the work of a pluralistic and intergenerational pool of Jewish writers who engage the text in deep, sophisticated and innovative ways.



**Rabbi Toba Spitzer**



**Melissa Weintraub**



**Dr Stephen  
Hazan  
Arnoff**

# CALL ON FAITH

New in 2013

- Music & The Spoken Word
- Taking Time To Be Grateful
- Keeping the Faith



As an inspirational mobile app, Call On Faith has made it easier for people of all faith traditions to create a sacred space while on the go. Hundreds of uplifting videos – including prayers, meditations and personal stories of faith – are all available with just a few swipes on a smartphone or tablet.

In 2013, we launched a brand new website for Call On Faith, giving its highly-engaged audience even more content to browse. With over 10,000 downloads, Call On Faith has become a destination for those seeking a bit more positivity and light in their busy lives, helping us find the spiritual strength to “be the change” in a world that needs the compassion that faith can bring.

# EVENTS AND GATHERINGS

Odyssey's live events bring together a powerful interfaith network of leaders who are working to create a more just and compassionate world .



**FAITH & MEDIA CONFERENCE**



**2013 TOWN HALL**

At our third annual Town Hall Meeting members and friends discussed issues that concern and affect faith communities in society. Gun violence, interfaith cooperation and education were among the key points of discussion.

Odyssey's partners include more than 160 religions, denominations and faith-based organizations representing millions of Americans. To help bring this powerful force for change together, the event was live-streamed to viewers across the country, and digital participants were able to ask questions through social media in a unique networking opportunity.

In the fall, Odyssey hosted the Faith and Media Conference – a two-day event that drew influential attendees from the worlds of faith, film and news, giving our partners the chance to learn and improve their media skills. Attendees enjoyed interactive talks, networking sessions and panels led by key industry leaders such as Rita Mullin (OWN), Stephen Segaller (WNET), Eric Marrapodi (CNN), Lisa Miller (New York Magazine), Kevin Eckstrom (RNS) and Dr. John B. Weaver (ACU).

## ODYSSEY NETWORKS GRANTS

Our production grants support the work of our multi-faith colleagues, and help to ensure their continued success.

- Alliance for Christian Media
- Baha'is of the United States
- Daily Devotions
- Hartley Film Foundation
- Hebrew College
- Interfaith Worker Justice
- Intersections International
- International Society for Krishna Consciousness
- National Jewish Conference for Learning and Leadership (Clal)
- The New Evangelical Partnership for the Common Good
- New York Board of Rabbis
- Sojourners
- Women of Spirit and Faith

# AWARDS

In 2013 Odyssey Networks was recognized for producing high-quality content that makes faith visible in our world today.

## Exceptional Long Form Programs



### Serving Life (OWN)

Inmates in a maximum security prison staff their own hospice program, finding redemption and reconciliation.

### The CINE Masters Series Award

Presented to the best CINE Golden Eagle Award-winning production of the previous year, as selected by the CINE Board of Directors.



### The American Bible Challenge (GSN)

Contestants are quizzed on their knowledge of the Bible as they compete on behalf of their charity of choice.

### The Epiphany Prize

Awarded to movies and television programs which are wholesome, uplifting, inspirational, redemptive, and moral.

## Exceptional Short Form Videos as Featured in ON Scripture – the Bible™

### Race and the Death Penalty



Experts discuss the impact of race on death penalty in the United States, and explain how faith communities are becoming active about this issue.

### DeRose-Hinkhouse Award

Acknowledging excellence in religious communications



### Gospel Mama

Teens in Harlem learn about the power of Gospel Music

**Telly Award: Bronze: Internet/Online Video – Religious/Spirituality**



### Sumter Faith Clinic: The Lord Led Us

Nurse practitioners open a free clinic to treat physical and spiritual ailments of the insured and underinsured.

### DeRose-Hinkhouse Award

Acknowledging excellence in religious communications

### Telly Award: Silver: Internet/Online Video – Religious/Spirituality

Acknowledging the best film & video productions, groundbreaking online video content, and outstanding local, regional, & cable TV commercials and programs

### Fighting for Voter's Rights

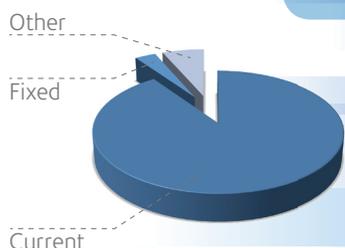
Faith communities mobilize to raise awareness about voting restrictions that have been passed into law.

**Telly Award: Bronze: Internet/Online Video – Religious/Spirituality**

# FINANCIAL REPORT

## STATEMENT OF FINANCIAL POSITION

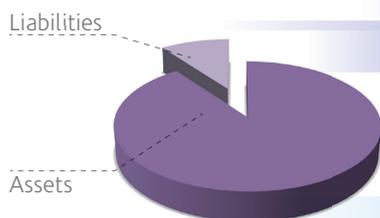
2013



### ASSETS

|                                       |                   |
|---------------------------------------|-------------------|
| Current Assets                        | 28,508,431        |
| Fixed Assets & Development costs      | 1,682,545         |
| Other Intangible Assets & Investments | 2,090,954         |
| <b>TOTAL ASSETS</b>                   | <b>32,281,930</b> |

### LIABILITIES & NET ASSETS



|   |                   |
|---|-------------------|
| Current Liabilities                       | 3,855,241         |
| Net Assets                                | 28,426,689        |
| <b>TOTAL LIABILITIES &amp; NET ASSETS</b> | <b>32,281,930</b> |

## STATEMENT OF FINANCIAL ACTIVITIES

2013

|                              |                  |
|------------------------------|------------------|
| Operating Revenue & Support  | 5,460,929        |
| Less: Production Expenses    | 2,816,843        |
| Supporting Services          | 2,522,893        |
| Other Income & Expenses, Net | 47,836           |
| <b>TOTAL EXPENSES</b>        | <b>5,387,572</b> |

|  |                   |
|--|-------------------|
| Increase (decrease) in unrestricted net assets | 73,357            |
| Net Assets, unrestricted, beginning of year    | 28,353,332        |
| <b>Net ASSETS END OF YEAR</b>                  | <b>28,426,689</b> |

*These figures represent a consolidation of Odyssey Networks (NICC) and Friends of NICC, Inc.*

# DONOR LIST

Deepest gratitude to our generous donors who make our mission possible. We are grateful to each and every one of our supporters in 2013 and beyond.

## Executive Producers: \$5,000 and up

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- Maura Dunbar
- Nick Stuart
- The Finance Department

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## 2013

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# ODYSSEY<sup>SM</sup> NETWORKS

The National Interfaith  
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