

# Transformers:

## Christians Who Chose to Change the World

Name: Erik Veliz

From: Bolivia

Age: Early 20s

Chose to Resist: Abuses to human rights

- ✦ Worked and lived with farm workers in Florida, picking tomatoes for \$3/hour in blistering heat. Traveled to Washington, D.C., to persuade members of Congress to improve conditions for the farmers.
- ✦ Served in an Ethnic Young Adult internship program at the United Methodist Board of Church and Society in Washington, D.C., working on social justice concerns.
- ✦ Worked for the Tennessee Fair Housing Council and Amnesty International USA.
- ✦ Helped set up English-as-a-second-language classes at his local church.

Quotation: "I don't just want to talk about human rights. I don't just want to complain. I want to do something."

Name: Casey Robbins

From: Minnesota

Age: teenager

Chose to Resist: Homelessness

- ✦ Spent 100 nights outside, on her roof, during the winter to raise awareness and funds for the homeless.
- ✦ Volunteered at the pharmacy of an HIV/AIDS hospital in Nairobi, Kenya.
- ✦ Worked with a medical campaign in rural Kenya, helping administer AIDS and malaria tests to people who were without access to medical help.
- ✦ Volunteered at the Dignity Center, a ministry of her local United Methodist church, serving persons in need of food, shelter, clothing, transportation, and employment.

Quotation: "I saw [homelessness] as something that I could do something about."

Name: Jacob Albright

From: Pennsylvania

Age: died in 1808, at age 49

Chose to Resist: Obstacles to preaching the gospel to German-speaking Pennsylvanians

- ✦ Struggled with grief and depression after the deaths of his three children.
- ✦ Joined a Methodist class meeting after a life-changing faith experience, and answered a call to bring Methodism to German-speaking Pennsylvanians.
- ✦ Felt inadequate to preach at first, but educated himself and grew into a gentle but dynamic preacher.
- ✦ Endured persecution as he traveled and preached, being beaten and hit by rocks.
- ✦ Founded the Evangelical Association, one of the denominations that joined to form The United Methodist Church.

Quotation (about Albright): "The wisdom coming from above glowed in his face."

Name: Tatyana McFadden

From: Maryland

Age: teenager

Chose to Resist: Physical disabilities

- ✦ Born with spina bifida; is unable to walk.
- ✦ Adopted at age 6 from a Russian orphanage.
- ✦ Became one of the fastest wheelchair racers in the world, winning silver and bronze medals at the Paralympic Games.
- ✦ Is active in many sports, including ice hockey, swimming, and wheelchair basketball.
- ✦ Learned to drive the family van, using hand controls.
- ✦ Is active in her United Methodist church.
- ✦ Is a role model to her younger sister, who lost a leg.

Quotation: "When someone writes *disabilities*, they should cross out the 'dis-' and just keep the 'ability'; because I think that everyone is able to do something."