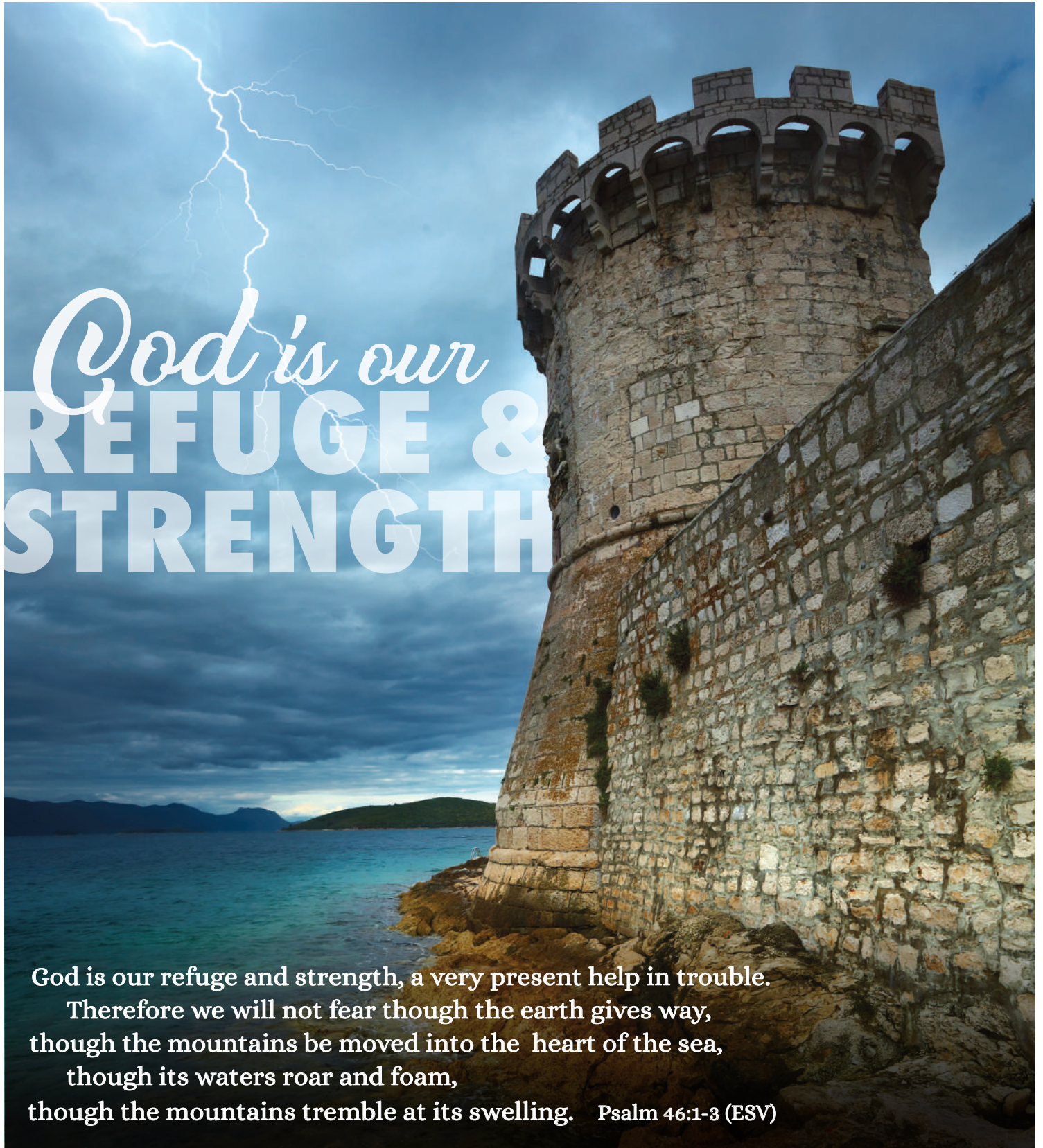


FALL 2020



International Messengers **GOOD NEWS**

How beautiful are the feet of those who bring Good News. Romans 10:15



God is our refuge and strength, a very present help in trouble.

Therefore we will not fear though the earth gives way,
though the mountains be moved into the heart of the sea,
though its waters roar and foam,
though the mountains tremble at its swelling. Psalm 46:1-3 (ESV)

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visit: www.im-usa.org/give**

In Canada: www.im-canada.ca/donate



MY HAPPY MASK

Everyone has their happy place, right? Do they have a crabby place, too? So, I've had a crabby place for a long time—Walmart! I hated going there before Covid, and now I hate it more. Well, don't ya know the Lord

convicted me of my sin and gave me the idea that every time I went to my crabby place, I would try to smile and be nice to ten people. It really helped until Covid changed everything. How do you smile at someone with a face mask on? A little doctoring of my face mask fixed the problem!

It's easy for us to focus on what we can't do. We need to focus on what we can do. Maybe wearing a happy mask to my crabby place isn't much, but it reminds me I need to do what I can. Can't travel overseas? Spend time on email and zoom with our staff overseas. Don't need to help at the office to pack for camps? Help with some administrative stuff at church. Not going to mission fests? Be intentional about sharing our ministry with those folks I am in contact with.

One thing I've really noticed is, with the extra time I have, I can be a lot more proactive in developing relationships. I can ask people I don't know well to dinner, and I can seek out ladies to meet for coffee and hear their story. Most importantly, I can pray.

Also, I need to look for ways to help those around me who I've ignored before. Martin Luther said, "Whoever will not help or support another person unless they can do it without affecting their safety or property will never help their neighbor." Love for neighbor is most evident not when expressions of love are easy, but when they are difficult.

May God find us faithful.

Deborah Sharp

Deborah and Steve serve with the IM Home Office, where they help with recruiting, training, staff care, and hospitality. They pray that their lives and speech might clearly present the Gospel to those they meet.



MERCY, RISK, AND OUR SOUL'S REWARD

As with most of you, there has been little of normal in this year for my wife and me. We helped with a discipleship retreat in Egypt in February, and on the flight home, the girl next to us was masked with gloves on and she spent ten minutes disinfecting every surface on her seat and the wall in front of us. We were slightly amused and even wondered why we weren't this concerned! Then COVID-19 became part of our lives! We canceled our spring IM staff conference at the last moment in April and then, one by one, our staff canceled the evangelistic ministries they were planning. No camps, no teams needed, no training to do, no vacancies to pray full. Very strange for us after 29 years of this "routine" of ministry.

But one camp stayed open, an Evangelistic Family and Youth English camp in Beirut. Lebanon had quite a year with fires, floods, government collapse, mass demonstrations, food shortages, hyper-inflation, and then COVID. We wondered who would be crazy enough to go with us. We had to sort our own theology to see what we really believed about the worthiness of God's Kingdom and His sovereign hand. And then God provided a team, mostly motivated by not wanting to miss what God might have for them there. So, we headed down the road of preparation. We must have cancelled the camp five times for various travel limits or financial reasons, but each time, by day's end, God had opened a way. Finally, we walked into an echoing O'Hare airport, flew on a mostly empty plane to a packed Charles de Gaulle, and then rode a full flight into Beirut. Upon landing, we were welcomed with another 'brain swab' and finally released to get after the ministry. We knew the only reason we had a team in Lebanon was God. He had placed us there by His hand.

He brought a unique combination of worn believers, curious Druze, M's, Catholics, and a small "family" of women in hiding due to their new faith. Our team from North America, Egypt, and Poland was ideal for this group in giftedness, age, and humility. God knew what was needed.

We saw an immediate openness to the Gospel, to being heard, and to join in relationship. We were taken by the compassion of the believers towards those still outside the body of Christ.

The perceived danger of the trip drew a crowd of maybe 1000 people praying for us and the Gospel went out easily and was received so quietly—it was remarkable. And it was hot, hot, hot, and humid! There was no virus outbreak and no nefarious types coming in to interrupt. On the third day, the country locked down, but we were allowed to finish the camp. Another mercy of God. There was such solid progress in understanding and many delightfully deep conversations around the Gospel. The hard times had tenderized these folks. Even our advanced English class was rich. They spoke openly, shared honestly, and laughed together. A conversation on giving and receiving affirmation rocked the group, both believers and lost. God was working.

The camp finished well after four intense days. We celebrated together, worshipped joyfully, and started the somber goodbyes. Late afternoon, I received a message that our travel agent wanted to get the team out two days early, which meant leaving yet that night. We talked and prayed and headed to the airport before midnight. He had heard a rumor that flights from Beirut might end on Monday, the day before the terrible explosion.

We left a bit puzzled and disappointed, but nothing could dampen the wonder of seeing how God miraculously delivered us into Beirut and then poured His Spirit out on the work among these Lebanese families and young people. Darlis and I returned home tired, thankful, and so very satisfied with the purpose we'd had in this part of 2020. It was a crazy plan to get more life and know Jesus more at our age!

There is an agenda for the lives of the redeemed - to take risks, to worship expensively, to trust God and mercifully take the Gospel to lost people, and then to resolutely celebrate ALL that God gives us in that walk of faith.



Darwin Anderson

Darwin and Darlis Anderson live in Clear Lake, Iowa. Darwin is the President of International Messengers.

KIDS' ART DAY CAMPS

Our prayer before the day camp was a thought from Ephesians 3:20-21: *"Glory to God who is able to do far beyond all that we could ask or imagine...."*

Thinking about this verse, every day, several times a day, I'd decide to trust His Word. I so easily get discouraged and feel overwhelmed with thoughts, doubts, etc. but not this time. This time I was determined to change the strategy, and every time a doubtful thought or panic would start filling my mind, I'd direct this force into thinking I won't be forcing myself to deny that I'm overwhelmed, but I'll be overwhelmed in a constructive way. This means that I will fill my mind with overflowing joy and curiosity in what God is going to do during the day camp. Because God will do something overwhelming, He will bring New Beginnings, New Life, new relationships, something beautiful, something only He can do. Something that doesn't fit into our wildest imagination. He will do something. That will bring Him glory and will shower me with joy.

The workshop turned out to be beyond my strength, but at the same time, I was experiencing support in prayer that would take physical form. There was always someone who helped, was kind, and the smile and joy that kids show was priceless. A lot of new relationships started forming.

There was also Ira, (seen in the picture) a Ukrainian lady and mom of two participants. She helped me with taking pictures and would go with the children to the bathroom! (very important) and was always ready to help.

In the pictures you see kids from the one round of the KidsARTclub, age 6-12 years. Everyone different, with different needs and different strengths. We spent five days together.

Please pray for Tomek; he is the worker who coordinates the city projects (he helped with getting city funds for the day camp).

Please pray for the participants.

Pray for our family that we'd stay united in heart, mind, and spirit.



LeRoy Schwartz

LeRoy, Ania, and their twins Naomi and Sara, live in Poznan where they are finding ways to reach out and grow relationships.

The At-Home MISSION

I knew in my spirit that this was an important summer. Tammy and I have two teenage sons, ages 17 and 13. Both of our boys were in a season of openness to me as their dad—a thing that I don’t take for granted. Both are also in a season of pressure and temptation and stress, as most teens in our times are. Knowing that I needed to maximize these days of opportunity, I hypothesized a lot of amazing adventures that we would take. But when? I packed a few father-son things into the narrow margins of our summer, hoping that I could build some real bridges with our boys.

When the opportunity to serve in Hungary (and elsewhere) was removed, I was extremely disappointed. But the extra two weeks created fresh space and opportunity for the family ministry that God had put on my heart. Caleb and I spent a week together in Colorado bonding over moose and bear sightings, jeeping, and rafting. Spurred by the phrase, “I dare you...” we each ate giant burgers dressed with bacon, jalapenos, an onion ring, macaroni and cheese, and crunchy Cheetos! It was akin to some sort of ancient-male-testosterone-ego-thing, but we did it, and we did it together. Somewhere between all the foolishness and the food, the Lord created a bit of openness between us that was a precious gift.

I took a trip with Samuel too. We played and prayed, (and fought a little), and ate a lot. We planned to canoe together, but we convalesced in a hotel room and then spent some time in the great outdoors. On the way home, I was inwardly accusing myself because I spent more time playing with Sam than I spent praying with him. At that very moment, Samuel took out his earbuds and said, “Dad, thanks for doing this with me. It was the most fun I’ve ever had in my life.” That sentence was the “I love you” of a 13-year-old boy. Mission accomplished.

So I’m learning not to second guess the Lord. He knows which opportunities are most needed. Even though we couldn’t go to Hungary, He provided some treasured opportunities in my at-home mission field.



Brent Howland

Brent and Tammy Howland live in Mason City, Iowa, with their two boys. Brent is the Vice President of International Messengers.

“

SHORT-TERMER COMMENT:

“I have the joy of pointing others to Christ. The benefits far outweigh the problems encountered. I get to watch God move and work and to be used by Him.” ~ Deborah (Lebanon Camp)

”

GOD'S LOVING PRESENCE *in Times of Crisis*

Since 2014, I've been serving with IM in Egypt. As a graduate of the Faculty of Arts, I live in Alexandria at the Mediterranean. Praise, worship and music, and teaching are my tools to spread the Gospel. I also have a 16-member "Praise Team." We divided the team into small groups where they are continuously discipled. God's call in my life is to preach and make disciples visiting all kinds of local churches, conferences, and going to many unreached villages.

This year's pandemic all over the country made ministry extremely difficult. But with online meetings connecting churches and communities, I could encourage believers and speak into the lives of many who don't know God. The Evangelistic Family Camp in Lebanon this summer made an extraordinary impression on me. There I met people from different backgrounds, believers, traditional "name" Christians, Muslims, and atheists. I made friends with most of them and until now I am still connected with them. With some of them, I pray regularly online.

Only a few days after the camp, an explosion occurred in Beirut. I was in a car on a street next to the blast. God protected me. After this enormous blast, one person from IM in Egypt and I had a time of prayer. The event shocked us, but inside we deeply felt the peace to stay longer in Beirut. People in Lebanon would tell us, "Go quickly home!" But we changed our airline tickets and stayed another two weeks to visit victims of the catastrophe, share the Gospel, and encourage them. Through the IM Food Program we were able to provide food and water. Looking back, I am amazed to see how the prayers of the IM family protected me and the team on the ground.



Wessam Mamdouh

Wessam lies with his family in Egypt. In addition to his ministry in Egypt, he has a desire to share the Gospel in Lebanon and Syria.

FAITHFUL IN THE LITTLE THINGS

It's so fun to serve God, travel, plan big events, meet and greet people in various countries, work on big projects, but what do you do when it all comes to a halt? How do you serve God then? That's the question everyone around the world has been wrestling with these days.

Many years ago Chuck Swindoll in a message asked this question. "If Jesus asked you to wash someone's feet in a closed room, where no one would ever see or know, would you still do it?" That question came back to me earlier this spring. I have been learning again the value of faithful obedience in the small and hidden things.

It takes a lot more grace to continue cooking, cleaning, babysitting, checking on older neighbors, and doing the daily chores, day in and day out than it does to be in the limelight. Both are important, but are we willing to do what is set before us today, without grumbling or complaining, because we serve the Lord Christ?

Missions and evangelism are wonderful, but there are seasons in our lives where we might be placed in a quiet backwater and not out in front. I encourage you to be faithful to whoever or whatever God puts in your path and life today. Not neglecting faithful, quiet, hidden service that only Jesus knows.

II Thessalonians 2:16, says ***"May our Lord Jesus Christ, himself and God our Father, who loved us and by his grace gave us eternal encouragement and good hope, encourage your hearts and strengthen you in every good deed and word."***

Be of good courage!!



Kim Soper

Kim and Loren live in Nebraska. Kim serves IM as a Regional Representative and enjoys serving IM missionaries by providing professional workshops for teachers and others.



A PIRATE OR A MISSIONARY?!?

Arrrgghhh! Those are cries heard from pirate ships—not a missionary’s living room!!! And they definitely aren’t my usual utterings while preparing teaching sessions for women! Arrgghh—I had a good plan for teaching about fear, worry, and anxiety—showing the neuroscience and how to renew our minds and realign our thought life with FAITH in God! But, arrghh... every time I sat down to plan the teaching, my mind went completely blank! And the days kept passing...and I had nothing. Then... with three days left before the women’s retreat, I stopped “arghing,” threw away all of my notes, and told Jesus that I’d gladly go forth empty-headed if that was His plan for me.

That’s when He suddenly began streaming verses and thoughts into my head on the same topic of fear but from a different angle. He wanted me to focus on His immense love, His comfort, His promise of provision when our future is unknown. He wanted me to teach that we need not fear when things seem out of control—that He’s got us and will never let go. And so I did. And three days after the retreat, Poland went into lockdown because of Covid. Women lost their jobs, lost their businesses, had health and family issues, and suddenly everything seemed out of control and unknown.

At this particular time, these ladies didn’t need to understand their brain synapses; they needed to be reminded about God’s immense love, His comfort, His promise of provision in this unknown future. And I am so thankful that God made me temporarily empty-headed. Next time, maybe the eye-patch won’t be necessary.



Julie Hybel

Julie, Przemek, and Roksy live and work in Kraków. Julie is involved in women’s ministry, counseling, and mentoring. Przemek does youth and men’s ministry.

“SHORT-TERMER COMMENT:

“I’m not sure how much I ministered to others; I was very nervous that I didn’t know enough about Jesus and they would find out, but I learned while I was in training that it’s not about me, and when I reminded myself of this, my anxiety went away. The amount of love and fellowship with the team members and the campers was wonderful, and I miss it. It was very heartwarming growing in faith and learning to be closer to God alongside campers and seeing Jesus moving in everyone’s lives. Wow, He is good.”

~ Robert (Lebanon)



GOD USES US

In Creative Ways

At the beginning of the year, we had many plans for the ministry in Upper Egypt and outside of the country. But God seemed to have a different opinion. Like with all of us, because of the pandemic, most of my plans had to be changed. At first, it disappointed me. But after some time, I saw God using me in His creative ways. I began sharing the Gospel with others on the Internet and on the phone. I went down to farmers in the fields to share the Good News with them. For the first time, I was invited by a popular Christian TV program to present the Word of God to millions of viewers. A young man who had watched the show called me. He felt God speak to him through this program. He had seriously considered becoming a Muslim. But God interfered at the right time when this young man accidentally turned on the TV. This was very encouraging for me because we both could pray together and something very important changed in his heart. Something similar happened when I was invited to speak through Zoom in front of a bigger Russian auditorium. God can transform all things for good.

Because of the six-month strict church lockdown, people in our region became hungry again for the Living Word. Many invitations have been made to me to preach in all kinds of churches, even in the Coptic-Orthodox Church. After one such outreach, a young man followed me. He wanted to talk with me personally. Many times he had considered ending his life. He said that there was nothing in his life he could thank God for. We talked for hours. I shared



with him about God's goodness and love. I then invited him to pray with me, and he gave his life to Christ!

I could add many interesting stories that happen daily in the ministry of my team in Menya. God blessed us with several interns from the Desertsides Training Center: Mina, Mamdouh, Romany, and Georgina. Despite the dangers of getting COVID, each of them has a group of young people that they continuously disciple. One of these disciples was suffering from severe inferiority. His mother had died, and since then, his father had abused him for many years. During our recent camp, after many talks and prayers and while experiencing our loving and respectful fellowship, a miracle happened in his life. Today he is free. Another young man was suffering from depression because of the sudden death of his best friend. He had totally isolated himself. Through

many prayers and because of our loving fellowship, this man got out of depression. We sometimes walk a long way with addicted young people. In the end, God's powerful Word and the love of the team has been changing and saving many of them.



Yasser Adel

Yasser and his family serve in Egypt. He preaches at different denominations in several cities. He is also establishing a team with the desire to go short-term and serve in Syria.

EIGHT YEARS OPEN!



We CLOSED Friendship House! We resisted but finally relented as the country of Poland shut down! The ministry of Friendship House deals mostly with homeless/addicted people. To shut our doors to their many needs was almost traumatic. No more showers, washing their clothes, daily coffee/tea, soup, 12-step recovery meetings, large group meetings, one-on-one counseling. They allowed us to keep our street ministry of giving out sandwiches, but only if they would take and GO! No hanging around and talking.

We busied ourselves with projects that we “never had the time” to do—some renovations and much needed cleaning and repairing. The place has never been in such good condition! Vera and Ewa started making masks for our clientele—many, many masks!

Little by little (as allowed), we opened up different areas of the ministry—but this ministry probably will look much different from before. That’s not all BAD! We are always searching for different outreaches, and this forced us to re-evaluate the ministry—always a good thing.

The extra time together with Artur, Ewa, and their boys was very special. Although we have always had a good and respectful relationship

with them—the time together during the Covid shutdown has drawn us much closer. We had “time” to just sit and talk about “LIFE!” Changes are difficult but vital to the health of Friendship House ministry! We ask for prayer for discernment for the direction of the ministry and prayer to be open to and aware of God’s leading. Thanks for all your prayers and support! God Bless!



Bob & Vera Hageman

Bob & Vera’s greatest hope is that the “Friendship House” will continue to be a viable ministry in Radom and that it will continue to develop as a ministry led by God’s heart.



SHORT-TERMER COMMENT: “Over the years, I have learned how selfish I am and how generous God is. God directs our steps in order to give us the best. Every step has a purpose and is used by God to teach us how to love Him more and love those around us by showing His love. Each trip helps me to see God’s love for the world as I love another part of that world. I feel so blessed to be able to go and share God’s love through the Holy Spirit in me. This trip grew my faith so much as I saw God continue to make a way where there seemed to be no way. This was the trip that never should have happened in human terms, but, God was in it, and that was why it happened—Immanuel—God with us!”

~ Doug (Lebanon)



MMT FALL CLASS 2020



MOUNTAINSIDE MINISTRY TRAINING

WISH LIST

- 1 **Canvas Wall Prints** These prints of IM ministries will be hung around MMT to inspire students as they train and prepare to serve. *\$60 each – wishing for up to (4)*
- 2 **Desks for Students Bedrooms** These simple, sturdy desks are a needed update where students may study. *\$120 each – wishing for up to (6)*
- 3 **Scholarships for Students w/ Kids** An important decision for parents attending MMT is how they will educate their kids while at training. A very good option is the local Christian school. These scholarships are partial and will fund approx. 40% of the actual tuition. You can help give these kids a Christ-centered education and an opportunity to make some friends while in Libby. *\$500 each – (scholarship funds will be earmarked and used as needed)*



If you are interested in donating to MMT to help with these needs, visit <https://m.onlinegiving.org/a67d69> or visit www.im-usa.org/give and choose your giving option. For checks, include a separate note with code ZMM along with which option(s) your donation is for. For online giving (after selecting the fund from the drop-down menu) click on "+ Add Optional Gift Description" and type in a description of the option(s) you are giving toward.

"We cannot separate taking the Gospel to the lost and the abundance that Jesus came to bring us! If He is going to answer our hungers and thirsts in life, it will be in this great purpose for our lives and the relationship with Him that suffering requires."

– Unknown

WE LOVE EGYPT!

A little less than two years ago, a young Polish lady named Monika (a missionary with IM) came to Alexandria, Egypt, in obedient response to God's calling. For sure, the Lord already had the big picture, and His plan must have been from the beginning to put her and me together for His glory. Not knowing what would wait for us, we planned our wedding for May. Unfortunately, nothing worked out because of Covid-19. All the paperwork was delayed because most government offices had been closed. She needed to travel outside the country to get a re-entry visa. But to our surprise, she wasn't allowed to enter the country of her destination. We could see how dark powers tried to destroy all our dreams and visions. Will there ever be a wedding? God turned everything for our good. Even though we were deeply discouraged and full of uncertainty, we went through a school of training our minds to proclaim and rely on God's goodness and His faithfulness.

"The Lord is good, a refuge in times of trouble. He cares for those who trust in him," Nahum 1:7 NIV.

In His perfect timing, we saw how God reopened the offices, and miraculously made a way to finish our paperwork. We got married in July, and we praise



God for bringing to pass what He had promised from the beginning.

During our wedding day, shortly after our photo session, we went with our photographer to a little restaurant to drink some tea. When he found out we are from an Evangelical church; he said that he would visit such a church for the first time. The discussion went on, and he asked questions about our faith. Immediately we had a great chance to point to Jesus and the relationship that we can have with Him. His eyes were getting bigger as we shared more about our Lord.

Currently, we are serving among the youth, but also reach out to younger kids. However, we pray and ask God to prepare us for opportunities to serve people all around Egypt. We have a strong desire in our hearts to make short mission trips in our region, and we are excited to see what God has in store for us.

Mekha & Monika Awad

Mekha & Monika live and serve in Alexandria, Egypt. Their greatest hope is that God would bring people who need to hear the Gospel or those who already accepted Jesus to grow in their walk with Him.

"But God receives us as sons, and loves us with the same steadfast affection with which he eternally loves his beloved only-begotten. There are no distinctions of affection in the divine family. We are all loved just as fully as Jesus is loved."

Excerpt From: J. I. Packer. "Knowing God."

COUNT IT ALL

“Count it all joy when you encounter various trials!” James 1:2

James 1 is so appropriate for this time in life and the world happenings. It's been a genuine struggle to keep my mind on the truth that God is in control. “The way life used to be” seems so much more comfortable than change. It's so good to reflect on the process that God is producing in one's life. I am learning:

I like my freedom. For months being isolated, living in only two rooms, in Poland, and without a car is difficult. God showed Kent and I many wonderful lessons. We made a blessing chart. Daily we spoke and wrote three blessings from the day. We saw sunsets, flowers, heard birds, were thankful for walks, masks, and seeing people even from a distance. We connected daily through zoom with our UK grandchildren, helping with their homeschooling.

I need to know my enemy and plan for the battle. The hardest part of my life is to recognize his lies. He wants to destroy me and my testimony for Jesus. I have tried to identify the thought that proceeded the lie, if I can Scripture addresses all issues. If it's not a fruit of the Spirit, it is from the pit. If I'm not having love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness,

gentleness, faithfulness, and self-control, I'm not controlled by the Spirit.

In James, it talks about the joys of trials because testing your faith produces steadfastness. This is not a common word and is translated as patience, endurance, or perseverance. It shows tenacity, grit, and determination. It's a commitment and intentional pursuit.

So I am trying hard to run the race, being tenacious to run well. Identifying lies and replacing them with the Truth. God is a faithful God. He is always there for His children and wants us to trust Him. This has been the calling that God has given me—to help women in my sphere of influence. He teaches me and then gives me opportunities to pass it on. What a wonderful God!



Jan McKinnon

Jan and her husband Kent serve with the Poznan International Church in Poznan, Poland. Her focus is on discipleship, small groups, evangelism, college ministry, women's ministry, and children's ministry.

BIRTHS



SOFIA

born on 12-18-19
to Dima & Anya Murkin

SAMUEL

born on 01-14-20
to Claudiu & Jennifer Soare

OLIVIA

born on 02-18-20
to Sergei & Vera Yurevich

LARIANNA

born on 08-06-20
to Carlos & Alyona Francis

IZABELLA

born on 08-19-20
to John & Christine Pipes

BENJAMIN

born on 09-13-20
to Amadeus & Monika Shaded

RUTH

born on 09-27-20
to Amos & Sarah Dranyima

GLORIA

born on 10-13-20
to Pasha & Ira Chorny

WHO'S MORE AFRAID?

Earlier, when Covid was just becoming serious, I was doing my exercise, jogging around a small park near my home, when I saw several people sitting in a corner. They looked like they were homeless. Later, I saw one young man leave the group and go sit by himself on a bench. I decided I would go to him after I finished jogging to see if I could have a spiritual conversation with him.

He was still sitting there when I was done, so I walked his way to say, "Hi." As I was coming up to him, he responded, and so I asked how he was doing. He answered and asked me the same—a sign he was open to a conversation. I stopped and asked him if he was homeless. He said, "No, but the others are." After a few minutes, I discovered that he had been kicked out of his home because he was addicted to drugs. I agreed with him that drugs do make a person feel better temporarily, but it never lasts, and, "When we come off our high, the pain comes back." He said, "That's why I try to stay high." I suggested that drugs would ruin his life and that there was a better way. I asked if I could show him something. He said, "Yes."

I had the *3 Circles Gospel Presentation* app on my phone, so I went and sat close to him so I could share my screen with him. I briefly wondered if he

might have Covid but thought I would trust God to protect me. As I shared the presentation with him, I noticed that when I talked to his face, he would look away.

He wasn't ready to accept Jesus, but he now had some things to think about. After the presentation, I mentioned that we were sitting too close together, and should I be afraid that he had Covid? Then I said, "What if you are afraid that I have Covid?" He said, "Don't you know that a runny nose is one sign of Covid?"

That was when I realized that after running, my nose usually joins in and runs too, so he saw that I was sniffing and was worried! Oh well! I guess it was time to go!



Wes Isaak

Wes lives in Abbotsford, British Columbia, and serves in the IM Canada office. His greatest hope is to see God work powerfully among the Punjabi communities in Abbotsford.

“

SHORT-TERMER COMMENTS: *About personal relationships:* "It always amazes me how in a short period of time you become like family for a lifetime.... I guess it must be similar to the experience that soldiers have when they are together in the barracks and are protecting each other's lives. I often heard that they become like brothers.

During those few days in Lebanon, we were in spiritual barracks together with "soldiers for Christ" from around the world and were fighting spiritually for each other and for the lost. It was an honor for me to "fight" with such a mature group of people." ~ Damaris (Lebanon)

About the mission experience: "My soul was renewed, like in Psalm 23 when Dawid writes, "He restores my soul." It is hard to explain why because you are physically very tired (after hours of ministry) but at the same time, rested in your soul. The reason probably is that we bear His yoke, not our own burdens..." ~ Damaris (Lebanon)

”

Faithful Through the Pain

Just a few weeks ago, I went for an ultrasound for my 11-week pregnancy, only to be told that the baby had died. This makes my fourth miscarriage (plus five beautiful kids at home).

As I was driving home after this appointment—pondering; processing—I thought about how many people we have known who started out following Jesus but then have gone through something hard and unexpected—like a miscarriage or loss of a loved one, or trouble in their marriage. So many times, we have watched people turn their backs on God during these trials, and it breaks our hearts.

Honestly, I understand. Each time I've gone through these things, it has challenged my faith. And yet, the more I cling to Jesus, the more I learn to trust Him no matter what happens. That day, as I processed this new grief, I considered the things that Jesus went through leading up to the cross—the betrayal, abandonment, abuse, and false accusations—all that grief and sorrow, and I thought; was any of that necessary for our salvation? Wasn't it simply His death that covered our sin? So why did He go through all the rest?

As I thought about it, there were three things I took from it: First, that as Christians, even if we could obey God perfectly as Jesus did, we are not immune to pain, grief, and trouble in this life (John 16:33). Second, that He understands and identifies with us in our pain and grief (Isaiah 53:3), and third, that God wastes nothing we go through but can make good come from it (Romans 8:28).



Katie Larsh

Katie, her husband Jon, and their children currently serve in Cat Lake, a fly-in only First Nation reserve in Northern Ontario (a community of about 500 people). Jon runs the local Christian school and serves as a pastor at a small church. Katie helps with worship, Bible studies and sometimes helps at the school.

I know it might sound crazy, but I have found that each time I go through things like this, I learn more about how good and how faithful God is. Yes, it still hurts, but I can't imagine trying to walk through this without Him.

A BIG STEP OF FAITH

This summer's evangelistic camp was a big step of faith for us, and we would like to share with you how God answered our joint prayers.

We did it despite Covid-19 because we knew an evangelistic camp is an excellent platform for our disciples to share the Gospel with their friends and family. We were encouraged by seeing their hearts for the lost. As a result, a Polish teenager, Zuza, gave her life to Christ. It was her third camp, so it took her three years to make that decision. Praise God!

We also praise God for Lester, our young friend, who uses a wheelchair. He has also been coming to our camps for many



years. This year he got baptized. Last summer his fear of water overcame him, but this year Bogdan and Lester's father baptized him in the lake on the last day of camp. It was a very special moment for all of us.



There were many examples at camp of showing the love of Christ in practical ways. When some believing campers took David on a kayaking trip, despite his disabilities, it softened his heart a little more. He is a big, tall man, and it took a lot of effort to help him get into a kayak and finish the trip safely,

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but it was worth thousands of words explaining God's love! David has been coming to our camps for over ten years. He was angry with God for his tragic accident and very resistant to talk about Jesus. This year he was a different man. His heart was much softer. We continue to pray for his salvation.



There was a beautiful spirit of unity which permeated the atmosphere at the camp. It was a wonderful thing to serve with one common purpose—to help non-believers come to the saving relationship with Christ.

We give many thanks to our heavenly Father because of your encouragement and faithful partnership for the sake of His Kingdom!



Bozena and Bogdan Jachym

The Jachyms live in Poland, where they serve with their local international church as well as coordinating evangelistic events, including their Family English camps. Their desire is to develop young men and women as leaders for the ministry.

THE DAILY GRIND

It's become an annual tradition for me the day after Christmas...I head out to the bookstore and take advantage of the half-off sales on daily planners. Yes, I am one of the few people who still like to carry around a planner where I can use a pen to write things on actual paper. Call me old-fashioned, but it is what it is! This year there weren't many planners available, so I got one that had on its cover, "The Daily Grind." I got home and began to fill up my planner with date nights, meetings, trips, our daughter's school activities...ah, a new year full of fresh paper and new opportunities. It felt promising! Skip forward three months, cue the white-out, and suddenly I was erasing everything I had put in my calendar. This probably would've been easier if I used my phone as a planner, but I digress! Each week would pass with more plans canceled. That was hard! Now when I see "The Daily Grind" on my planner, I think about how accurate of a description that is of 2020. I looked it up..."daily grind" is defined as "the difficult, routine, or monotonous tasks of daily work." How fitting!

I've been thinking about when I was at the IM Training Center before I went overseas. One thing we learned was the need to be flexible! Nothing

would go as planned, we were told. That came in handy when I was overseas... and now again in 2020!

One of my favorite Bible verses is Proverbs 19:21, "Many are the plans in a man's heart, but it is the LORD's purpose that prevails."

This year has reminded me that God is still in control. 2020 was not a surprise to Him! I think if we all look closely, we'll be able to see Him in the "daily grind." He is doing some mighty things this year. If only we are flexible to join Him in what He's up to!



Lisa Nagel

Lisa lives in Colorado Springs with her husband Mark and seven-year-old daughter Isabel. She works from home through Skype/phone counseling and encouraging IM missionary women and women from other missions.



SLOVAKIA: *Hope needed in the face of setbacks.*



The Roma in Sabinov, Slovakia, built a church out in the middle of an open field with help. After a few years, the church bought a strip of land across the road. They divided it into 21 lots. Different families from the church worked and saved so they could buy a lot. The church sold 13 lots to people in the church and still owns the other eight. The local town council gave a tentative go-ahead for the projected street of homes, so the pastors worked with an architect to get a duplex design that would allow each family to have their own home on their own plot. They obtained permits from the water, gas, sewer, and electric companies. The regional building permit office was on board. After a couple of years, all the Roma families were anticipating finally being able to begin the long-awaited process of building their own homes.

It was at this point that some people following an anti-gypsy political group who are against the church Roma families being able to build these homes started circulating a petition. They were not honest with the public and used fear as a tactic. They succeeded in getting the 10,000 signatures needed to make the town council members reconsider. Without the final approval from the

council, the project was halted. Now, over a year later, permits are expiring. One family with five children invested their savings and are about to be homeless because no one will rent them an apartment. This racism is real. The pastors and families are discouraged. The politicians are afraid of the political group and the neighbors. However, we know, *“What seems impossible for man is possible with God.”* Luke 18:27.

Please pray with us for this situation and for the many Slovak Roma believers who need help to get their own housing. We’re seeking land we can purchase for a similar project with our partner organization, Stability International. We’ve had many meetings with leaders and mayors in different villages and possible towns, including the mayor and pastors in Sabinov. We’re asking God to lead us.



Karla Thiessen

Brad and Karla Thiessen moved to Kosice, Slovakia, in 1991. They enjoy seeing how God is working in the lives of their family, friends, and neighbors.

“True biblical faith is always something that you live. If your faith does not reshape your life, it is not true faith. Faith is not just intellectual assent to a body of truth. I’m afraid that’s what faith looks like in the evangelical academic circles. But real faith radically rearranges your life.”

– Paul David Trip [New Morning Mercies, A Daily Gospel Devotional](#)

But the more they afflicted them, the more they multiplied and grew. And they were grieved because of the children of Israel.

Exodus 1:12 KJV



During the past year, we believers in the Middle East have been sensing that it is time to grow up. The pandemic has been sifting us. The world before and after Covid is totally different, and we still don't know what life will look like in a year. Jesus' followers have no other choice but to trust Him. In many situations, we can clearly see how God uses the virus to His glory and for His kingdom. I have observed many old friends leaving Him, but at the same also many people seek Him more. In our Egyptian Muslim society, because of death going around, many young people open up to hear about the Good News. Suddenly they look for the real God who controls everything.

Personally, God is teaching me how to live as his child, trust as a child, walk, ask, pray, and serve as a child. The sports team is deeply growing in Him. Having summer evangelistic outreaches were impossible. But our relationship with God is growing. Many of our disciples left the team because we didn't have much going on. Phillip is one of those people who stayed and kept working on the sports team. He believes that God is in control and that He has a purpose with what is going on. As a sports team, we are praying and

thinking about how to create alternative ways to share the message with the young generation. There's always a way, no matter what.

My heart is on fire to move forward. The nations in the Middle East need us. The world is so open to hear the Good News. The people we meet daily are hungry for the Word of God. Kids look for a father who loves them. People look for someone who can save their lives. This is the right time to leave our comfort zones and go.

Some of our dreams are coming true: The Lord willing, we plan to have an Evangelistic Sports Camp in Egypt in July 2021. The next step will be to have a Sports Camp in Syria.



Mina Fawze

Mina's desire is for God to open doors for having sports ministries where the team can share the Good News with those who are lost and need Jesus.

LETTER TO THE CHURCH IN PHILADELPHIA

SLOVAKIA

Slovakia has been spared much of the hardships from the Covid-19 experienced in America and elsewhere in Europe. However, we too, have had to do ministry differently because of strict government guidelines. My weekly three-hour men's Bible study had to be via social media. Church services were canceled. But throughout this time, we have also seen God's hand at work in powerful ways. There is a greater hunger for not just fellowship but for hope, which makes sharing the Gospel very practical and fruitful. I'd like to share just one example.

I was asked to be the guest preacher at a special church service in celebration of the 200th anniversary of the new sanctuary. It was an honor as an American to be asked to speak, and especially because it was the last time we would be allowed to gather together for the foreseeable future. The new rules, which forbid gatherings indoors, including weddings and funerals, went into effect at midnight. There was almost a palpable feeling of both celebration and grief at the same time. Long in advance, they asked me to speak on the church of Philadelphia from Revelation. God promised this church that they would be spared from the trials coming upon the whole earth because they had been faithful in the midst of great hardship

and that, even though they were small, they were undefeated. God promised to open to them a door that no one could shut. Just as the pandemic was becoming severe worldwide, and the government was shutting their doors, I preached that God was opening the doors to them to be missionaries just as the early church, which fled Jerusalem and carried the Gospel with them. There were a lot of tears shed as we closed and locked the doors behind us and then turned towards the world around us in need of the Gospel. The Father's Heart ministry is here communicating God's heart for Slovakia, and we see His sovereign hand at work, bringing us here nearly 25 years ago to encourage missions.



Bevan Stein

Bevan and Laura live on a ranch in Turciarsky Michal, Slovakia. They work to help local churches, especially the Lutheran church, catch a vision for outreach to orphaned and disabled children, and to use means such as motorcycles to reach unsaved bikers for Christ. They use horses and a ranch to minister to children.

DONATE A SUITCASE

We are in need of **good quality, medium to large suitcases, and carry-ons with functioning wheels and pull-up handle.**

If you would like to donate one or more suitcases, or if you have any questions, please contact us today!



office@im-usa.org
641-357-6700

“SHORT-TERMER COMMENT:

“I am just as passionate about serving on IM trips as I am about asking others to come and serve on them. The Lord has grown my faith in leaps and bounds on these trips and I want others to experience this kind of comfort-shaking, faith-moving times you have simply by saying, ‘Yes, I will go.’”

”



Corona Island Experiences

People worldwide had a lot of unique experiences with the Corona lock-down. For sure, it was some sort of “walking through the desert for each one of us.”

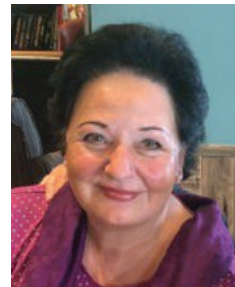
I am very grateful for how God used this time of being so strongly restricted from traveling and meeting with our teams in the Middle East. On the one hand, it was very hard, but on the other hand, I had much more time than usual to do in-depth online counseling.

God sent two ladies into my life who asked for help during that time. One was a relative of mine; the other was a young lady from Egypt I had never seen before. Both of them were in utter despair, not knowing how to live their lives anymore. Both were close to making an end to their existence here on earth.

It was a bit of a challenge to work with them solely through the internet, but God gave wonderful breakthroughs after working with them several times per week for about two-and-a-half months. Together we saw how Jesus set people free from severe bondage and helped them out of deep darkness into his light. They went through a thorough process of forgiveness, and Jesus renewed their lives.

It showed me that there are no limits for God’s children during such times of restriction if He gives favor. The Spirit of God works on all levels of our existence.

I feel very encouraged.



Burgi Oehler

Burgi and her husband Ben focus mainly on the countries in the Middle East/North Africa. They also coordinate IM’s Desertsides Training Center (DTC).



GROUND^{ED} *in glory*

September 28-October 1, 2021

Gather with other member care practitioners at Ridgecrest Conference Center in Black Mountain, NC, for fellowship, networking, skill-building, and spiritual refreshment. Randy Gariss, Director of the Life & Ministry Preparation Center at Ozark Christian College in Joplin, Missouri will challenge us with what it means to be Grounded in Glory. For more information go to: **www.barnabas.org/ptm**

Make plans now to join us next year!

PTMConference
Pastoral Training in MemberCare

2021 SHORT-TERM MINISTRY OPPORTUNITIES

EVANGELISTIC ENGLISH LANGUAGE CAMP (EELC)	LOCATION	HOST	TRIP DATES
	Siofok, Hungary	Dan	July 14 - 26

FAMILY EVANGELISTIC ENGLISH LANGUAGE CAMPS	LOCATION	HOST	TRIP DATES
	Warsaw, Poland	Wawrzyniak	June 24 - July 11
	Warsaw, Poland	Snuffer	June 30 - July 13
	Odessa, Ukraine	Naydenov	July 8 - July 20
	Odessa, Ukraine	Litvak/Winkler	July 17 - July 29
	Krakow, Poland	Schlorff	July 27 - August 7
	Alexandria, Egypt	National Staff	August 6 - 15

SPECIALTY CAMP	LOCATION	HOST	TRIP DATES
Discipleship Camp	Odessa, Ukraine	Litvak/Winkler	December 31 - January 10
Discipleship Camp	Kampala Uganda	Tustanovskyi	December 31 - January 12
Discipleship Camp	Alexandria, Egypt	National Staff	February 10 - 19
Soccer Camp	Gulu, Uganda	Akugizibwe/Smith	Between May and Sept.*
Minister to moms, kids, elderly @ ROL	Cornesti, Romania	Moore	Ongoing, flexible, anytime
Sports Camp (for ages 17-23)	Alexandria, Egypt	National Staff	July 9 - 17
Kids' Camp	Iquitos, Peru	Garcia	July 17 - 27
Youth Discipleship Camp	Alexandria, Egypt	National Staff	July 24 - 31
Media Camp	Alexandria, Egypt	National Staff	July 17 - 25
Kids' Camp	Alexandria, Egypt	National Staff	August 13 - 22

*Specific dates yet to be determined

To sign up or give: <https://internationalmessengers.focusmissions.com/#!/>

For the most up-to-date camp schedule visit our websites: USA: www.im-usa.org/camps-schedule

Canada: www.im-canada.ca/camps-schedule

"Making the video this time, I could hardly hold my tears. I've known what it's like to be a missionary since I was six. I saw them coming to our house, spending time and loving on people they hardly knew, putting smiles/tears on people's faces, listening to the deepest hurts of people's hearts, being available for them 24/7, sharing their love for Christ and, leading them to the One Who created them carefully.

What I never knew though, was the amount of work they were doing daily, the challenges they were going through along the way, the trust they had to have for God, and the importance of their work.

Now, as I know the life of a missionary, I feel especially privileged to be one of them. Thank you for introducing me to the life I've never known, but surely the life my heart has always longed for."

~ Dasha, IM Intern, Ukraine

commandment I give unto e love one another; as you, that ye also love one another

LOVE LIKE IT'S GOING IN THE BIBLE

I never thought 2020 would make me consider how much I engage in small talk with so little action. How chats between my co-workers and me were just time-fillers, and how 2020 would change that in my world.

For most of the COVID crisis, I worked for a company that took COVID very seriously. They required us to wear masks. We couldn't enter our co-workers' office to work, or even just to share about our weekends over coffee. It isolated us. It made small talk almost obsolete because who wants to stand six-feet apart and talk about the weather, right? Here's what God taught me in this.

What used to be quick "How are you? How was your weekend?" chats became more intentional conversations.

"How is your elderly mother who lives with you? Can I help shuttle her to the doctor?"

"How is your child, who is auto-immune compromised?"

"I know you work all day and have the house to run at night. Do you need me to get your groceries?"

"I know homeschooling is wearing you out. You seem tired and worn. Can I pray for you?"

God used COVID to force me to get serious about being in their business. I cared about their elderly

mother and their child with the auto-immune disease. Yet how often I asked those questions, not out of the intention to take action if needed, but because it was what you do in small talk. While I did care, God convicted me that I needed to love like I was on a mission. I had to love like it was going in the Bible. I had to act on their answers, either in prayer or in deeds. I had to follow-up and course correct if what I was doing to help and serve wasn't meeting needs. If I am honest, my chats at the water-cooler before COVID were superficial, like making small talk. Now it was time to be ready to act on "how are you doing?" By God's grace, I learned to love more in real ways. I learned to be intentional, even in those small talks over coffee, six-feet apart.

Proverbs 3:3 tells us, "*Let love and faithfulness never leave you.*" I pray that I call to mind this scripture as I reflect on these times, to love people as if it's going in the Bible.



Jamie Miller

Jamie and her husband Mike, live in North Carolina. Jamie is IM's new short-term recruiting director. She also desires to serve in their local church and community.

EXECUTIVE ASSISTANT/RECEPTIONIST

IM is searching for a full-time Executive Administrative Assistant who will also handle incoming phone calls in the IM Home Office in Clear Lake, Iowa. The job also involves preparing and organizing materials for overseas ministries. If interested, please contact office@im-usa.org.



SEASONED WITH SALT.

We moved to a new city in North Carolina (when not in Poland) and don't know a single person. We started using Colossians 4:3-6 to *Shine and Witness for Jesus*.

By praying this passage before getting out of bed each day, we ask God to open up doors of Gospel opportunities for us. We then get out of bed, looking for and expecting God to answer. We started taking daily walks around our new community, praying for these opportunities, and God answered.

As we walked, we made it a practice to wave and say hi to everybody we saw along our daily walk. If we can, we stop and chat, telling them our names and then asking for their names. When we get home, we write down their names and what we learned about them.

You might ask, "Why did we go to so much work to come home and write out the information?"

We wanted to *Shine For Jesus*. When you can remember and say the person's name the next time you meet them, it says you are different (loving and caring) and they start wondering why!!

Gospel Steps:

- 1) Start caring friendships. Be friendly to all God's open doors for you.
- 2) Eventually ask, "Are you interested in spiritual things?" Don't worry about their answer. Be a good listener.
- 3) Ask, "Can I share with you about my spiritual journey?" Prepare by writing out and practicing your salvation testimony beforehand (three minutes). (*Need help? Contact me—I will send you a testimony worksheet.*)
- 4) What joy it is helping people come to Jesus and "Populating Heaven"

John and Sharon—he has Alzheimer's and can't be left alone—went and chatted on his porch.

Ben lives alone—Kent reads the Bible with him, walks, and plays checkers

Dale and Kelly—their daughter is going through a divorce. They have the children much of the time. Need to encourage and pray for them.

Jenny—biopsy for cancer; prayed for her—benign.

Hosea and Courtney—she works for ENT Dr. and brought me swim plugs. I bought her a pizza coupon, as thanks. Game night.

Rick and Crystal—like to walk, hummingbirds; visited two times, appointment and activity next week.

Joyce has a foster child; Kent almost fainted while walking, she offered to drive us home. Invited for coffee.

Larry and Beth—yard is nice, many street-side talks.

Henry and Brian—wife has Alzheimer's, talked politics, sports. Talk about spiritual things.



Kent McKinnon
Kent and his wife Jan serve with the Poznan International Church in Poznan, Poland. His focus is on preaching, teaching, discipleship, small groups, evangelism, and college ministry.

Homegoings

JAMES WILLIAM HURD

June 29, 1936 – October 24, 2019

From his wife Roberta: “In July of 1995, Jim and I led a team from Iowa to Hungary, holding a ten-day discipleship camp. Upon our return, Jim had a difficult time going back to secular employment; it seemed so meaningless to him. That fall, Darwin challenged us to consider going full-time with IM, which we did in December 1996. We returned to the States in November 1998 primarily because our twin grandsons, Caleb and Joshua, were one year old and mentally and physically handicapped. Our son and his wife had four children under six and needed our help. We continued returning to Hungary, leading a family camp with the Dannes in 2000 and then did various ministries with the Moores in Romania: Bible Schools, eyeglass distribution, and hospital ministries, etc., in 2005. We were able to return five times to do various ministries.



We moved from Erie, Pennsylvania, to Arizona in 2014. Our two daughters live in the Tucson area, and as Jim’s health continued to deteriorate, they encouraged us to make that change. At that point, Jim was unable to do ministry, his voice was impacted by Parkinson’s, so it was difficult to hear and understand him. He walked with the aid of a rollator and was dependent on others for many things. But even then, he continued to impact people by his positive attitude, his interest in them, uncomplaining spirit, and faithful attendance at all church functions. In Arizona, he was purposely visited by two former employees who wanted to thank him for his impact on their lives and careers; one of them shared at his service, “*Jim was the dad I never had,*” and we heard that from several men in our congregation. When we left Erie our pastor thanked us for the many areas of ministry we had served in the church, nursing home ministry, city mission ministry, Bible School helper, etc. still, he said Jim’s encouragement and concern for the church and his family through some difficult times was one of his greatest gifts.

Jim passed away on October 24, 2019, from complications of Parkinson’s Syndrome. He was 83 years old. Even to the end, if Jim were asked what stood out about his days of following the Lord, unequivocally, he would reply the opportunity to serve the Lord with IM. It was such a blessing to both of us.

CONTINUING CONNECTIONS WITH CHRISTIANS IN NEPAL

We returned to Nepal, January 8-30, 2020; our challenge: to provide and teach our friends how to run a camp for children. God opened doors for International Messengers Canada Society (IMCS) to partner with Gull Lake Center (Alberta Christian Camp), and six camp-trained adults joined the team. We were up close and personal with our 140 campers and co-workers. who explored the truth about love, belonging, and purpose as God’s creation. Our team demonstrated that every individual, regardless of caste, ability, or status, is worthy of inclusion. A month later, our friends successfully hosted another day camp for children with mental disabilities.

We also held three leadership seminars—with two Bible School student groups and one BAM staff group. Each participant received the book “With You It Will Be Different,” which was born after our 2016 seminars and published in 2018. These dear people respond to the unfolding and personalizing of the stories of leaders in the Bible with wonder and enthusiasm.

Since 2018, “PEP – Prerana (inspire) Education Partner-ship” has invested in the futures of needy children. In order to



continued on page 24

Continuing Connections with Christians in Nepal

continued from page 23

review our objectives, audit, refine and plan for the future, we spent a day visiting one of the schools and two homes of PEP students. It is so hard to describe the sights, emotions, and humility that passed through us as we received their generous hospitality and saw how PEP program and the work of Beautiful Gate Church makes a difference to “the least of these.”

Our dream for year three (April 2020-2021) included expansion into a rural community, growing from 30 to 65 students, working with more schools, empowering teachers so even more students would benefit, changed with the March lockdown. At this time, schools have not all re-opened, online learning is limited to those with good internet access, and the working poor are even poorer. PEP has provided curriculum workbooks for home study, emergency food relief, encouragement through phone calls and on-going connection. We also are pivoting and staying connected because God has given us these relationships for His glory.



Verna & Bruce Ratzlaff

Verna serves as a director on the board of International Messengers Canada Society (IMCS). Bruce is the volunteer leader of partner activities with Beautiful Gate Church in Nepal. They live in Calgary, Alberta.

W. WOULDN'T J. D.?

I always remember what everyone's favorite seminary professor, Jerram Barrs at Covenant Seminary, said in a class in late 1999 as Y2K was rapidly approaching. With the hysteria increasing day by day, Jerram told the class, others at the seminary including some professors, kept asking him would he be able to protect his family?

Finally, Jerram, in his usual understated way, said, “I don't think Jesus would want us to shoot hungry people.”

It's funny what you remember, but I never forgot that.

As the coronavirus began making headlines early in the year and the death count slowly rose, I naturally thought Jesus wouldn't want us to forget about all those who might not have ready access to masks and hand sanitizers.

I began stocking up on them. I gave them to friends and family. I also bought a large number for those at a retirement home in the inner city close to where I attend church. The pastor was able to get them to an older woman in the home who was a kind of evangelist of the place. She distributed them with other Christian materials we supplied.

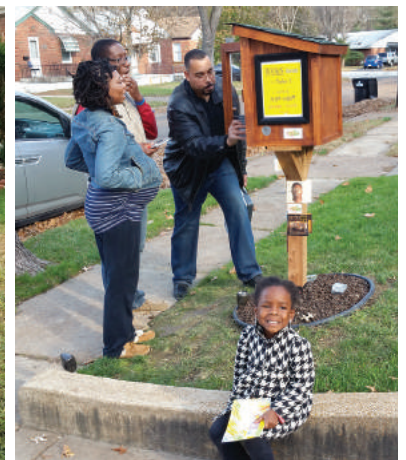
I then began putting masks and hand sanitizers in my Little Free Library on my front lawn to go with the existing books by Martin Luther King, other good African-American writers, children's coloring books like Color the Gospel, Christian hip-hop CDs, and other books and DVDs.

It seemed like a natural fit. I would usually put out about five masks and one bottle of hand sanitizer each day. And they were mostly taken by each night.

Since that seminary professor made that remark over twenty years ago, I often find myself thinking; *What Wouldn't Jesus Do?* The next thing you know, I say; *He wouldn't want us to forget about all the people on the margins—He didn't!*



Little Free Library during Coronavirus



Two pastor friends loading up from The Little Free Library



Ed Kleiman

*Ed Kleiman lives in St. Louis, Missouri. He speaks and serves throughout the US and overseas. small cloud ministries
www.praybold.org*



The ministry of Mobilizing Uganda for Missions (MUM) is starting a radio program at Signal FM in the Eastern Uganda district of Mbale. We will broadcast the program at 9:00pm and will be an hour every Thursday.

This came after some long time of prayer after I had moved to Mbale in February. Rachael and I were asking God to use us in the region to preach the true Gospel to many. Mbale is the most Islamist district of Uganda—nearly 70% Muslim. The few “Christians” here are either grounded on the health and wealth gospel or Catholicism. It has been on our hearts to find a platform where we could preach the Gospel, and then the radio program idea came up. We approached different radio stations and went with Signal FM.

We are still raising the funds for the program to start, so please pray with us.

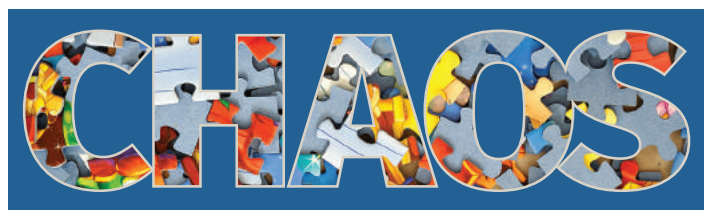
Our program will get its name from Pilate’s words, “What is Truth?” It’s true that Pilate wasn’t asking to learn, but, there are many people today who would like to know the Truth, and that is what this program will be about.

Ministry has been difficult because of the virus, but through this radio program, the Gospel will reach many.

Amon Nabasa

Amon is a Ugandan who was raised in one of the villages of western Uganda. He grew up in a Christian family with a great desire for the Gospel. After high school, he joined MUM’s Riverside Missionary Training, and since then, he has been a missionary in South Sudan, West Nile, Gulu, and now Mbale.

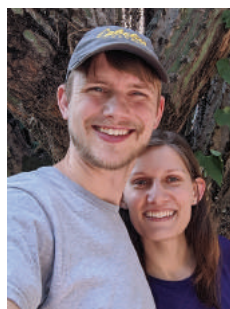
He was married in February and moved with his wife to serve God in Mbale district, Eastern Uganda. nabasaamonjoseph@gmail.com



Looking back on the blur of the past ten months sometimes makes me question what country I will wake up in. Will it be India where the life and ministry we tried to form was interrupted by political problems? Or in Myanmar, where we taught English for a few months while trying to figure out our next steps? Or possibly even in the US, where we spent long months waiting out the Covid crisis? Or when I wake up, will I realize that I am in Mexico, where we are currently living, to check out new ministry opportunities at a camp?

When taken on a daily level, the stress of buying new plane tickets, not knowing when borders will open, questioning where God would have us, and trying to heal from leaving India unexpectedly, feels like chaos. In fact, if this were a movie, it would be B-rated. I would be staring at the TV muttering to my husband, “They don’t actually expect us to believe this could happen, right?”

When we were debriefing our time in India, our counselor had us make a timeline. We went back about five years and wrote about big events, losses, high points, and other things of significance. This big picture view made me smile as I pointed to those events in the past where God’s hand was so evident. Even just five years later, some pieces have clicked into place. Likewise, I can smile even in the chaos’s midst because I know the One who is drawing this entire picture. I can trust God to work in this year that feels so B-rated, knowing that His plan always includes “immeasurably more than all we ask or imagine” (Eph. 3:20).



Mikayla Carlson

Mikayla and David are living in Mexico, serving at a camp and missionary training center. They are seeking the Lord’s guidance for whether this is a good option for long-term ministry.

COVID CAMP CHRONICLE

Grace and I have led short-term English Camp teams with Czarek and Ewa Dabrowski (IM staff in Gorzow, Poland) each summer for eleven years. This summer, their English Camp was forced to cancel due to Covid-19 restrictions.

In fact, all but one IM English Camp was forced to cancel due to the pandemic this summer. Does that mean that the work of building God's Kingdom was stopped? Certainly not. I've enjoyed seeing the new things God is doing despite and sometimes because of the pandemic.

In place of their regular English Camp, Czarek and Ewa Dabrowski hosted a Zoom Camp. It delighted us to bring a team of English speakers without leaving home (no jetlag, packing a suitcase, or dirty laundry at the end).

Approximately thirty-five Polish campers and a 10-member camp team (from Canada, USA, and Lebanon) attended via Zoom from their homes. Each day camp included an opening session, a workshop on Hope presented by Grace, a small group Bible study in breakout rooms, a fellowship time (testimonies, worship, Q&A on the workshop, and Bible studies), and games done in the Bible study groups (scavenger hunts, Bible story tableaux, Bible trivia—via breakout rooms).

During the workshop and Bible study times, Elie Karam (IM staff in Beirut) led ten young people in their own breakout room.

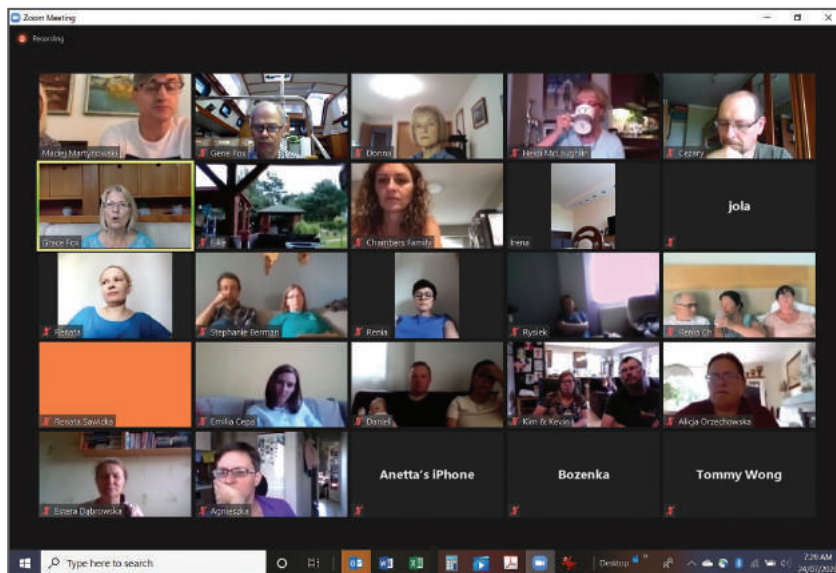
After the camp day was officially over, the team members went into their own coffee-time breakout

rooms. Interested campers joined them for a more personal connection.

Most campers were alumni from past English Camps. It was a wonderful opportunity for follow-up, and discipleship for those still seeking and for the new believers.

Even after five hours/day over three consecutive days of camp, the campers were involved and enthusiastic. The time in small groups and coffee rooms added to the personal connections that made the camp relational.

There were many comments at the end about doing Zoom camps quarterly. Personally, we hope this was the first of no others. But if the pandemic continues into 2021, we won't hesitate to repeat it if in-person camps continue to be restricted.



Gene Fox

Gene and Grace serve together as the directors of International Messengers Canada.

“God assumed from the beginning that the wise of the world would view Christians as fools ... and he has not been disappointed,” Scalia said.

“If I have brought any message today, it is this: Have the courage to have your wisdom regarded as stupidity,” he added. “Be fools for Christ. And have the courage to suffer the contempt of the sophisticated world.”

– Antonin Scalia

GOD WAS FAITHFUL. *ARE WE?*

Spring 2020 and quarantine—it was a tough time. At first, panic, fear, and the unknown. Closed at home, with no possibility of contact with others. Closed churches and no fellowship.

We are not a modern and media church. But we had to learn to reach people over the internet.

Here's what we did:

We created a group on Zoom for non-believers. Because it was a time of fear and uncertainty, our Bible study was about hope. Trained church members also attended these meetings and talked about how they deal with various problems. It worked because as of today, we meet once a week. We created a second Zoom group for believers. It functions to this day.

We couldn't go out with our scouts. But here, too, we started meeting through Zoom. Several scouts asked to be taught to read and understand the Bible. So we started teaching the Bible, to read and interpret from the Gospel of Mark.

The evangelistic project of the Street Church was suspended for a time. The authorities banned public meetings, and we could neither share the meal nor publicly proclaim the Good News. But we found a way. We prepared sandwiches and approached the homeless, fed them, and talked with them personally about the hope there is in Christ, all while keeping the social distance of two meters.

We have a family camp every year. But this year, there was no chance. The borders were closed. But God helped us, and we organized a Zoom Camp. It was a three-day conference during which the principal topic was about Hope in Christ. It was needed for many people who struggled with various concerns.

God was faithful to His Church and helped us with ideas and opportunities. It is worth relying on Him in every situation because He knows how to help.

In June, my wife Ewa had a bicycle accident and dislocated her elbow with a displacement in her right hand. To this day, she cannot straighten it or bend it. She has been struggling with pain and rehabilitation for three months. Please pray for her recovery.



Czarek Dabrowski

Czarek, Ewa, and their children (Michal, Estera, Wojtek) live and serve in Gorzow, Poland.

PART-TIME OR FULL-TIME OFFICE ADMINISTRATOR

IM Canada is searching for a person to fill the position of Office Administrator in our office in Abbotsford, BC, Canada.

This position is a minimum of four hours per day, five days per week. The office administrator will answer the phone, process mail, deposit donations, respond to inquiries, and in general, handle all the office-based paperwork, communications, and other tasks needed to serve our staff and donors. Social media and marketing skills would be helpful.

The successful applicant would either be a volunteer or need to fundraise support for their ministry. If interested, please contact our office at info@im-canada.ca



THEREFORE, MY BELOVED BRETHREN,
**BE STEADFAST, IMMOVABLE,
ALWAYS ABOUNDING** IN THE WORK
OF THE LORD, KNOWING THAT YOUR TOIL
IS NOT IN VAIN IN THE LORD

I CORINTHIANS 15:58

ALWAYS *Abounding*

Many plans were laid. Relationships were thriving. Evangelism in different forms is increasing. Pastoral training and Bible study workshops on the horizon. Discipleship meetings and Bible study. Friday night youth group. And then—Boom! Our schedule—and most everyone else’s—cleared when Covid erupted on our scene in early March. No more in-person meetings allowed. Churches closed. Schools closed. We, along with many other Christian workers, were left praying, “Lord, what next? How can we be ‘always abounding’ in our service for You when we cannot meet with people?”

As so many, we moved our meetings online where possible. With schedules cleared, we found people had more time to meet. Within a few weeks our fellowship had grown and included people in two other cities and even from another country! Our fellowship group added a mid-week meeting, where we feasted on the delights of Ephesians during the Covid quarantine. Keeping Christ front-and-center in those confusing days was key to our spiritual vitality and encouragement!

Especially meaningful was the participation in our groups of a busy friend who had become a Christian but was with little meaningful Christian fellowship because of her work schedule. Her schedule cleared, and she joined every meeting. She remained strong in her faith in the face of Covid isolation and uncertainty, in part because of our frequent meetings. So many Scriptural uses of “you” in the New Testament epistles are plural—meaning that our spiritual walks are communal besides being individual. We need each other to persevere and keep encouraged in our walks with Christ. Encouraging others to persevere through

this Covid trial has been one of the many blessings of our pandemic journey.

Pre-Covid evangelism disappeared. Instead of talking with people face-to-face, we connected with unbelievers through encouraging texts and Scriptures. We pray that our efforts through relationships, English club, English camps, and street evangelism will prove fruitful in the lives of the hearers of the Gospel in these dark and difficult days!

At the end of lockdown, as government measures relaxed, our church plant could meet in person in a park and in smaller groups in homes. What sweet fellowship we enjoyed! We would all agree that the Lord sustained us and grew us deeper with Him in this time of crisis. The Lord has taught us that “always abounding” in His service under difficult circumstances is fruitful and rewarding. He leads and uses us for His kingdom purposes as we keep in step with His Holy Spirit!



Doug and Jen Droll

The Droll family is currently in the States, but their greatest hope is to return to Romania to continue with the work of proclaiming the Gospel of Jesus Christ with their local church there.

RIVERSIDE MISSIONARY TRAINING CENTER

After a seven-year hibernation, **RIVERSIDE MISSIONARY TRAINING** God woke up RMTTC and called us back out to prepare God's people for missions. During those seven years as a staff, we had been faithfully developing Mobilizing Uganda for Missions (MUM), Pastors/Leaders Discipleship, and Church Planting Training. Now that the ministry is well established and reaching well over 150 pastors/leaders each year, we realized God is calling us back to missionary training.

On October 2, we graduated seven students, as they completed their three-month training at MUM Training Center in Jinja, Uganda. They now begin their eight-month internship assignments in different areas of Uganda. We are already beginning the second class in November, finishing in late January. Each class has only seven to eight students. We cover Old and New Testaments, Developing and Maintaining Healthy Relationships, Communication, Risk Assessment and Management in Ministry, Systematic Theology, and Bible Study Methods. A few of the classes are with instructors over Zoom. Overall, the Zoom worked very well, a few hiccups with internet and power supply, but 90% of the time, it was great.



Romans 10:15

We desire to have two classes a year. We base the essential criteria for interns on their relationship with Christ, their relationship with MUM Ministries, and they must have a good comprehension of English. After finishing their three-month training in Jinja, they will serve alongside staff for eight months in a ministry MUM is actively engaged in.

If you would like to follow the interns, please email RMTTC, and we will add you to our general updates. rmttc@gmail.com



John Pipes

John, his wife Christine, and their children live in Jinja, Uganda, where they serve with the local church to renew, train, and mobilize believers for active involvement in reaching the world for Christ.

AmazonSmile is a simple and automatic way for you to support **International Messengers** every time you shop, at no cost to you. When you shop at smile.amazon.com, you'll find the exact same low prices, vast selection, and convenient shopping experience as Amazon.com, with the added bonus that Amazon will donate a portion of the purchase price to IM.

To shop at AmazonSmile, simply go to **smile.amazon.com** from the web browser on your computer or mobile device. Use your same account and login, and on your first visit to AmazonSmile just **search for and select International Messengers as the charity you wish to donate to.**

Help bring joy this season

Buy your gifts at smile.amazon.com
or with AmazonSmile ON in the app
and Amazon donates

amazonsmile



Weddings



Piotr Suchy
Emilia Lyczba
 married on 9-9-19
 serving in England

Michelle (Mesho) Mounir
Remonda (Monda) Ramzy
 married on 5-16-20
 serving in Ukraine

Amon Nabasa
Racheal Nakami
 married on 2-8-20
 serving in Uganda

Mekha Saied
Monika Gebala
 married on 7-24-20
 serving in Egypt

Piotr Kapera
Agata Tolloczko
 married on 9-25-20 serving in Poland

2020... OUR FAITH GREW

In 2020, my family is learning to have childlike faith. In the stressful times, we can run to God; in the happy times, we can go to God because He is waiting for us to seek Him. God gave us more than we could handle this year. What a blessing because now we can look back on 2020 and see God's fingerprints all over.

Eight things out of the many God did for us are: 1) God provided money for our training at MMT. 2) God gave us a place to rent for our unexpected overstay in the USA. 3) God made a way to pay for two rental houses (one in the USA and one in Peru). 4) God gave us food on the days we needed it most. 5) God blessed us with money to save Manuel's dad's house from getting taken by the bank. 6) God provided 80% of the funds we needed for construction at our kids' center. 7) God gave us a van when we needed to travel. 8) God blessed us with money to feed over 200 families in Peru.

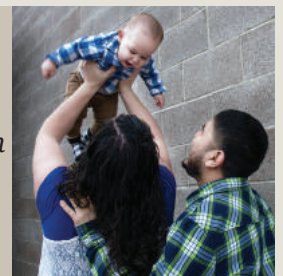


Only God gives peace in the middle of the storm. No matter what the future holds, we know who holds the future.

Hannah Baxter da Garcia



Hannah,
 her husband
 Manuel, and son
 Daniel live and
 serve in Peru.
 One of their
 greatest hopes



is that they would glorify God in all they do and that the kids they work with will grow deeper in their walk with God every day.



The past year was full of unpredictable and sometimes rather unpleasant events, but God helped us through everything. I have been blessed with a wonderful husband, and both of us received the gift of a baby. So far, the pregnancy is going well. We are enjoying our married life. We've been married for a year now.

Ministry is going on... the kindergarten is moving into a new apartment, which was a kindergarten before. It needs a new wall painting and some other repair work, but we think we can open again at the beginning of October. The parents keep asking, "When can we send our kids again?" We definitely need God's protection from the virus for all those involved in the kindergarten project!

There's one little guy who comes from an uneducated background. His parents can't read or write. When he first came to us, his speaking

capacity was very limited. But then things improved. He can speak much better now, and he has also learned to behave well. His parents are grateful for this, and so are we.

Our Sunday school started an online competition. We just finished the Book of Mark. Now we dive into Ruth and Esther. The kids love it! They show a lot of interest, and we get positive feedback every day. Over 30 kids are taking part in this program. A quiz, games, and crafts are included. We feel very encouraged to carry on.



Randa Karam

Randa & Steven live in Egypt, where they share the Gospel and work through social media and discipleship groups at the church, kids' ministry at the kindergarten, and the local church with Sunday School.

What have I learned through 2020?

My second year with IM will close at the end of December... and very little of it has been as I expected it to be.

With just continuing to learn the new normals of my duties in the Home Office and Staff Care joys... add to that, writing prayer letters more consistently, raising support, camp preparation, training, ever-changing list of responsibilities, learning new software—and then CV19 hits, causing many of these new normals (that I am still learning) to be set aside.

If you are still reading this, I am not saying anything new you are not experiencing yourself. The only certainty we have is clinging to God! He is faithful every day to walk us through the uncertainties. He is our anchor! He is the one we can depend on that will not change! None of this is a surprise to Him! He promises to meet every one of our needs! Jesus has left HIS Comforter here for us until He returns! He will give us His peace!

Our Lord continues to help me see the need to humble myself and ask for help. As I accept that I can't juggle 13 balls in this season; I can send out a few emails of encouragement, I can be in His life-giving Word every day, I can pray as He lays someone on my heart. I am so very blessed with my conversations with Him.

II Corinthians 1:3-4 "Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ,
the Father of mercies and God of all comfort,
*who comforts us in all our affliction,
so that we may be able to comfort those who are in any affliction,
with the comfort with which we ourselves are comforted by God."*

1 Thessalonians 4:18 "Therefore encourage one another with these words."

As I read over these passages and pray for understanding from the Lord, He shows me again, it is about The Gospel, sharing what our Christ has given for us, and the command to pass on that hope. My prayer for all of us is to be brave, be all-in, share with great urgency the HOPE we have in Him with those He brings into our lives.



Bonnie Kossow

Bonnie moved to Iowa from North Dakota nearly two years ago to serve full-time in Administration, Staff Care, and short-term camp participant in the IM Home Office. When Bonnie isn't in the office, she volunteers at church as a youth sponsor and FaceTimes with her six grandkids. ❤️ ❤️ ❤️

Important information about FACEBOOK FUNDRAISERS

Facebook has become a popular way for people to raise money for their favorite charity. These fundraisers are also a great way to raise money for the IM ministry you would like to support or to raise money for an upcoming short-term trip you are participating in. If you decide to run a fundraiser on your Facebook account, be sure to contact us with the following information, so the money received is credited to the correct account here at IM.



- The dates the fundraiser was "active."
- The amount Facebook said you raised.
- The preferred designation for the money raised.

Please email this information to: nicki@im-usa.org

QUESTIONS? CALL OUR ACCOUNTING DEPT. 641-357-6700

MEDIA MINISTRY

The pandemic hit our country heavily. Egypt was not prepared when the first wave swept over our big nation. Many have died since then. But our life and ministry went on. I praise the Lord for my marriage with Randa. We joyfully just finished our first year together. When the doctor told us that she is pregnant, we knew once again how much God, in His wisdom, put us together to do His will.

My Media Ministry is steadily growing. The IM Media Center in Alexandria is where we use media courses to reach out to the young generation. The new media on the web have a strong and unbroken appeal to young people, and there is where we feel called to meet them with the Gospel.

This year we had our first small Media Camp. We saw with our own eyes how much that affected young lives. We had already worked in the media center with most of the campers. The camp had a more discipling character. Today their ministry among others, shows how powerful systematic discipleship training can be.

Philemon is a new member of the team. He is the youngest among us, a good interface designer, and a new believer. This was his first camp with the media team. After the second day, he joined our group games and opened his heart. Later he



told me: “This is the first time that I feel I’m in a real family. Here I can speak out without fear or shyness.” On the last day, he added: “It was an amazing time, studying the Bible and praying together, I don’t want to stop that!” He really didn’t drop the whole thing, but started sharing the Gospel with many non-believers.

Being the leader of the teen meetings in our local church gives me even more access to the age group that I am working with.

Many doors have been opening, and I count the days until our Media Center will be too small, and we have to move into a bigger facility.



Steven Naseem

Steven & Randa live in Egypt, where they share the Gospel and work through social media and discipleship groups at the church, kids' ministry at the kindergarten, and the local church with Sunday School.

OPPORTUNITY!

Not Opportunity Lost

Our expectations for 2020 began on a high note! Early this year, we were looking forward to having more teams this year than ever before, but one after another canceled as travel bans and shutdowns became the norm because of worldwide mandates and closures.

Our Romanian foundation, River of Life, is a licensed and accredited provider of social services, helping needy pregnant women to keep their babies and children, and not abort or abandon them. We normally have about 30 residents living here. We are considered an essential service by the government, so we never shut down this year but had to jump through every hoop that the Romanian government and European Union required in each stage of alert or emergency they declared us to be under at any given time.

But during all the uncertainty and challenges we were facing every day—one very important truth emerged: God is still God—and He is still working!! Although much was different this year than we expected, and it seemed like a lot of our opportunities were lost—we realized—that's okay because NOTHING can stop God's plans from being carried out! We just need to reevaluate how to join the Lord in the work He is doing.

For me personally, the opportunity to join the Lord in His work has meant a season of fasting and prayer. But I have to admit I'm not a good faster, or intercessory prayer. My mind wanders, and I would get headaches when I didn't eat. But I felt called; I felt compelled. Even so, I'm ashamed at how easily my noble conviction caved in to my desire for a snack!

Despite my weaknesses, this season of prayer and fasting has shown me much. At times I have been humbled and convicted. My prayers

became less of a shopping list of things I wanted God to do. Something changed. I got on board with His agenda. I felt like I was truly joining the Lord in His work. Praying and proclaiming His Truth, until He comes, our opportunities to join Jesus in His work that I refuse to give up, especially in times like these!



Roberta Moore

Roberta and Doug Moore are the founders of River of Life (ROL) ministries. One of their greatest hopes in ministry is that more people will come alongside them in the work of this ministry, in a deeply committed way—so that God's plans and purposes will be materialized and that He will be honored and glorified in the process!

“ SHORT-TERMER COMMENT: “Serving on short-term trips truly conditions you for sharing the Gospel at home. I have become better equipped at seeking out the lost, as well as sharing the Good News with them because of the “on-the-job-training” you get on IM trips.” **”**

LOVE IS A PRECIOUS RESOURCE

Youth ministry requires a lot of energy and creativity to get them participating and involved in growth and yield towards the Gospel. I have been graced with an understanding of the game of soccer, having grown up with a strong desire for sports. I could have introduced them to baseball, but they have teams to play against. Or I could have introduced them to basketball, but I have little knowledge of the sport. So soccer is what most of the people in Uganda understand and love so much. It is a grassroots sport, and our Good News needs to reach the grassroots. I started a soccer ministry called New Hope Football Club. So far we reach out to 70 youth in this community and about 40 families where they come from. Some of them have accepted the Gospel, and others we continue to trust in God for their salvation.

One Sunday evening, as we were getting ready for a soccer match, I spoke some motivational words to the players, and after my speech one of them said these words to me.

“You like to brag too much.”

My mind instantly pondered this statement used by one of the youths that I minister to. It reached to my bone marrow and the deepest part of my heart.



God has and is still using it to drive me into His Word. I looked at him and said I am sorry because love is not boastful. Love is patient with everyone. I was just not patient with them. I wanted them to grasp what I taught and didn't think about how they are trying hard to learn.

The Spirit brought these verses to mind, “Love never fails because it never gives up.” God is transforming the boys and me.

I have started this daily training fellowship as we play soccer, sharing God's Word, and praying for each other's needs and salvation for our families. It is my prayer to see people with an understanding of Gospel-oriented sportsmanship come down to minister to these souls.

This love of the Father has also enabled me to stay and love-on the kids in the Gulu Centre for Christian Missions Home of Hope. It is a blessing to see their smiles each morning.



Henry Akugizibwe

Henry serves in Gulu, Uganda, where his ministries include construction, youth evangelism, child care, evangelism, farming ministry, and men's Bible study fellowships.

LANGUAGE MINISTRY خدمة اللغات

During this past year, God blessed me with a ministry that I never planned or imagined. Actually, the story began already when I was in middle school. By then, I had given much time to study English. I didn't know that God would use this much later in life. Now He has.

This year God put on my heart to help the interns of the Desertsides Training Center with English. I started an online English school, teaching two days a week. I also have American friends who help by doing regular online conversation times with them to apply what they learn with me. Shortly after that, I added a translation training program for them. The goal of the school is to train the students to translate for North Americans at IM camps. Georgina didn't speak English when she began her training with IM. Now she can communicate with Americans. I believe that one day she will be a good translator and she might even teach others. Remonda always had the desire to serve as a translator. She began this training, and now she is one of our new generation translators. Remonda can translate precisely and accurately, even American idioms.

God blessed me this year with another online ministry. One of my friends in the States asked me to teach her Arabic. This was a fresh experience for me. I took a big step of faith, and God helped tremendously. The group steadily grew, and we now have four students. It's a challenge to teach people who come from a different culture. Arabic, for Americans, looks funny at times. One student said: "There are sounds I thought never existed." Now they can do some small talk in Arabic. The goal is to equip Americans to master certain language skills in Arabic here in the Middle East. For the sake of the Gospel, we walk together through the difficult, cross-cultural territory. One of these students wants to help Syrian refugees in Europe. This class is her chance to learn the heart-language of those refugees. I'm so thankful that God gave me this language ministry.



Suzi Mamdouh

Suzi was part of our 2015-16 class at the Desertsides Training Center. She hopes to see the interns to whom she teaches English become translators in the upcoming year.

TECHNOLOGY GRATITUDE

As we traveled 40 hours to return home from Nepal, on January 30, the WHO declared a state of emergency of international concern because of Covid-19. We are increasingly grateful for the technology that allows us to stay connected in real-time despite the world travel restrictions. Almost weekly phone/video chats offer two-way encouragement and we are deeply encouraged and challenged to live selflessly following the example of our Christian friends in Nepal.

International Messengers Canada Society (IMCS) has an agency agreement with SDC/SDSS (Beautiful Gate Church and NGO) to guide working together effectively for God's Glory. Their expertise in healthcare allowed them to pivot when asked to help their ward and other municipalities with training and management of case tracking for government records, also, with contact tracing and training ambulance drivers, hospital workers and government administrators. They have served effectively by providing training,

providing a workforce to sanitize isolation units, providing PPE and shields for front-line workers, and humbly acknowledging their Christian identity. They have pivoted to use their skills and resources to share with all.

And we are privileged to take part because God gave us the gift of relationship one short mission trip back in 2016 and grew it with trips in 2018 and 2020. Using the gifts and experience God has given Bruce and me has morphed into meaningful coaching and encouragement to tackle practical ways that SDC/SDSS does their work and declares God's love and identity in a country where it is illegal to proselytize. Love is the language of service and connection.

~by Verna & Bruce Ratzlaff



An ambulance ready to receive patients

GOD DIDN'T STOP WORKING

A pregnant, hormonal orphan teenager quarantined during a world-wide pandemic... this is who I spent the entire two-month lockdown in Romania with, and I wouldn't have traded it for the world.

While lockdowns prevented any volunteers from physically entering the orphanage, 15 kids and I exchanged daily verses and messages, one girl asking to do an online Bible study... but more than that I had a one-on-one opportunity right at home. Re-welcoming this young girl in my apartment, we had daily devotionals, prayed together, celebrated a quiet Easter, and she surrendered her heart to the Lord!

The two of us also tried to maintain contact with the orphans, including her three younger brothers, who we were eagerly praying for. Video calls and messenger helped us stay connected and deepen relationships.

One day, it was a surprise to receive a call from the director of the orphanage wanting to help place those three younger brothers permanently in my care! Apparently, not all work halted in Romania (or in the heavenly realm). I gladly rejoiced at the opportunity, and I am moving forward in this path as they seek to have all kids placed in homes by the end of 2020.

As soon as lockdowns ended, these kids flooded my apartment (within regulations), and it was such a blessing to see that God did not close the door when the government did. Each of these kids is precious and pursuing a persistent relationship with them is a way in how God worked through me and in me to remind us all of his never-ending love and long-suffering through every trial.

Currently, I am looking to buy a home so I can take these younger kids in permanent placement and would love you to partner with me on this journey! If you would like to contribute financially visit: www.internationalmessengers.org/give and designate ZRA-Ray of Hope Project House.



Alissa Foreman

Alissa's primary focus is orphan ministry in Oradea, Romania. She hopes that God will speak the truth of the Gospel through her, with grace, that many orphans will find their true identity as a child of God.



The power of the Gospel is authenticated by what believers are willing to suffer for it. If we refuse to suffer for the Gospel, it confirms what the world already thinks!

It is nearly always in the context of kingdom-related risk that our knowledge about the Bible brings growth in us, changing us towards the image of Jesus.

BEING CALLED TO SERVE

How I left my job to pursue God's calling.

God's calling is powerful and influential. The year 2020 has been quite a year in my walk with the Lord.

Before the end of 2019, I had worked as Deputy Principal in a High school in Uganda for 12 years. And with that position came prestige, respect, and financial security. Everything was looking good in terms of my career goals. However, I realized that not one of those goals is what God had planned for me, and instead, it was clear that God wanted me to quit that job! I felt lost! I asked God, "How will I take care of my family financially? What is the future going to look like?"

And the Lord reminded me in James 4:13-15; it says, "Come now, you who say, 'Today or tomorrow we will go into such and such a town and spend a year there and trade and make a profit.' Yet you do not know what tomorrow will bring. What is your life? For you are a mist that appears for a little time and then vanishes. Instead, you ought to say, 'If the Lord wills, we will live and do this or that.'"

I allowed myself to become closer to God and started listening to where I was being called to serve. Our children's ministry for the South Sudanese parentless children from the refugee camps needed my time, and it became difficult

to continue with my full-time job and also serve these children effectively.

After going through our family financial situation with my wife Beatrice, we had to make this hard decision to step out in faith without fear, and I decided to quit my job even when my job was the only major source of income for the family!

It's been nine months since we stepped out in faith, and God has been with us every single day! God has been providing for our family needs, and watching these children grow in the Lord. This has given us the joy that no job or money will ever give! We have been able to attend a three-month training course in missions this year at the Riverside Missionary Training Center here in Uganda despite the Covid-19 Pandemic.

This training has been a huge blessing! Now, we are looking forward to sharing the Gospel to the lost world! Our God Reigns!!



James Ekanya

James and Beatrice live in Gulu, Uganda. Their greatest hopes are to reach out to many more people for Jesus, that the ministry will continue to grow, and that they are able to support more parentless children from South Sudan.

- ☐ I/we would like more information about IM's ministries planned in 2021.
- ☐ Please send an application for short-term / long-term (circle one) involvement.
- ☐ I am an alumnus and would like to return to the following camp in 2021:



PO Box 618
Clear Lake, IA 50428-0618

In Canada
PO Box 11022, 1945 McCallum Rd
Abbotsford, BC V2S 0E4
CANADA

- ☐ Please send more information about IM's automatic donation program.
- ☐ I would like to financially support _____ \$_____ per month / quarter / year
- ☐ I am interested in receiving my receipts by e-mail.
- ☐ Please do not send this annual International Messengers newsletter (continue to send individual missionary prayer letters).
- ☐ Please remove me from all newsletter and prayer letter lists.

Comments: _____

Name: _____ Phone: (____) _____

Address: _____

City: _____ State _____ Zip: _____

E-mail: _____

Please cut along the dotted lines and mail to IM at the address above.



Christmas Gift Alternatives from the IM Family

It's often hard to buy Christmas gifts for people within our family and friends. Normally we purchase gifts assuming they may be returned or short-lived, and sometimes we're even afraid that we are just adding "stuff" in their lives that will only clutter. We'd like to offer some Christmas gift alternatives with more of an eternal twist to them. If you choose to donate to one or more of these areas, we will send you a link to download and print a card to give to the recipient indicating that you have given a Christmas gift on their behalf to help with one or more of these ministry needs.

YES, I would like to give:

- ☐ A hot meal for the homeless in Radom, Poland (\$10) Amount for hot meals \$ _____
- ☐ Scholarship to enable a young person in the Middle East to attend an Evangelistic English Camp where they will hear the Gospel (\$100) Amount for camp scholarship \$ _____
- ☐ School fees/supplies for needy children at River of Life Care Home in Romania (\$25) Amount for school fees and supplies \$ _____
- ☐ Tuition for one school-term for orphans in Gulu, Uganda (\$50) Amount for tuition for orphans in Uganda \$ _____
- ☐ Scholarships (\$50 each) to help HIV-infected children and families attend a Joshua Project camp next summer in Romania Amount for Joshua Project scholarships \$ _____
- ☐ Food and medical aid for families in Beirut impacted by the mess there from the government collapse, hyper-inflation and devastation caused by the explosion in August. (\$30) Amount for Beirut food & medical \$ _____

Name _____

Total Amount of Donation: \$ _____

Address _____

Phone _____

City, State, Zip _____

Email _____

Return this form along with your tax-deductible check made payable to INTERNATIONAL MESSENGERS and send to: PO Box 618, Clear Lake, IA 50428.

To give online, visit:

<https://internationalmessengers.onlinegiving.org/donate/form/771#/>



Ph: 641-357-6700
Fax: 641-357-6791

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Enhancing Trust

Career Ministry Summary

China, Cyprus, Czech Republic, Egypt, England, France, Greece, Hungary, Kazakhstan, Lebanon, Native American, First Nations Reservations, Mexico, Nepal, Netherlands, Peru, Poland, Romania, Russia, Slovakia, South Africa, Spain, Syria, Tajikistan, Turkey, Uganda, Ukraine, Uzbekistan, and the U.S. working to share the Gospel through the ministries listed below.

- ❖ Adult evangelism through Bible study and discipleship
- ❖ Children-at-risk ministry
- ❖ Christian schools
- ❖ Evangelism through English teaching
- ❖ Jail ministry
- ❖ Marriage/parenting outreach
- ❖ Medical ministry
- ❖ Men's discipleship ministry
- ❖ Ministry to abused women and their children
- ❖ Ministry to people with HIV
- ❖ Ministry to the elderly
- ❖ Ministry to the homeless/addicts
- ❖ Missionary Training Centers in the US, Middle East, Uganda, and Ukraine
- ❖ Motorcycle club evangelism
- ❖ Native American ministry
- ❖ Outreach to businessmen
- ❖ Outreach to sex-trafficked, abused women
- ❖ Pastoral training
- ❖ Planting, pastoring churches
- ❖ Purity ministry
- ❖ Refugee ministry
- ❖ Roma ministry
- ❖ Therapy using dogs and horses
- ❖ University student outreach
- ❖ Youth Ministry



www.im-usa.org

International Messengers

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www.im-canada.ca

International Messengers Canada Society

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*Discipling the local church through training and sending
Calling the local church to **Ministry as a Way of Life***