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INTERNATIONAL

Vol 64 | Issue 3 | 2016

# MESSAGE

CANDIDATE CLASS  
2016



## Staying Faithful to the Call

As 2016 comes to a close, we are prompted to reflect upon a year when we leaned heavily on the strong arm of our Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ. Over ABWE's 89 years, there has never been a time we have not looked to Him for our safe passage, but there are seasons when the storms of adversity are more intense.

While this past year has been filled with transition and challenges, the favor of God has been remarkable to observe. The stories of lives being transformed, churches being started, and national partners launching cross-cultural ministries remind us of what ABWE is all about. It also reminds us of how thankful we are for the courage and faithfulness of our missionaries who allow us to participate in the Great Commission.

Every year we have the amazing privilege of watching ordinary men and women of faith take the extraordinary step of surrendering their lives to God's call to missions. Their passion and their stories revive our own passion to stay faithful to the unique tasks that God has called us to, as we strive to serve our missionaries well.

As you read about our new missionaries and we look ahead to the new year, I pray that God will give you renewed vision and strength. I pray that He will show you how He is calling you to be a part of His Great Commission — whether that is by supporting those who are called to go or by joining them.

Merry Christmas and may God bless you and your family in the new year.

**Al Cockrell** | *Interim President*

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### WHO IS THE ASSOCIATION OF BAPTISTS FOR WORLD EVANGELISM (ABWE)?

ABWE was founded in 1927 as an independent Baptist mission. We are dedicated to fulfilling the Great Commission by multiplying leaders, churches, and missions movements among every people. Currently, more than 900 ABWE missionaries are working to advance God's work in more than 70 countries by sharing the story of hope, building communities of faith, and serving the world with love.

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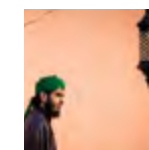
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### 2016 Candidate Class

Meet ABWE's newest missionaries and read how God called them to their mission field



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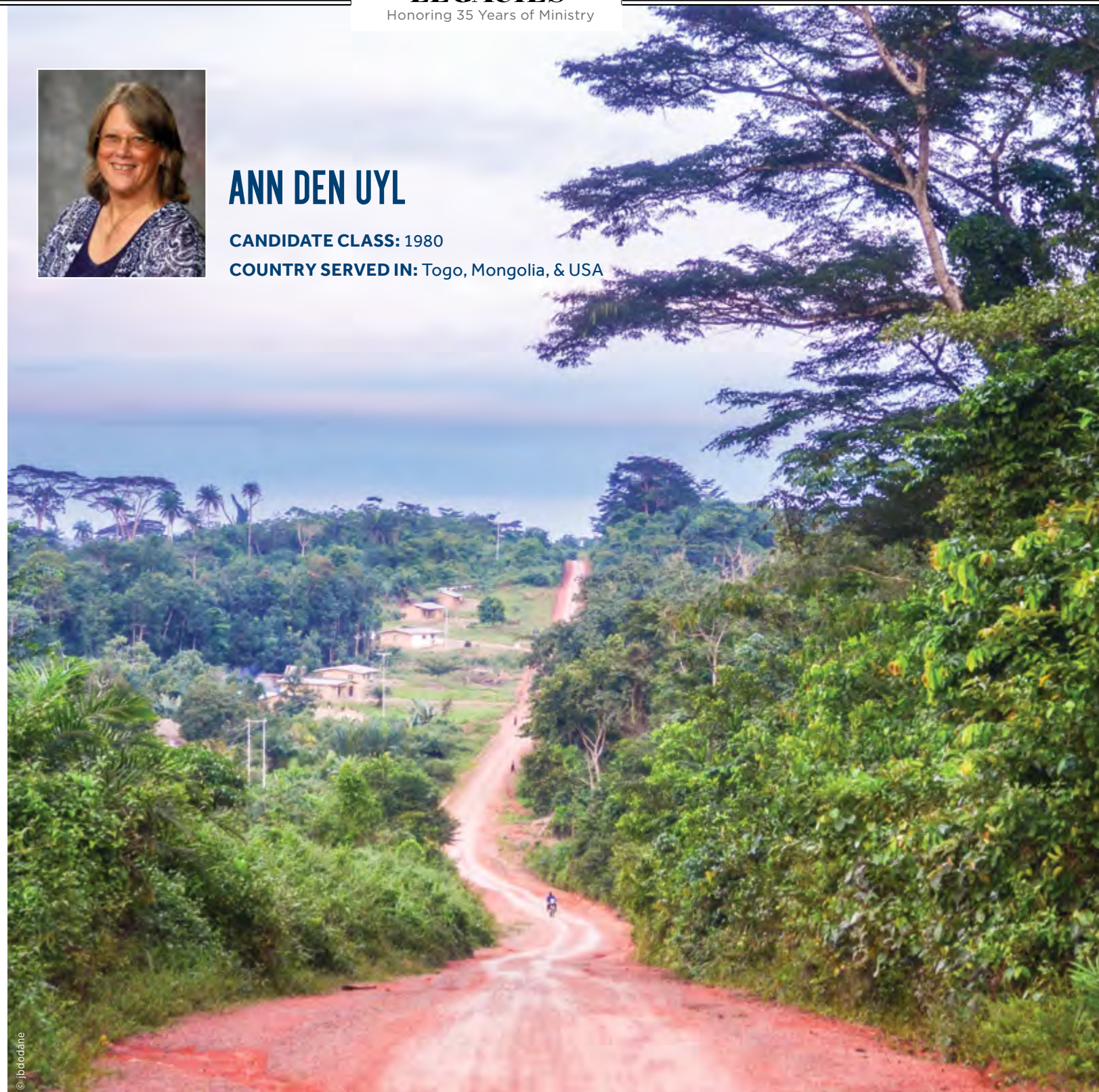
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## ANN DEN UYL

**CANDIDATE CLASS:** 1980

**COUNTRY SERVED IN:** Togo, Mongolia, & USA



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### AN INTERVIEW WITH ANN DEN UYL

**Q: How did God first call you to missions?**

**A:** As a university student, I began to learn what a Christian truly is, and as I sought God and took steps of obedience, God changed my priorities and desires.

God used His call for harvesters — particularly His calls to Samuel and Isaiah — to impel me to ask what He wanted of me. I could not get away from those verses. Day and night they resounded in my mind and heart. So when a very special woman in my church asked me if I'd ever considered being a missionary, it was not long before I knelt before the Lord with wonder, anticipation, and trepidation, and said, "Yes!"

**Q: How did God call you to Togo?**

**A:** I had no idea how God would lead me as I was burdened for so many people and saw need everywhere. I sought the Lord in His word, and I studied the lives of people of whom we have some detail — Joseph, Moses, Daniel, and Paul — and I saw a pattern: God used their personality, family, education, and experiences to prepare them for a particular place, people, or ministry. I asked God to show me how He had prepared me.

Still seeking that answer, I went to Jordan in 1979 as a missionary

apprentice. While there I learned a great deal and God solidified three main criteria for choosing a field of service, even though Jordan was not that place. When I returned home, I turned to a pastor for guidance, and he encouraged me to contact Dave and Kathy Clutts who were on pre-field for Togo. I hadn't thought that Africa would be the continent, but after meeting with the Clutts, it was clear that God was leading me to Togo.

**Q: What is your favorite memory from your time as a missionary?**

**A:** Teaching a ladies' Bible class under a tree in the town of Adeta on Tuesday afternoons is one of my favorites. I had the tremendous and humbling joy of watching God take His word and apply it to their lives in ways I never would have imagined. Often their eyes would open wide in epiphany, or sometimes a woman would suddenly stand and break out in a dance of joy for what God had shown her. When that happened, we would stop, pray, praise, and rejoice together before going on to study more. There is now a church in that town born partly out of that class.

**Q: What moment had the biggest impact on your ministry?**

**A:** Before I even knew Togo existed, I was exposed to a negative situation through an acquaintance where I learned the value of humbleness in mission work and in ministry. I saw the subtle danger of thinking yourself superior simply because you are American or may have more education. I also saw the value of learning to enjoy the culture in order to build relationships in their context and not in your own — this included the great importance of language learning. Without a common language, we miss out on the shared laughter, the confidences, and the ability to have someone share their heart in their own language.

**Q: What advice would you give to new missionaries just starting out or those considering missions?**

**A:** First, be sure of the calling and direction of God. That will help you to stay the course. Next, know that God is sufficient. God gives us others, but there may be difficulties and confusion and times when you will stand alone. He is sufficient! ■

**LEARNHOW** you can start building your own legacy of faithfulness | [www.abwe.org/go](http://www.abwe.org/go)



**1984**

Arrived in Togo, began Ewe study, and worked with the Kpodji church



**1989**

Began working with the Kpele Tsiko church



Assisted in the Akata Dzogbe and Amou Oblo churches



**1999**

Graduation of first nursing class



**2004**

Began working with all nations at the University of Iowa with Campus Bible Fellowship



Began working with the Dzogbe Kpime church and grand opening of ABWE's L'Hôpital Baptiste Biblique  
**1985**



Started teaching Adeta Bible study  
**1994**



Began a nursing school at the L'Hôpital Baptiste Biblique  
**1997**



Moved from Togo to Mongolia  
**2001**



2016

# CANDIDATE CLASS

Meet ABWE's Newest Missionaries



## FEATURED MINISTRY

### HOPE FOR THE FUTURE

**Beni was born into a Togolese Muslim family that believed they knew God. As a boy, Beni prayed regularly, memorized and recited verses from the Koran, and tried to heed the rules of Islam. But to him, it was all just rituals. He understood nothing.**

**“We were required to memorize what we did not understand,” Beni said. “I lived a life of fear without hope and I did not know where I was going after I died. I wore an amulet against evil spirits. It was a life in darkness — without forgiveness or love.”**

Then, one day, Beni asked his Islamic leader a profound question, “What assurance do we have of life after death?”

“I do not know,” the leader replied.

Concerned by that answer, Beni started asking questions about his faith. Then, one day, a neighbor who worked at ABWE’s nearby hospital told Beni about the assurance of salvation and the promise of eternal life through Jesus Christ. Despite his parent’s disappointment and the risk of persecution, Beni asked the man to teach him more about Jesus and His sacrifice on the cross. He did and soon he invited



Beni to come to his church.

On Beni’s first Sunday in a church, the pastor preached from John 14, and Beni heard that Jesus was the way, the truth, and the life. He learned that Jesus is the only way that leads to God.

“I couldn’t wait to raise my hand to express my desire to have Jesus in my life,” Beni said. “From that moment on, my life was changed and is now filled with so much hope. I no longer live in doubt. I live with the expectation of my Savior from heaven.”

Although Beni had hope in his future with Jesus, he had very little hope for a future career. Opportunities in Togo are very limited, and after high school, Beni began selling phone cards in the market to earn about \$10 a month — with no real hope for building a good life for himself.

However, after meeting an ABWE missionary at church, Beni was connected with a job at ABWE’s hospital. It was through this work that he learned about the ABWE’s Nursing Education Program which provides classroom education, hands-on training, spiritual discipleship, and a good job upon graduation.

“Opportunity for advancement is rare in Togo, but the program guarantees that if students work hard and study hard, they will have a good job and an opportunity to serve God,” said ABWE missionary Annette Williams, who serves as a nurse educator and the

director of ABWE’s hospital in southern Togo.

Beni was accepted into the program, and he was able to provide for his family during the three-years of intense training because he was sponsored through ABWE’s Adopt-A-Student-Nurse Program. The adoption program covered all of Beni’s school supplies, gave him a stipend that allowed him to study and train full-time, and provided him with regular prayer from his sponsors — a husband and wife from California.

Today, Beni is working alongside other program graduates who are all using their nursing education to meet the physical and spiritual needs of thousands of patients who come each year to ABWE’s two hospitals in Togo.

“Our hospitals allow us to share the gospel with every patient and person who walks through our doors. And we could not do what we do without the nurses from this program,” said Annette Williams, ABWE missionary nurse and educator. ■

**LEARNHOW** you can sponsor Togolese student nurses, like Beni:

- **READ** page 4 in the enclosed giving catalog
- **GO** to [www.abwe.org/givejoy](http://www.abwe.org/givejoy)

K. Michael Cole | Togo

www.NurseMikeCole.com

Point Baptist Church, Pensacola, FL



Michael was raised by medical missionary parents serving in the Philippines, and when it came time for college at Cedarville University, he followed in their footsteps by choosing cross-cultural nursing as his major. However, Michael's vision shifted when he met a Navy recruiter.

"I realized it was a cool opportunity to do nursing anywhere in the world," he said.

After graduating from Cedarville, Michael served for nearly 10 years in the US Navy Nurse Corps. But when his term of service was concluding in 2013, Michael found himself wondering what he wanted to do next — and sensed the Lord leading him into missions.

**"I felt the Lord saying, 'You have no job. You have no family ties. Why not missions?'" said Michael. "There was nothing making me go to a certain area, so I was wide open."**

Michael contacted ABWE to find out about missionary nurse opportunities and learned about a new hospital being built in northern Togo, West Africa. The Hospital of Hope was to open within a year and it needed nurses. Michael knew he had found the opportunity he was looking for.

Shortly after being discharged from the Navy, he went to Africa and spent 16 months working as a nurse supervisor — where he met fellow nurse missionary, and his future wife, Anna Doenier.

The couple plans on returning to the Hospital of Hope, where Anna will continue to serve as a nurse involved with community health evangelism and mobile health clinics, and Michael will serve as a nurse educator to help train the new class of Togolese nurses enrolled in ABWE's Nurse Training Program.

"Many of our patients and coworkers have never even heard of Jesus," Michael said. "We want to use nursing as a platform to build relationships with the Togolese, lead them to the Lord, and disciple them."

Steve &amp; Bethany Chmil | Togo

www.MedicalEvangelismWorldwide.org

Grace Bible Fellowship, Harrisburg, PA



As a child, Bethany befriended a Cambodian refugee in her Sunday school class. One day, her church had a missions display that highlighted the missionaries they were praying for or supporting, and Bethany watched as her Cambodian friend reviewed each missionary.

"There's no one going to Cambodia," her friend said with a disheartened face. "Who is going to tell the people in my country?"

That question put a deep burden on Bethany's heart for missions, and during her sophomore year of high school, she went to a youth rally that was focused on medical missions. God used that rally to call Bethany, and that day she committed her life to medical missions.

Unbeknownst to Bethany, her future husband Steve made that same commitment at the same rally.

Years later, as Bethany was pursuing her undergraduate degree and Steve was studying to become a doctor, they began dating. Their common passion for medical missions brought them closer and soon they wed.

"We love medical missions because it follows the example of Jesus — using physical compassion to reach people with spiritual needs," said Bethany.

In preparation to heed God's call to medical missions in Togo, Steve finished his seminary degree and is now gaining experience in a surgical practice.

"We chose Togo for the same reasons we chose ABWE — because of the balance between church planting and medicine," said Steve.

Shawn &amp; Rebecca Hill | Togo

www.HillsInAfrica.weebly.com

Aurora Free Church, Niagara, WI



Brought together at a summer Bible camp, Shawn and Rebecca have always had a heart for missions. Rebecca went on a missions cruise when she was 10 where she and her family evangelized outside the standard tourists spots by putting on puppet shows for street kids and working in

orphanages. She saw hunger, thirst, and disabilities for the first time in her young life.

"That experience changed my life and worldview," said Rebecca. "It gave me a heart for other people and other places."

While pursuing a mechanical engineering degree in college, Shawn went on a missions trip to Mexico that gave him a heart for other nationalities. When he returned, he started spending a lot of time with the international students at his university, and slowly, Shawn felt God leading him to missions.

Together, Shawn and Rebecca talked about missions constantly, but they were unsure how God was calling them. They decided to come to ABWE's 24-Hour DEMO event that helps people interested in missions see what missionary life is all about and explore opportunities around the world.

"If you're at all interested in missions, you should go to the 24-Hour DEMO," said Rebecca. "It was an amazing experience."

During their time at ABWE, they felt God calling them to full-time missions in Africa. The Hills are hoping to use Shawn's experience in mechanical engineering, as well as their combined experience with youth ministry, to help with church planting, evangelism, and discipleship.

"We feel a burden to fight for the gospel in the contested zone of Africa and to reach the unreached in Togo," said Rebecca.

Samuel &amp; Lauren Lunsford | Togo

Petsworth Baptist Church, Gloucester, VA



When Samuel was 24, he went on a short-term missions trip to help do accounting at ABWE's hospital in southern Togo, West Africa. The trip was only supposed to be 12-weeks long, but Samuel ended up staying for 12 months.

"I loved the Togolese people. I loved the work that was happening there," said Samuel. "That's where I really got my call for missions."

It was also where Samuel met Lauren, a Liberty University nursing student who was also serving as a short-term missionary at the hospital.

Lauren had always loved the Lord, but she never felt called to devote herself to ministry or missions. However, that changed when she went to Liberty University and heard heartbreaking stories from missionaries all over the world.

**"I decided I couldn't stay in America and live**

**life for myself," she said. "There is just too great a need, both physical and spiritual."**

Once Samuel and Lauren returned from Togo, the two began dating and eventually began pursuing missions as a married couple. The couple went on short-term missions trips to Congo and Jordan, but always felt called back to Togo. They returned to Togo for a two-year short-term trip to serve at ABWE's school for the blind, The Village of Light, and felt God confirming their call to long-term missions. They are open and eager to fulfill any need on any mission field where the Lord leads them.

Lindsey Kepiro | Togo

Christian Fellowship Church,  
New Holland, PA

Lindsey always had a heart for missions, and when she discovered she also had a heart for healthcare, she knew somehow God would weave them together.

During a short-term missions trip to Ukraine, her eyes were opened to the need for compassionate, Christian healthcare. But it was a trip with Cedarville's cross-cultural nursing team to ABWE's hospital in southern Togo that opened her eyes to all that medical missions could do.

"I was just blown away at how taking care of someone's physical needs instantly gives you the opportunity to talk to them about spiritual things," Lindsey said. "It was so cool to see how those things could tie together."

After graduation, Lindsey found a job in a hospital's neonatal intensive care unit and eventually saved up enough vacation time to take a two-week trip to serve in ABWE's new hospital in northern Togo. But to her surprise, when she reached out to the hospital's chief-of-staff about coming for two weeks, he asked if she could come for two years instead.

Then, her mom asked her a thought-provoking question, "Lindsey, what's going to happen in your life in the next two years that will be so life-altering that you'd be glad you didn't go to Togo?" Lindsey couldn't shake that question, and when she finally made it to Togo, she couldn't see herself doing anything else.

Lindsey looks forward to establishing a neonatal follow-up care system, where hospital staff will check up with premature babies in their villages after they've returned home. This additional care will not only ensure the health

of the babies, but also provide an opportunity to introduce the gospel into their home villages.

“If you’re showing them that you care enough about their baby to come make sure they are doing well, it’s a great opportunity to explain why you care so much,” she said. “I care about their children, but I care about their eternal lives so much more.”

Megan Mackenzie | Togo

[www.facebook.com/TeachingInTogo/](https://www.facebook.com/TeachingInTogo/)  
Whitney Baptist Church, Boise, ID



Megan grew up in a missions-minded church where she often heard about the need around the world, but she experienced it firsthand through missions trips with her youth group.

“Missions started for me when I started seeing places beyond Idaho,” said Megan.

Her worldview continued to grow in college as she went on international missions trips, and after she graduated with a teaching degree and taught for several years, God connected her with a family that was heading to Togo. They had come to speak at her church and Megan opened up her home to them. During their stay, they shared the great need for MK teachers on the mission field, and it planted a seed in Megan’s heart.

After much prayer, she signed up to teach MKs in northern Togo for two years. At first, it was hard, but slowly God reshaped and opened her up to full-time missions.

Megan’s heart broke when it was time to go home, but she planned to stay in Idaho for a year before making any decisions about returning to Togo. That resolve only lasted two weeks.

She felt God calling her back, and two weeks after returning home, she began the process of becoming a long-term missionary to Togo.

“What I do is a background support role for the big work that’s being done in Togo, but it’s exciting to know I have a hand in bringing Christ to people thirsty for salvation,” said Megan. “I want to aid that work in any way I can.”

Hannah Strayer | Africa

[www.HStrayerMedia.org](http://www.HStrayerMedia.org)

New Life Church, New Cumberland, PA



Through several missions trips and listening to missionaries who visited her church growing up, Hannah felt God calling her to be a light in the dark places. But as she got older, she was torn between her calling to missions and her passion for photography.

After an intense time of self-reflection, she felt God urging her to trust Him and pursue missions. She resigned to His will and began to study missions at college, but then she also felt God confirming her heart for photography. She reached out to people who had done media in relations to missions and connected with Jeff Raymond, ABWE director of visual communications. He showed her the possibilities of using media on the mission field, and she took an internship at ABWE under Jeff’s mentorship.

“That experience really showed me how media and missions worked together,” said Hannah. “While it’s not common, I saw there was a huge need for visual storytellers in missions.”

As a missionary, Hannah will be serving as a media mission specialist for the continent of Africa, using her photography and video skills to tell the stories of how God is working through ABWE’s missionaries and ministries. She will be traveling to different mission fields throughout the continent to lend her skills and expertise to ABWE’s field teams.

“Media gives the outside world a better understanding of the complete picture of what’s going on and what the needs are,” said Hannah. “I’m so excited to see how God will use me and my skills in Africa.”

Kyle & Rhonda Gregory | Togo

[www.KyRhoGregory.wixsite.com/togo](http://www.KyRhoGregory.wixsite.com/togo)  
Grace Christian Fellowship, Bainbridge, NY



It’s not every day that a man moves to Africa just so he can date a girl, but that’s what happened with Kyle and Rhonda.

Growing up in missions-minded family, Rhonda had always been interested in missions. After finishing her midwifery training, Rhonda did a short missions trip to ABWE’s hospital in southern Togo and fell in love with the ministry. She accepted an invitation to come back for six months to fill-in for another missionary, and through that experience, Rhonda developed close friendships and a deep appreciation for combining physical care with spiritual care.

She knew she wanted to give her life to medical missions and was preparing to minister full-time at ABWE’s new hospital in northern Togo that was under construction, when she met Kyle.

When Kyle was a teenager, a church member’s departure to the mission field of Benin in West Africa ignited an intense interest in the region, and in college, that interest blossomed into a heart for the Islamic world. He studied in Benin and Jordan, and by graduation, he was focused on reaching the Muslim world.

Then he met Rhonda.

She was only home for a two-month vacation from Togo, but they felt an instant connection. They talked about the possibility of dating, but Rhonda told him that the only way they could date was if Kyle moved to Togo.

Realizing that Togo neighbored the country of Kyle’s passion, Benin, he agreed.

As Kyle and Rhonda built their relationship, they also tried to build relationships in their community. Making meaningful connections with their neighbors was hard at first, but when the hospital opened, that completely changed. They were both stunned by how caring for physical needs helped people be open to hearing the gospel.

**“I noticed firsthand what a powerful tool the hospital ministry is,” said Rhonda. “It was hard to get past polite chitchat, but after the hospital opened, that immediately changed. Suddenly people knew me and I had tons of invitations to people’s homes.”**

Now married, Rhonda is eager to return to her midwife ministry at the hospital and Kyle is excited to continue working with the hospital chaplains to follow up with those who were interested in learning more about Jesus Christ.

John & Tabitha Groeneveld | Togo

[www.Groenevelds.abwe.org](http://www.Groenevelds.abwe.org)  
Immanuel Baptist Church, Newton, IA



Tabitha has always been passionate about missions, and as a child, she was moved to tears during the missionary commissioning service for a family at her church that was heading to India.

Similarly, John’s mother had a heart for missions and hosted many traveling missionaries in their family’s home, exposing John to missions and showing him the potential for God to use him on the mission field.

Fast forward to studying nursing at Pensacola Christian College, John and Tabitha signed up for a short-term mission trip to southern Togo.

“I thought everybody who went with us loved it, but later I found out that we were the only two that really enjoyed it,” said Tabitha. “The Lord put a love in our hearts for Togo.”

After graduating, the couple continued their education, had several children, and served on two short-term missions trips to Togo. When they returned from their second trip, John began working as a nurse practitioner in the United States, but soon Tabitha began to feel God challenge that decision.

“I remember driving down the road by myself and I just couldn’t get away from it. It was just this constant yearning to go back,” Tabitha said. “But I hadn’t felt that from John.”

Tabitha prayed and waited for the Lord to move in John’s heart. That day finally came when their church held a commissioning service for John’s sister, who was returning as a missionary to Togo. As John prayed for his sister’s successful return to Togo, he felt the Lord convicting him of his own unwillingness to surrender to Him.

“God broke me in those few minutes of the prayer,” said John. “He really struck me with the question, was I willing to sacrifice myself and my family?”

When the couple told their children that they were returning to Togo — the country in which two of them were born — they were ecstatic.

“It’s just amazing to know that we are not just part of something that’s going on in Togo, but we are part of something amazing happening all around the world,” said John. “We all have different talents God has given us, and He has a plan for each of us.”

Bethany Edwards | *Togo*

[www.ElusiveTangent.com](http://www.ElusiveTangent.com)

Westwood Baptist Church, Roxboro, NC



As a child, Bethany loved reading stories about missionaries and felt inspired by these heroes of the faith. But she couldn't help feeling that missionaries were a different breed of Christian and that she wasn't cut out to be one.

However, during her first year of clinicals at nursing school she started feeling like she wasn't supposed to be at an American hospital. She found herself drawn to the idea of serving on the mission field and signed up for a short-term medical mission trip to ABWE's hospital in southern Togo. While there, God confirmed her call to missions.

"I really fell in love with the Togolese people, and I could just see myself doing that," said Bethany. "It was also cool to see that missionary life was not just for the religious elite."

When Bethany returned home, she immediately told her family that she wanted to go back and help with upcoming nursing needs at ABWE's new Hospital of Hope in northern Togo. Her family didn't quite believe her at first, but she kept pursuing it as she got more nursing experience. She also kept in touch with a man named Jon Edwards, who was helping to set up computer systems at the hospital. Their relationship grew, and they were married one month after Bethany was appointed as an ABWE missionary in July.

They are eager to return to Togo where Jonathan will be serving as the information technology manager for ABWE's southern and northern hospitals and Bethany will be sharing the hope of Jesus through nursing.

[www.Facebook.com/NuwagabasOnMission](https://www.facebook.com/NuwagabasOnMission)

Gowen Bible Church, Gowen, MI



Cassie and Denny met while they were serving at a Word of Life Camp in Uganda. Cassie was a Michigan native with a heart for serving the Ugandan people, and Denny was a Ugandan native with a heart for reaching his own people.

Together, they felt God calling them to reach and serve underprivileged people in the less fortunate communities and slums of Uganda by teaching them marketable skills.

"If they are having trouble getting food for their family, how can I disciple them? How can I tell them about Jesus?" said Denny. "I want to walk with them and help meet their physical needs and then spiritual needs."

From farming and baking to brick laying and computer skills, Denny and Cassie are eager to create a resource center where they will equip less fortunate Ugandans to become self-sustaining and be able to share Christ's love.

**"I've been in the same situation. My mom couldn't feed us," said Denny. "The solution could have been easy if someone had helped teach us how to provide for ourselves. I want to help these people meet their needs and get to know the God who loves them."**

The Nuwagabas' greatest prayer is that they will not only help empower people and bring them to know Christ, but that the people they train will go on to teach and disciple others to do the same.

Denny & Cassie Nuwagaba | *Uganda*

# PREACH THE GOOD NEWS

John & Anna Kelley | *Togo*[www.facebook.com/KelleysInTogo](https://www.facebook.com/KelleysInTogo)

Piney View Bible Church, Piney View, WV



While John was a pastor's son, he fell in with the wrong crowd in high school. He began drifting away from school, until he got plugged into the swim team.

As he became a strong swimmer and began to set records at his high school, he left God further and further behind. College scholarships rolled in, but his father made him another offer: he would pay for his first year of schooling if John went to Bible school. John declined his father's offer, but promised to do a year at a Bible college after he graduated.

John began his collegiate swimming career but failed to connect with his teammates, who only seemed interested in alcohol and partying. Without the comradery he experienced on his high school team, John slowly lost his passion for the sport and transferred schools to pursue an associate's degree in biomedical engineering and technology that would equip him to fix hospital medical equipment.

After graduating, John made good on his promise to his father. He enrolled at Appalachian Bible College, and at the very first chapel, there was a skit based on Luke 15: The Prodigal Son.

**“I realized I was the Prodigal Son, and I broke down crying,” said John. “That really turned my life around.”**

As God got a hold of John's heart, He brought him together with Anna, a Texas native who was also enrolled at the college.

Together, John and Anna worked to put God's will at the center of their lives, and soon He began leading them to missions. Then, the sudden passing of John's father brought the couple closer together and made their call to missions clear.

“It was rough losing him, but I'm so happy he got to see me change my life,” said John.

After much prayer, the couple is preparing for service in southern Togo where John will use his education to maintain ABWE's southern and northern hospital's medical equipment, and Anna would like to serve through children's ministries and administrative work.

“It's amazing to see the way God has prepared me for missions, even when I wasn't following him,” said John.

E. F.

Raised as a missionary kid in Europe, E. F. clearly remembers first recognizing her need for salvation. She had just told a lie to her mother and immediately felt dirty.

“I knew in my little four-year-old mind that the only way I would feel clean again was if I asked Jesus into my heart,” said E. “And so I did that with a little childlike faith.”

As she got older, E.'s faith grew and so did her interest in missions. She began reading about famous missionaries and prayed that God would allow her to have even a fraction of the impact they had.

The confirmation of E.'s call to missions came when she accompanied her parents on a street evangelism project. The more she shared her faith with people, the more she realized that this was what she wanted to spend the rest of her life doing.

After E. and her family moved back to the US, she felt God calling her to be a doctor. She enrolled in medical school not knowing where God was leading her. Then, through several short-term medical trips with ABWE, E. learned about an ABWE hospital in an unreached region. The hospital was looking for medical missionaries with a heart for unreached people, and E. knew that this is where God was calling her.

“For a number of years, I very strongly felt God calling me to this people group,” she said. “So when I started to hear more about the ABWE hospital, I knew that was where I needed to be.”

James & Melissa Fife | *Togo*[www.TheMerryBandOfFife.com](http://www.TheMerryBandOfFife.com)Meridian First Baptist Church,  
Meridian, ID

Next to the question, “What do you want to be when you grow up,” in her eighth-grade year book, Melissa wrote, “a missionary doctor to Africa.”

It was a bit out of left field, and as Melissa grew older, her missionary dreams slipped into the background. However, after she and James married, they moved to Idaho and began attending a church with a strong emphasis on missions and her childhood passion was rekindled.

“I remember many times being torn after the missions conferences,” Melissa said. “I felt that God was calling me, but both partners have to be on board for that.”

Growing up, James had a fascination with the adventure that missions entailed, but that zeal faded once he became a teenager. Then, God used their church's missions conference focused on Togo to show them His will for their lives.

**“I had been praying that God would either call James, or give me contentment where I was,” Melissa said. “After the conference, James looked at me in the car and said, ‘This is going to sound crazy, but I think I feel called to go to Togo.’”**

That evening, the couple told their pastor of their call to missions and began the application process with ABWE.

Jame, a longtime landscaper and business operations manager, plans to help ABWE's Hospital of Hope with administration and business management, as well as assisting hospital chaplains and local church planters. Melissa is looking forward to using her double major in French and music for a music ministry with Togolese women and children.

“When I heard about the Togolese's love of music, I remember thinking, ‘That is something I could do,’” Melissa said. “I didn't think there was a place for me in missions, but there is a place for me. Jesus can use me.”

Bethany Caldwell | *Togo*[www.TheGreatAdventure13.wordpress.com](http://www.TheGreatAdventure13.wordpress.com)

Valley Baptist Church, Amity, OR



When Bethany was about 13, her youth pastor spoke about being willing to go where the Lord called them. His message resonated with Bethany, and a short time later, she prayed “Lord, I'm willing to do anything and everything you call me to — except be a missionary or go to Africa.”

As soon as she said those things, she knew that's where God was calling her. She fought this calling for many years, but God worked on her heart, and after college, she went on a one-year mission trip to The Gambia in hopes of appeasing God's calling.

While in The Gambia, she taught a missionary family's children, and before she knew what was happening, she fell in love with the kids and the work. When her year was up, the children's mother asked her to come back and Bethany agreed.

During her time in The Gambia, God continued directing her heart to missions, and after her time there had come to a close as most of the children were older, she got an email about the need for MK teachers in southern Togo. She knew that God was calling her to full-time missions, and she was finally ready and thrilled to say yes.

“I love kids, but the exciting thing for me is to allow the missionary mothers to have more time to minister to others,” said Bethany.



## FEATURED MINISTRY

### SHARING THE ONE TRUE GOD

**Pick-up basketball games have led to new teams, new friendships, and even new rivalries. But when a pastor and recent graduate of Bukidnon Fundamental Baptist Seminary (BFBS) invited a young man named Roderick to shoot hoops, their game led to something different — the gospel being shared in a culture where a prayer to Jesus and a prayer to spirits of the trees are uttered in the same breath.**

One day, after an intense game of ball in the sweltering Philippine heat, the pastor invited Roderick to check out his church. Not sure of what he'd find, Roderick took him up on the offer and he was hooked. After two months of faithful attendance, he put his faith in Jesus — and his life was immediately changed.

Roderick became filled with an insatiable hunger for God's word, which eventually led him to enroll at BFBS.

Sadly, his parents rejected his new life.

Roderick was the son of a tribal chief in a remote village in the Philippines, where they had long blended elements of Catholicism with animistic superstition as a way of life. Saying



the Lord's Prayer was a normal part of their spiritual beliefs — as was sacrificing pigs, chickens, and cows to ward off evil spirits, or performing rituals to appease the gods of nature. His animist parents deeply disapproved of his decision to follow Christ alone.

Despite their rejection, Roderick attended BFBS.

"Roderick's passion for the Word was overwhelming," said Phil Klumpp, ABWE Missionary and BFBS professor. "When he was first saved he didn't have a Bible, so he continually copied verses into a notebook. He eventually took on some farming jobs and saved enough to purchase his first Bible. He still carries it around everywhere with him — he's very proud of it!"

At BFBS, Roderick devoured his Bible courses and the more he learned, the more he longed for his lost family to discover the one true God. By the beginning of his third year, Roderick felt he was ready to put his training where his heart was. He took a bus to where the road ended, hiked three hours to the remote tribe his mother's family called home, and began sharing the gospel.

For more than two years, Roderick has made this trek every week to share and disciple his cousins and a handful of villagers who have come to Christ, and recently, Roderick's friends at BFBS banded together to help build the village's first church. While Roderick's prayers to change his parents' hearts

have not been answered yet, Roderick has built a loving family of believers who gather each Sunday.

"I can't thank Bukidnon Fundamental Baptist Seminary enough for giving me the tools I needed to grow my faith and then to share it with the people I love so deeply," said Roderick.

BFBS is surrounded by 14 unreached people groups on the island of Mindanao and is strategically located to bring the gospel to some of the Philippines' most spiritually isolated regions. Since its founding in 1953 by Filipino believers, BFBS has trained more than 1,000 graduates who have carried the gospel throughout the Philippines, but sadly, its facility has fallen into disrepair.

The school needs \$30,000 to complete a reconstruction and expansion project that will provide BFBS's new facility with windows, classrooms, a second floor, and a chapel — allowing the school to equip more believers to share the gospel with their unreached neighbors. ■

**LEARNHOW** you can help BFBS continue to train Filipinos, like Roderick:

- **READ** page 5 in the enclosed giving catalog
- **GO** to [www.abwe.org/givejoy](http://www.abwe.org/givejoy)

Trevor & Hayley Amack | *Cambodia*[www.AmackMissionaries.org](http://www.AmackMissionaries.org)

Taylor Creek Church, Maple Valley, WA



Trevor felt the Lord calling him to full-time ministry in high school, but through several short-term missions trips with his youth group, he felt that missions was not for him.

After college, he moved to Seattle for a youth pastor internship. He gained a lot of experience and met his wife, but never found a position in full-time ministry.

Needing to pay the bills, he went into marketing but kept volunteering at his church and applying for ministry positions. Then, he took on the role of volunteer college pastor, and realized God had opened the door for full-time ministry in a way he hadn't anticipated, while still providing for him financially through his marketing career.

During his first years as the college pastor, the students asked to go on a missions trip to Cambodia where the church had just sent ABWE missionaries Todd and Jen Janes. The trip was challenging. Hayley was seven months pregnant and towing an 18-month-old on her hip. The heat was stifling, everything was dirty, and Hayley got Japanese encephalitis.

While the Amacks loved the Cambodian people, they never wanted to go back. But then they attended a missions conference at their church and heard, over and over again, missionaries begging for help.

"Many were retiring and other just needed more workers," said Trevor.

Without speaking to each other, Hayley and Trevor had the exact same feeling that God was calling them back to Cambodia. They decided to take a month to pray for more confirmation. They reached out to the Janes for prayer and learned that they had been praying for them to join them ever since they left two years earlier.

"In Cambodia, the name of Jesus is vastly unknown," said Hayley. "There is a silent cry. They live in fear."

Trevor and Hayley, along with their four children, are hoping to minister to college-age students in Cambodia through coffeehouse ministry and house churches.

Traver & Amy Freeman | *Australia*[www.ShallTheyHear.com](http://www.ShallTheyHear.com)Shadow Mountain Community,  
Church, El Cajon, CA

Traver and Amy met in college, but really got to know each other through a missions trip where they ministered together for three weeks in a small, rural town in Australia. They fell in love — with each other and with the country.

As soon as they returned home, they wanted to go back to Australia, so Traver arranged to do his required pastoral internship with the same pastor they had worked with the previous summer. He spent three months interning and learning more about the country before Amy joined him for the last three weeks.

Through his internship, Traver got to see the day-to-day life of missions in Australia. He saw the vast need and traveled through several towns with no churches and no one trying to reach the people there.

When he and Amy returned to the States, Traver researched the need in Australia and was shocked to discover that in 2007 only 11 percent of Australian people reported that they regularly attended any type of church, and in 2011 that number had dropped to 7 percent.

**"If my math is correct, less than 2 percent of Australians attend a Bible-believing church," said Traver. "When we saw that, the Lord just opened our eyes to the need of this place, and we knew we had to return."**

Together, they are praying to plant a church outside of Sydney and Amy is hoping to complement that work with a deaf ministry. They are looking to establish their ministry in an area without a gospel-preaching church.

"Australia is just as much of a mission field as the 10/40 Window or any other place. They need the gospel just as much," said Amy. "And we're going to be ministering near Sydney, where 40 percent of the population was born outside of the country. Both the need and the opportunity are huge."

# ANSWER THE CALL



# EUROPE



## FEATURED MINISTRY

### SHARING CHRIST'S PEACE IN THE FACE OF WAR

**Five years after the civil war broke out in Syria, more than 11 million Syrian refugees find themselves still longing for home. Many refugees fled to neighboring countries with only the clothes on their backs, and now they are heavily dependent on quickly depleting international aid.**

The need is crushing, but through this crisis, doors for the gospel are opening. Muslims who would have never let a Christian into their homes are now getting to hear the hope of the gospel, and receiving life-saving supplies through the ABWE Syrian Refugee Relief Fund.

Thanks to the contributions of generous supporters, ABWE has sent more than \$190,000 dollars to help provide refugees with basics like food, heaters, clothing, and education. These small offerings in a sea of desperation have made a huge impact.

“Showing the love of Christ in practical ways has opened doors to share the story of hope — doors that would never have been opened were it not for

this horrible tragedy,” said an ABWE worker ministering in the Middle East. “They are sensing the love we have for them and our genuine desire to get to know them and care for them.”

The impact of these efforts was evident when one relief team visited a community of refugees that they had been working with for a few months. At first glance, the area just looked like a cluster of abandoned buildings. But as the relief team’s familiar car came to a stop, people began to emerge and a man silently pulled back a plastic sheet covering the entry to their shelter and motioned for the team to come inside.

They obeyed and stepped into a dark, cold room where winter winds were forcing their way in through large holes in a wall shoddily covered by tattered blankets. In one corner, a lone bulb strained to illuminate the room, and in another corner, a young boy struggled to keep warm next to a heater the team had provided them with aid from the ABWE Syrian Refugee Relief Fund.

The man directed the team to take a seat on a shabby carpet as a steady stream of dark figures wordlessly entered. Soon, the room was completely filled with men, women, and children who had heard about the team’s aid.

These refugees were used to living in the shadows so not a sound was heard until a relief team member named Samir\* introduced his team. He explained that they were Christians who love Jesus and that they represented many Christians involved in this aid effort. Then, Samir did something these survivors were not used to: he asked them how they were doing.

Representing the voice of this community, one man explained that life was not difficult because no one was trying to kill them here. But he also explained that it wasn’t easy. They

struggled to find work, faced high rent by local landlords exploiting the refugees, had limited access to medical care, and lacked basics, like shoes and diapers.

“No one sees us. But you did. You cared and gave us this heater,” one man said, pointing to the lone heater in the corner. “Without this we would have nothing.”

After more discussion, Samir asked the refugees what they thought the main obstacle to peace in Syria was. He expected a political and complicated answer, but one man simply said, “We do not forgive or forget.”

Others nodded in agreement, and Samir saw an opening.

“Do you know what Christmas is about?” Samir asked.

Most people averted eyes and some shrugged their shoulders.

“Christmas is about peace,” he explained. “Jesus was born to take your sin and give you peace with God. Jesus died for this and forgiveness is a free gift for all those who repent and love Jesus. When we know God has forgiven us for our wrongs, we know we can forgive others, and we can be at peace.”

Over the next few hours, Samir and his team discussed and answered questions.

This is how doors are slowly opening in hard-to-reach regions of the world — compassion leading to meaningful conversation about the Creator and Giver of peace. ■

**LEARNHOW** you can help share Christ’s love with Syrian refugees:

- **READ** page 6 in the enclosed giving catalog
- **GO to** [www.abwe.org/givejoy](http://www.abwe.org/givejoy)

*\*name changed for security*

Anna Curby | *Hungary*

Calvary Baptist Church, Avon Lake, OH



When Anna was a teenager, God called her parents to be missionaries to Eastern Europe. She spent her final years of high school helping them fundraise and prepare, and right as she was headed to college, they moved.

Disappointed by the idea of not seeing the dream they had all worked so hard for, Anna took a year off to join her parents in Eastern Europe. During that year, she traveled the region and saw what God was doing there. She felt God calling her to missions, but when she returned for college the following year, she felt that He was telling her it wasn't the right time.

She pursued her education and got her dream job as an occupational therapist working with special needs children, but she never lost sight of her call to missions. She regularly went on short-term missions trips and visited her parents on the mission field. Then, her father passed away unexpectedly in September, and she went to spend time with her mother in Hungary.

**“Being back there gave me a renewed vision,” said Anna. “It felt like going home. I felt God telling me it was time.”**

After she returned to the States, she spent a lot of time in prayer to confirm her call, and began exploring opportunities to use her skills and experience to minister in Hungary. As she started making contacts with people working with special needs children, she found the system lacking — both on the Hungarian side and the missionary side. Anna is eager to return to Hungary in the hopes of working with local churches to help care for families of children with special needs.

“I want to let these families know that church is a safe place for them if they have a child with special needs,” said Anna. “I want to help them with their daily struggles and at a much deeper spiritual level.”





LATIN  
AMERICA

FEATURED MINISTRY

SHARING LIVING  
WATER & DAILY BREAD

**Leticia lived with the unmistakable pain of hunger almost every day of her life. She rarely got enough to eat, and when she got pregnant at 19, she didn't know how she would be able to feed her baby, too.**

Sadly, her plight was not uncommon in her city. Established as a government relocation area for those displaced by Hurricane Mitch in 1998, Sandino City struggles with high unemployment, poor infrastructure, and extreme poverty. The need there is great, but when Nicaraguan Pastor Valeriano Manzanares, a graduate of ABWE's Institute for Church Planters, visited he didn't just see great need — he saw great opportunity. He began a plan to share Christ's love and plant a new church by opening a feeding center in a neighborhood in Sandino City called Tangará.

Word about the Rayitos Feeding Center spread, and when Leticia heard,

she took her baby and her little brother down to check it out. She arrived at a simple cement building on a dirt lot, and lined up with about 100 children — each eagerly awaiting what was likely their only meal of the day.

Before the meal, Pastor Valeriano and ABWE missionaries Mark and Jenn Holsinger led the children in a time of worship, prayer, and a Bible lesson. Then, Leticia's baby, her brother, and the other children gratefully received the standard meal of rice and soy, pureed potatoes, and tortillas.

"At first, the kids came for the food. Then, they came because of the relationships they formed with the teachers," said Mark Holsinger. "We pray that as they grow they will also come because of their love for God and His word."

Mark's prayer was answered through Leticia. As the wholesome food nourished her body, the Word of God began nourishing her soul. She watched the Rayitos staff lovingly care for her baby and the other children. She listened intently as Pastor Valeriano and the others talked about a loving God who sent His only Son to die for her.



Soon, Leticia began memorizing Bible verses and participating in worship and prayer.

Then one day, as the children were receiving their food after the lesson, Leticia sat down with Pastor Valeriano and asked him to help her accept Christ — becoming the first adult saved through the Rayitos Feeding Center.

Leticia now attends the adult Sunday school class, and has become one of the first members of the church plant started by Pastor Valeriano.

"We truly believe that the children are the key to reaching our entire area," said Pastor Valeriano. "We have already seen this ministry's ability to make an impact, and we are praying to expand its reach so we can impact even more hearts in Tangará." ■

**LEARN HOW** you can help feed more Nicaraguan children:

- **READ** page 2 in the enclosed giving catalog
- **GO** to [www.abwe.org/givejoy](http://www.abwe.org/givejoy)

Caleb & Alair Mitchell | *Jamaica*

Blackhawk Ministries, Fort Wayne, IN



For seven years, Caleb and Alair served as missionaries in Uganda working with orphan children. They adopted two Ugandan sons, and a month after their adoption was finalized — after years of trying — they had their first biological child. Then, three months after their first daughter was born, Caleb got very sick and had to be evacuated back to the United States.

Although their adopted sons had been living with them for six years, the Mitchell's did not have visas for their adopted sons, and when Alair applied for temporary visas so they could join Caleb, their request was denied out of fear they were trying smuggle Ugandan children. Alair was told that the process to get a visa would take about 10 months, so she was forced to stay behind with their sons while Caleb lay in a hospital in the US.

Caleb was diagnosed with HLH — a perfect storm of typhoid and malaria that created an overwhelming immune response in his body, causing it to attack itself and shut down. After seven weeks with HLH, there is 100 percent mortality rate, but Caleb was diagnosed at five and half weeks.

“The Lord spared him,” said Alair.

God also cut the estimated wait of their visas to two months, so Alair and their children were able to return to the states to support Caleb as he recovered.

While Caleb was not permitted to go back to Africa because of his weakened immune system, they still had missions on their hearts and prayed for where God was calling them to serve. As Caleb's health improved, they felt God leading them to Jamaica, which does not have the health concerns of Africa and gives Caleb access to American medicine within an hour flight. It also offered the opportunity for Caleb and Alair to pursue their passion for ministering to and through the local church. They hope to come alongside Jamaican pastors and churches to develop discipleship and evangelism programs — which will include youth mentorship.

## Rich &amp; Cherry Smith

www.RichAndCherry.org

West Bridge Church, Danville, IN



Rich and Cherry are high school sweethearts who met in a vibrant youth group. They knew what a pivotal point high school and college can be for so many young people, so after they were married and had two daughters, they began working with their high school youth at their church.

As the years passed, they served in a number of capacities in their churches, but they kept coming back to high school and college ministry. Through their time as youth leaders, they had several opportunities to take students on short-term mission trips.

**“Seeing the impact of those mission trips on their lives and on our lives, really opened our eyes to second-career missions,” said Rich.**

Rich had a successful career in finance, but Latin America got a hold of their hearts and God began calling them and opening doors for them to pursue missions.

“We’re almost 50 and we’ve realized that God has not called us into a comfortable life. We have recognized that God can call us at any age and we must listen and we must respond,” said Rich. “I’m learning what it means to really have faith in Him and not in a good job or a full bank account.”

On the field, they will be using their passion for youth ministry and business ministry to help with church planting and discipleship.

“We’re excited to see a glimpse of what God is doing around the world and being able to play a small part in it,” said Cherry. “We know He has a plan and He will sustain us.”

Jenn Taylor | *Chile*

www.TaylorJennBlog.wordpress.com

Calvary Baptist Church, Guelph, ON



At 15, Jenn, a pastor's kid, felt called to missions during her first missions trip. She spent six weeks in Brazil and knew that's what God was calling her to, but she soon developed health problems that kept her from going to the field.

Constant surgeries meant she couldn't pursue missions abroad, so she began working with children's ministry in her local church. She did that for nearly nine years until circumstances led her to take a job at a pregnancy care center for at-risk youth. The center provided housing, life-skills training, and counseling for young mothers to help them break the cycle of poverty, addiction, and abuse. It was challenging but meaningful work.

Then, Jenn's health vastly improved. For the first time in her life she is not living in chronic pain, and she was finally able to pursue God's call to international missions.

Through much prayer and time in God's word, God called Jenn to Iquique, Chile where she will work with the children's ministry at the local church. She will also assist with ABWE's new prenatal and family counseling center where she can use her recent experience at the pregnancy care center — time that she had once thought was wasted.

“I love the next generation. That's why I do children's ministry,” Jenn said. “I see the opportunity for God to work in their lives in a way that they never walk away and can walk with God throughout their entire life.”

Oto & Sarah Guanilo | *Argentina*

Northside Baptist Church, Waterloo, ON



Sarah grew up in a Christian family, but it wasn't until she was 15 that she first saw the love of Christ being truly lived out at a friend's church. She wanted to be like that, and Sarah started getting heavily involved in the church.

After high school, Sarah felt God calling her to Word of Life in Argentina, and despite not knowing the language or

anyone there, she felt at peace as she boarded the plane. She quickly fell in love with the country and its people and felt God calling her to be a missionary in Argentina. God used the school to begin her training and to introduce her to Oto.

Born in Peru before his family moved to Argentina, Oto dedicated his life to serving the Lord at 18. After he graduated high school and began college, God put a desire in his heart to study at Word of Life. He was already a youth leader, but he knew that he could be a better leader and teacher with more Bible education and training.

“At Word of Life, my life and ministry changed completely,” said Oto. “I learned how to have discipline and do devotionals, and I developed a deeper understanding and love of God's word.”

Oto and Sarah united over their shared passion for ministering to the Argentinian people, and they began to pray for where God was calling them to minister. God placed upon their heart a town in northeastern Argentina, in one of the country's poorest province — both economically and spiritually. It had very few Bible-believing churches, and Oto and Sarah felt God calling them to minister and plant a new church there.

To prepare, they took a training internship at a recently-planted church in Buenos Aires. They served in every aspect of the church ministry for three years until they felt God telling them they were ready to begin their own ministry in northeast Argentina.

**“While we only found three gospel believing churches in the capital of the northeast region, the people there are very open to talking about the gospel. The doors are wide open,” said Sarah. “We have a heart for church planting, evangelism and discipleship, and we’re eager to get started.”**

# NORTH AMERICA

## FEATURED MINISTRY

### THE LONG JOURNEY HOME

**Smoke billowed from their family minivan as Trevor and Hayley Amack and their four small children sat along the roadside, sweating in the 100-degree summer heat.**

**This wasn't exactly the way they envisioned their new life beginning.**

The Amacks had recently been appointed as ABWE missionaries to Cambodia, and they decided to head to Trevor's distant relatives in Nebraska to kick off their Prefield Ministry — a crucial time when missionaries learn to rely on God as they develop their support base and prepare for the mission field.

Their visit was well received, and they felt optimistic as they set off on their 20-hour drive home to Washington. But a few hours in, their car began to smoke and refused to go on.

"We were on a very strict budget for the whole trip. We had the exact money we needed to get home, and that was it," said Hayley.

The couple believed that this bump in their road was all part of God's plan, but as the delay stretched from hours into days, they started wondering about His methods. Then, after spending several

days with their pastor's mother who providentially lived nearby, they finally received a diagnosis from the local auto shop: their transmission was shot.

They would either need a new transmission or a new car. A transmission would cost about \$3,000 and take a week to replace. And buying a new car would mean taking on new debt, which would further delay getting to the mission field.

"That was the point I broke," said Hayley. "Trevor works at a Christian school and I'm a stay-at-home mom, so our income level is very modest. We had \$18 in our bank account and we had to figure out a way to get home."

In desperation, Hayley called ABWE's Director of Prefield Ministries, Brad Winkler, for clearance to take on debt so they could finance a new vehicle. Brad gave them approval, but felt the Lord urging him to help the family through ABWE's Prefield Emergency Fund. Generous donors contribute to this fund to help new missionaries overcome issues that come up as they're raising support to get to the mission field.

"Many of our missionaries give up their jobs, the security of comfortable homes, benefits, and other comforts to pursue the call from our Lord. It is so important to let them know they are not alone," said Brad. "When Hayley told me their situation, I felt God impress upon

my heart that, if ever a need embodied what this money was to be used for, this was it."

Using the Prefield Emergency Fund, Brad transferred \$1,500 to the Amacks' account. And when the Amacks' church, family, and friends learned of their situation, they also contributed funds. Soon, the Amacks had more than \$3,000 to put down on a used vehicle — and still had enough for their drive home.

"I cried with joy," said Hayley. "To have it come out of the blue was very humbling."

Now, as the Amacks continue to prepare for a church planting and college ministry in Cambodia, their experience in Nebraska continues to remind them to put their trust in God for all of their needs.

"It was overwhelming to see how He provided above and beyond," said Trevor. "And it's a blessing to know the ABWE family truly cares for us, loves us, and is praying for us." ■

**LEARN HOW** you can help other new missionaries overcome challenges:

- **READ** page 3 in the enclosed giving catalog
- **GO** to [www.abwe.org/givejoy](http://www.abwe.org/givejoy)



## NEW MISSIONARIES

Matt & Sarah Brown | *Project Office*

[www.BrownsBeyondBorders.org](http://www.BrownsBeyondBorders.org)

Cornerstone Baptist Church,  
Springfield, OH



Matt had always questioned if his career in engineering was where he was supposed to be investing his time and energy, and Sarah, a pediatric occupational therapist, had always been drawn to missions.

Then, in 2013, Matt, Sarah, and their children went to help friends who were missionaries in India. That trip opened their eyes to missions and how their skills could be used on the mission field. Then a year ago, Matt felt God leading him away from his job and into missions.

As a member of the ABWE Project Office based in North America, Matt, along with his family, will be traveling around the world to use his expertise as an engineer to manage ministry building and rebuilding projects on the missions field.

“We’re excited to help manage these projects so that the missionaries on the field can focus on doing what they do best: sharing the gospel,” said Matt.

Paul & Nastassja Hanna | *USCA*

Bible Baptist Church, Shiremanstown, PA



Paul, the son of a Syrian pastor, felt called to ministry in high school, but went to college in Syria for an engineering degree before seeking a Bible degree. Six years ago, God opened up a door for Paul to go to a Bible college in the United States. Paul jumped at the opportunity, not knowing he would meet his future wife, Nastassja.

After a civil war broke out in Syria, Paul couldn’t return home, and Paul and Nastassja weren’t sure where God was leading them. Then God opened the door for Paul to go to

central Pennsylvania to work with an Arabic pastor who was planting a church for different ethnic groups who relocated to the area.

**“This was not my plan when I left Syria, but God gave me this ministry,” said Paul.**

The new church plant ministers to immigrants and refugees from all over the world. Paul loves giving a community to these people who have lost theirs, and Nastassja is eager to use her Bible education, psychology degree, and Spanish and English language skills to support Paul’s new church.

“There are so many foreign people and they need somebody to reach them,” said Paul. “They are lost in this culture and they need someone to build the bridge.”

### UPCOMING EVENTS

at ABWE's Headquarters | Harrisburg, PA.



#### 24-Hour DEMO

**When:** April 13–14, 2017

**About:** Are you pursuing missions but don’t know what your next step is? 24-Hour DEMO is a chance for you to come and get to know the people, ministries, and passions of ABWE!

**Learn more:** [www.abwe.org/DEMO](http://www.abwe.org/DEMO)

CROSSING CULTURES  
WITHOUT  
CROSSING BORDERS

# Missionary Candidates

THE STATS AT A GLANCE

2016

40 total new candidates

+35 missionary kids

23 AFRICA

7 LATIN AMERICA

4 ASIA-PACIFIC

4 NORTH AMERICA

2 EUROPE

## CANDIDATE AGES

20's

30's

40's

50's

32

average age

## Where They Are From

CANADA

7 percent

WEST

WEST

21 percent

SOUTH

15 percent

MIDWEST

42 percent

NORTHEAST

15 percent



## LIGHT AT THE END OF THE TUNNEL

FN

By Heather Amundson | ABWE Missionary

About halfway through our five-year journey of preparing for the mission field and raising the support we needed to get there, I remember feeling like, “This will never end.”

I just wanted to get to Chile to begin the ministry we had been praying and dreaming about for so long. I was so sick of my husband working full time, homeschooling, mowing the lawn, doing laundry, packing, and

unpacking. Then each and every Sunday we worshiped somewhere unfamiliar, only to hear my husband’s sermon again. I was tired and I felt like I could barely see the light at the end of our tunnel. Our dream of

the mission field didn’t seem to be getting any closer. And then I read a book in my devotional time that talked about where the light at the end of my tunnel really was: with God. God showed me that the light at the end wasn’t Chile or any other destination here on earth; He is the light and the true destination is to be with Him in Heaven.

Ever since that day — and long after we finally left for the mission field — God has used that revelation over and over to refocus me on His light at the end of our tunnel. It hasn’t been easy. Many times our tunnel has been dark and challenging. In our first five years overseas, our family confronted a potentially fatal illness, an earthquake, adopting twin girls, assisting two different churches, moving five times, and my husband falling through a roof. Each time I was reminded of our need to refocus ourselves on God’s light.

During the 8.8 earthquake of 2010, we lost basic utilities that are often taken for granted, and my husband Doug and I struggled with how best to care of our family while also wanting to minister to Chileans during this tragedy. God gave us the wisdom and peace to wait, and when Doug finally went to help in the earthquake torn areas, he was given the amazing opportunities to witness to many. Then when Doug fell more than 25 feet headfirst through the roof at our Christian school onto a cement floor, I was confronted with whether or not I could live without him. But God showed Himself mighty through the love of our teammates and Chileans who came alongside us. Later, in our second term, we faced different challenges caused by the

sudden departure of a teammate, and God showed us the importance of never wavering from His light.

While each challenge had its own unique circumstances and lessons, God’s overwhelming lesson has always been clear: “Daughter, do you see My light? Keep going, and trust me. Don’t turn back or try to find a new tunnel, just focus on My light and be faithful.”

Recently, God has brought us back to ministry in the United States. While some people thought we were abandoning the path God had laid out for us, we knew this to be God’s will for our lives. While each tunnel has twists, turns, trials, and challenges, the end goal is, and always will be, Heaven.

Although each obstacle we face as missionaries and in life can look complex and confusing, they bring His light back into focus. If you look for it, I know that you, too, will find that His light is always there to guide us and encourage us forward.

Where is the light you focus on? Is it His light? ■

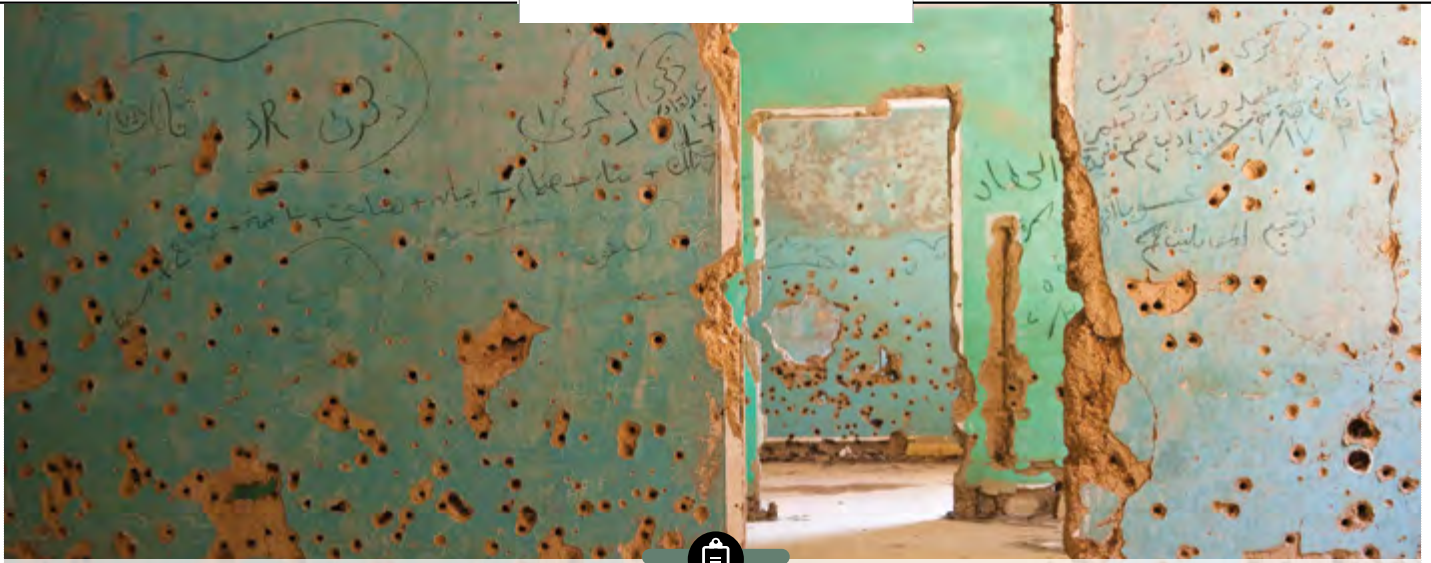
“I have told you these things, so that in me you may have peace. In this world you will have trouble. But take heart! I have overcome the world.” John 16:33



Heather and Doug Amundson served as ABWE missionaries to Chile for seven years before moving to serve at the Home Office in 2016.

*“Tho he slay  
me, yet will  
I trust him.”*

*Job 13:15*



## 5 Ways

## To Survive War on the Mission Field

According to

an ABWE Missionary to the Middle East

During our first term on the mission field, our family lived through two wars. There were missile attacks, terrorism in the city where we lived, family trips to the bomb shelter, and one scary time when a rocket exploded over our car. We lived in an elevated state of anxiety, but in the middle of all of this chaos and fear, we found practicing these five things helped give us a sense of peace by putting God in the center of our lives:

**1. Continue with “normal” life and ministry** as much as possible. We decided that if we were going to stay, we should continue to minister even if it took us to more dangerous areas. God continually reminded us of the bigger picture and why He called us to that place, and we grew very close to our national friends and partners.

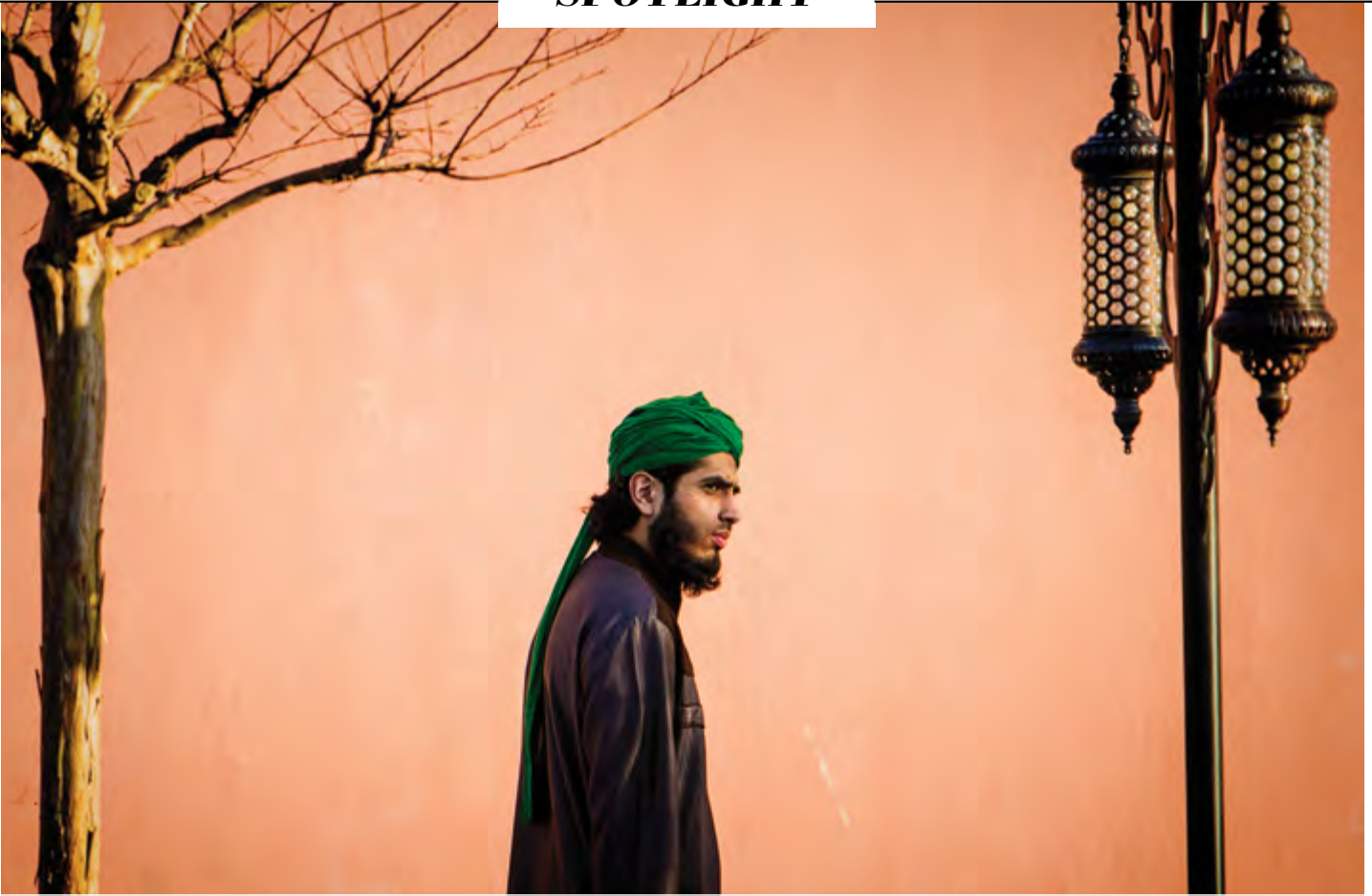
**2. Set boundaries.** For my mental health, it was too distressing to read the news, so I relied on my husband to tell me things that were pertinent. I chose to operate in faith and focus on things that were in my sphere of influence.

**3. Take a Sabbath** and extra down time. We guarded our one day off per week and took more time with our kids. With that extra time, my husband — an avid outdoorsman

— took time to learn to fly fish, and I — a musician — took time to teach myself the guitar. And as a family, we planted a garden. From buying the seeds in the store to digging up the soil to plant, it gave us such joy to teach our kids about gardening and how things grow.

**4. Don’t ignore the mental and emotional effects.** We are not unscathed from all we went through. When there is a fire drill, I hate that my small children instinctively run and hide under a desk. When a motorcycle revs its engine, our adrenaline still surges for a split second because it sounds just like a siren starting. By age four my son knew what missiles were and that terrorists were launching them to try to kill people. I have to watch my own cynicism towards certain people groups — something I have never struggled with before. It is important to recognize these effects in ourselves and in our children and to counter negative attitudes with prayer.

**5. Trust God** for the peace that surpasses understanding. During the hard times, we leaned on God and truly came to understand that Jesus is our daily bread. He is enough. We serve an amazing God. Even though life is really hard sometimes, He is always good. Always. ■



# CROSSING CULTURES

## Without Crossing Borders

**“In recent years, an unprecedented** number of refugees and immigrants from around the world have come to call North America home, providing an amazing opportunity for believers to do missions in their own community. Unfortunately, many North American Christ-followers don’t know how to effectively engage with someone from a different background or culture. That is why ABWE is partnering with local pastors to empower their church members to confidently love and share their faith with people from other cultures. Our prayer is that every man, woman and child will have repeated opportunities to hear and respond to the gospel, but we can’t do it on our own.”

**LEARN****HOW** you can get involved at [www.everyethne.church](http://www.everyethne.church).

### About the Photographer | *Scott McCoy, North America Missionary*



*Based in Austin, Texas, Scott partners with local church leaders to ignite church-planting movements in cities across Canada and the USA. His prayer is to inspire local churches to be missional in their own diverse neighborhoods and saturate their communities with the gospel by multiplying churches and leaders.*



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