

CBC Missionary Newsletter – March 1, 2022

AFRICA

D & M (USA, Nigeria) January 31, 2022

GOD IS AT WORK THROUGH ACTEA

Professor E, President of Nigerian Baptist Theological Seminary and Chair of the ACTEA Executive Committee, set the encouraging tone for the ACTEA annual meetings (several months ago via zoom), in rephrasing Jesus' words of John 5:17, to praise the Lord for ACTEA's ministry last year and in anticipation of this year. COVID has not slowed the work of God in building the church in Africa. Consequently, great is the work of ACTEA to sustain the fruit of God's work by fostering quality theological education.

GOD AT WORK AT ACTEA INSTITUTIONS

The pandemic with its concomitant responses in Africa (varied from country to country) has challenged student access for in-person classes, thus modifying traditional models of theological education. Resourceful administrative leaders of ACTEA theological institutions have added virtual teaching modes, particularly models suitable to Africa. These hybrid models combine both online and in-person teaching components. Africa's relational cultures in conjunction with often inefficient infrastructure likely ensure that an in-person element of theological education will endure. ACTEA initiatives through Executive Director Dr. D and with ACTEA global ministry partners (e.g. training for developing and teaching online courses) have enabled productive transitions at ACTEA schools.

PLANNING FOR GOD'S ONGOING WORK

ACTEA's year-long strategic planning exercises will climax by mid-year. In-person meetings in Nairobi in March will help consolidate assessments and findings. Scholar Leaders has coached Director D in the Initiative process, wherein the ACTEA family may clarify our unique mission and plan for the future so that ACTEA may advance more effective training of pastors, teachers, evangelists, and missional entrepreneurs for the African Church. ACTEA's future growth will incorporate greater service to the entire African continent (i.e. to French-speaking and Portuguese-speaking schools), and more vibrant engagement with church executive leaders to address the need for training African pastors without formal theological education—estimated to be as much as 85% of all pastors in Africa.

ASIA

J (China)

J and his family dealt with health issues during the Chinese Spring Festival time – fever, coughing and lack of sleep. Thankfully, they are doing much better. They spend two weeks in Sdg and two weeks in Syg every month. From Monday to Friday each week, J will share a message from a book of the Bible. They are now studying Galatians. He will record these messages and send them to leaders of the different churches for them to use. This year their

fellowship in Syg has started to support two missionary families, sending money to them monthly.

C (RAM in Pakistan)

As you already know I am doing Afghan refugees relief work nowadays and as of now I have provided the food & hygiene boxes to more than 2000 refugee families. Please keep these families in your prayers as they are living in a very bad situation.

Please keep Pakistani Christians in your prayers as there are multiple attacks on minorities in recent times. A week ago one of the young christian boy was lynched to death by a Muslim mob on false allegations of Blasphemy. So please keep us in your prayers.

February 26, 2022

I have completed the round 4 of Afghan refugees relief work. In this relief work I have distributed food and hygiene kits to 500 families. These Afghan families are living in very tough conditions without any support from the government and the non-governmental organizations (NGOs) are not allowed to help these families openly. Things are getting tougher for these families day by day because the living cost in Pakistan is getting very high with every passing day. Inflation rate is at an all time high.

These families with limited knowledge of local language are forced to sell their kids for small money. They only get cheap jobs like collecting garbage. In every food distribution we pray for these families in the name of Jesus.

One story of an Afghan family:

K lives with his family in the outskirts of one of the biggest cities of Pakistan. K was working as a mason in Afghanistan. After the Taliban came into power, he had no work. K's wife is suffering from tuberculosis. He migrated to Pakistan after selling all his belongings thinking that he will get the work there and also his wife's treatment will be possible but the sufferings of K did not end after coming to Pakistan. He gets only half of the normal wages of a mason in Pakistan because he is not a resident of Pakistan. He told me that often police take him in custody for bribes. He told us that all of his income goes towards the treatment for his wife. K is very thankful to RAM Foundation for their support. We prayed for K and his family.

March1, 2022

This week we celebrate the opening of RAM's new medical clinic in partnership with the World Compassion Foundation.

On the first day, more than a hundred people arrived seeking medical attention. The current clinic capacity is 30-40 people daily. We are scheduling appointments for those who cannot be seen the same day for the following day.

The amount of people looking for care shows the vast need for medical attention in the area. RAM works to address systemic issues facing brick kiln workers and religious minorities, and this medical clinic is one step towards stopping families from entering brick kiln slavery to pay for medical care.

JR (Deshi's Hope in NYC and Bangladesh)

New York City

Some doors have opened in their Brooklyn community for JR and JM to share with the women about the way to heaven. The community's women have shared with them how different Bengalis have been dying, from illnesses at young ages or killed in their prime. This terrible news has increased the burden in their hearts for them to be saved. JM recently had an opportunity to share with a few ladies in her English class. JR had an opportunity to meet last week with S, who during a class, said she believes she's going to hell because of her sins. She doesn't sleep well and clearly has fears about her future and that of her people.

Bangladesh

There is a new gospel outreach in northern Bangladesh to a remote Muslim village where there has never been a witness and there are no Christians. An evangelistic group has formed consisting of five men and five women who are eager to hear this new teaching about Jesus. Pastor M and his wife, J are ministering to them. In another area of the north, the church in the Hindu community is again under persecution. This is the HBB church that was built on B's property. The husband of his daughter returned from being away and became furious when he saw that the church was built, and services were being held. He said he would not allow the building to stay and threatened to destroy it and divorce his daughter.

A (YoungLife in Vietnam)

In March 2021, A reconnected with a former student, D, whom years earlier she taught at a Bible class at her local church, and again at a YL camp. D shared with A that she was on a prayer journey from North to South Vietnam, traveling through every province to pray with Christian teams. She went to the MT Province in the Mekong Delta and felt God calling her to stay there. D met two local people who had a growing desire to share the gospel with young people in MT. The three of them began a small ministry as an English Club that grew to 40-50 students each week. They connected with the high school teachers and administrators and met young people at various events. As they created relationships with the students, they earned the ability to be heard in their lives. When A learned that this was happening, she knew YL would be perfect for this area. A shared the YL ministry principles and values with them. She began training them virtually and will meet with them in-person this May. They are now officially YL volunteers in this new area of Vietnam near the Mekong Delta.

D & J (Malaysia) February 11, 2022

After a year of purging and moving around, we were excited to spend our first few weeks here doing a lot of shopping. The Lunar New Year is a huge celebration for Malaysians, and shopping malls are full of performances and festivities to celebrate the occasion. Fireworks could be seen from our windows, and sometimes, they have woken us up in the middle of the night! On Lunar New Year's Day, we celebrated by enjoying hotpot with our teammates.

Maybe we're still in the "honeymoon phase." Maybe we've learned to rest and know our limits... Maybe our Asian upbringing makes the culture a little more comfortable for us... Maybe life in Malaysia is just easier than life in NYC... Or maybe God hears your prayers for us. Whatever the reason, we are thankful that the transition to life here has been surprisingly comfortable.

Malaysia feels like a good fit for us, and we're excited to start new rhythms here. We will soon be sending our son to a new school.

J will start volunteering with Orphan Care, an organization that advocates for deinstitutionalization of children by reuniting them with their families, adoption, foster care, or placement in group homes. The organization also provides care and counseling for individuals and families in difficult circumstances, facing unplanned pregnancies, and those who are seeking to adopt.

R & M (Thailand, Myanmar, USA) February 12, 2022

Thank you for your faithful prayers on our behalf...including our dear ones in Thailand. We could see the Lord's hand at work in big and small ways. The Lord answered your prayers for us in these ways:

1. We have had a total of five Covid tests for this trip, including the final test 24 hours before departure from Thailand. By the grace of God, we were negative for each one. It was scary because if either of us tested positive in Thailand, we would have both been hospitalized and isolated (even from each other), most likely at our own expense.

2. M's scooter died on Sat. Feb. 5. We tried to rent a wheelchair, but nothing was available until Wed. Feb 9 so that would not have been helpful at all. Many people prayed. On Sunday morning, M's brother also attempted to fix it, and we all laid hands on the scooter and prayed...and it started to work again!! It would work for awhile and then fail again and start again, sometimes lurching; sometimes it would only move in reverse, and later it would start to work again, going forward too. On our departure day, Thurs. Feb 10, M did have to drive it backwards. Once we reached the check-in counter, the scooter was running normally, and did so throughout the entire trip home! Upon arrival in L.A., the scooter worked perfectly...all the way through customs, baggage claim, to our nephew's car and into our house. How great is our God!

3. Our flights were long and tiring as always, but there were so few passengers that everyone could spread out and enjoy the whole row to himself/herself. The ANA crew, especially, went above and beyond to help M in every possible way.

S & V (India) January 28, 2022

V and I are all set to return to India on February 9th after going through all the hoops of changed itineraries, approval from the Indian government, etc. We now need an RT-PCR negative report before we will be allowed to board the flights! Our daughter, P, and N, her husband, will celebrate their first wedding anniversary on January 30. They have been waiting for their India wedding reception that has already been rescheduled three times. Our fourth attempt now is in March, we all are praying that there won't be any more changes to their travel plans.

NIITS' students were to return to the campus residence to start in-person classes on January 17th. But, the new lockdowns and COVID restrictions forced us to go back to online classes. The Lord willing, we are planning to get them back on campus in February. Our annual pastors' conference in late February has been canceled for the third year in a row. We will do small regional conferences/seminars from March onwards. The Bible distribution plan has also been pushed to April.

Although our regular financial support was down in 2021, God provided for what was needed and more, through a few generous donors. Both S and V will carry full teaching loads at NIITS

because it is short two teachers, as one is on maternity leave, and another is on sabbatical. This extra work is in addition to our regular administrative responsibilities. We are currently searching for additional teaching and support staff. Despite all this, we are hopeful and confident in what God will do this year.

T & A (YoungLife in Mongolia) February 21, 2022

Last few months we have been very busy and a lot of things have happened in our life. We thank the Lord that we can now carry out our Young Life ministry normally. I (A) started to do club times with a new school.

In July 2021 we started construction of our new house. Nothing is impossible for Him. Praise the Lord. We have been praying for a baby for a few years. I recently had a miscarriage. We are very sad about the loss of our baby and are working through that situation.

EUROPE

Suthy & Rodina (USA, France)

February 9, 2022

We had some bad news at the end of November... Not recovering well from my second bout with the Covid virus, our son Jim took me to the hospital, which gave me a CAT-scan and an ultrasound. The grim results were:

1. I have aggressive prostate cancer.
2. It has spread to most of my bones, right up to my skull.
3. My kidneys are Mal-functioning, so my legs and abdomen are filled with fluid.
4. My red blood cell count is very anemic.
5. I have 3 aneurysms on the aorta and its branches into the legs.
6. Pain in bones when walking, or the acts of standing up, sitting down, lying down, or getting up from bed, or standing.

After my doctor started me on a hormone treatment my PSA declined 90%. But the pain in the bones got worse. Many of you prayed for God's intervention because the cancer was still devouring the bones.

During the past two weeks a strange and unnatural thing happened. The pain in the bones began to diminish, including in my spine which was full of cancer in every vertebra and really hurt. I can now move without pain in most movements. My kidneys are improving because my body is retaining much less fluid. I have more energy, which my physical therapist has noticed in improved exercise performance.

France is calling us to help our Lord Jesus in His desire to enter French hearts and live forever there (Rev. 3:20, John 3:17). You are helping us by prayer to escape Satan's snares of disease and death, I believe. The evil one did not want us to work in France when we first went there in 1969, and I believe he does not want us there now to help them receive Christ and live for His glory. He tried to kill me in 1971 and now, 50 years later.

March 1, 2022 - Update

Suthy is getting better every day, praise the Lord!! He is without any pain!! Still needed healing in his bones because the cancer was eating away at them. He now can walk, lift heavy things and do normal things pain free. All glory to the Lord!!!

EAST EUROPE

Albert & Teuta (Albania) January 27, 2022

In the church plant of Bulgarec, we have seen things returning to pre-pandemic levels of attendance, especially during December and January. This period has been very good with the children and our Christmas events were full. Throughout the month, we focused on the Christmas story with them, and we finished with a snack buffet, games and gifts on Christmas day. Since we received the gift boxes from the Samaritan's Purse organization, we also worked through the twelve-week Bible course that came with the boxes.

The youth group has continued to grow in their knowledge of the Lord as we focused on the Gospel of Matthew. We had a great time with these boys at Christmas, and celebrated together with worship, a Bible message and snacks and games. We were happy that two of our boys, Albi and Damiani, who had left our programs, returned. We continue to pray for Oresti and Gabrieli to come back to the program. During this period, we have held football matches and sleepovers at the church too to build our relationships with them. Teuta has begun a young teenage girls' meeting every Thursday too. And Hektor has been keeping up with the teenage boys every Friday.

The women's group has been meeting every Monday. We begin with a time of coffee and socializing, and in our time of Bible study we have been looking at what the Old Testament reveals about the Lord. The women had a great time together at Christmas with worship and looking at the story of peace in the trenches during World War One. We also had games, dancing, and a meal together.

God has been doing a great thing amongst the older men who are often the most difficult group to reach in Albania. We also had a Christmas celebration with them. They are a generation who grew up under communism and was taught its ideas of atheistic collectivism and against belief in the Lord. It is often very hard to get their attention to talk about Jesus. We use coffee mornings to establish relationships with them and to build their openness to hear about Jesus. Some brothers in Christ from Holland have enabled us to provide a meals service three times a week for six elderly people in Bulgarec, and it has been a blessing for them in difficult times. We have also been able to pass on donations of firewood to them too. These have left a 'fragrance of Jesus' in the community around us. We are doing the same course 'Discovering Christ' with them as we are using with the women.

With our work in the prisons, we have run two courses of evangelism and ten of the prisoners have decided to join the church meetings there. We held a number of smaller meetings celebrating Christmas with the believers inside the prison, together with the educational staff. With the Orthodox it was easier to set things up, but with the Muslims our idea was to invite them to build relationships so that they might be more open to hearing about the Lord in the future.

We have continued with our Bible studies at the church in Korce with the families of those in prison looking at the letters to the Thessalonians. With the help of a Dutch organization, we distributed food aid boxes (and also firewood to some of them) to 55 of these families. We shared with them about the hope we have in Jesus.

Diana & Bogdan (Romania)

January 31, 2022

We currently have thirteen EDGE evangelistic soccer teams. More than fifty percent of the teenage boys (ages 14-18) came as non-Christians and seventeen of them gave their life to Christ last summer. Praise the Lord for this fruit!

The coaches follow up each week with the boys, studying the Gospel of John in one-on-one meetings or a Bible study called GRO (growing in their understanding and relationship with God).

Diana is leading a discipleship group of teenage girls.

Both of us came down with covid and were not able to carry out some ministry plans that were crucial. But we learned that God is sovereign and that He is Lord over our plans and ministry.

March 1, 2022

Romania has a long border with Ukraine and we are receiving refugees in the country. We are humbled to see how people are mobilizing! All churches are opening doors, people are giving food, clothes, towels, toiletries, medicine and many prayers. We have systems in place in order to receive more refugees. In the last two days Romania received over 20,000 refugees and they say that Romania is ready to receive up to 500,000 refugees. May it not be necessary, may evil not prevail.

We need wisdom in knowing how to continue with our plans for this spring.

I (Diana) have a Peace Amidst Conflict Training for women from all over Romania, on March 21-27, the topic is right for this season, but all churches and people are fully stretched with caring for refugees. Praying for discernment and meeting with the team tomorrow to decide how to continue.

Bogdan has a national Edge stage (part of the championship, over 70% of students are not believers), happening the weekend of April 1-3. We need discernment in how to continue. The boys need this connection and time together, but finding places to host them might be impossible as all camps and motels are rented out to refugees.

Then we were supposed to have the national discipleship training for youth leaders in April - we need discernment, the Balkan cup (with teams from Ukraine, Moldova, Estonia, Bulgaria, Hungary and Romania) in May - all countries overwhelmed with the situation, and of course, the borders with Ukraine are closed. So DISCERNMENT. Discernment. Jesus is the Way!

Please pray for the conversations we are having with our young people about fear, anxiety and war. Their friends. Confusion and questions. These are discipleship opportunities. We just had a conversation with them about how to bring the hope of Jesus in the conversations with their friends.

Susan (Romania)

February 23, 2022

I have one more year and will be coming back to the States in January or February 2023. I will certainly continue my discipling, equipping and coaching relationships on-line with individuals and have been asked by the Romanians to stay on for a while part-time (virtually), with consulting and training leaders for the grad ministry. Whether I will continue with IVCF or work as a volunteer remains to be seen.

Recruiting leaders: I am especially excited about finding Cornelia, someone who I had worked with years ago - an unmarried, mature Christian with gifts in wisdom and discernment and a strong vision and commitment for ministry among young professionals. I will be calling on her initially to help with the leading and training of leaders for the ProImpact course in her town, Craiova, but I am HOPING and PRAYING that she will later play an even larger role on a national level. Prayers still needed for more like her!

Website: We ditched the guy who had done a lot of work already on setting up the framework for the site and are starting from zero again with someone new, Ruben, who is excited, committed young and available. I've recruited folks for website design, for our Facebook page, for helping with writing and am now going to focus on finding people to provide content and take over the graphic design for the long haul. I am also collecting and preparing resources and content for the initial launching (Whew!).

Vocational Groups: I've had two meetings so far with the local leaders of the Credinta la Munca (Faith at work) about national vocational groups - this will be more work than I thought but I hope to hand over the brunt of it to others as soon as possible. There are currently pilot vocational groups for IT and Medical folks and we will be trying to find people interested in starting them for Finance/ Economics, Education and Artistic-type vocations. These groups are for mutual support, encouragement and strengthening, and working out Christian perspectives and ethical issues, all in a specific professional context.

ProImpact Course: The development of the second Module of the ProImpact course is going well but SOOOO slow. Please pray that I can finish the last two lessons in good time.

March 1, 2022 - Ukraine crisis:

There is a significant human trafficking problem in Romania. Please pray that Romanians wanting to help will be informed of the dangers and techniques of these criminals and that God would protect vulnerable Ukrainian refugees from them.

I have registered with a kind of Bucharest council of churches to help with housing, activities with kids, food, etc. Please pray that I may be able to serve Jesus faithfully and well as I am given the opportunity.

THE MIDDLE EAST

A & K (Bethlehem) February 21, 2022

At the East Jerusalem International Church during the next two months, we are walking to the cross with Jesus through Mark 14-16. Week by week we will consider the events of Jesus' last days such as the anointing of Jesus by the woman in Bethany and the last supper with the disciples. Next Sunday an influential Jewish follower of Jesus in Israel will share about Jesus' struggle in Gethsemane.

A few weeks ago, as we were beginning our Sunday service at the East Jerusalem International Church, we heard sounds of a conflict that had flared up near Damascus Gate in the Old City. I began our service with the declaration, "We worship in the face of death."

Isn't that what we all do? We worship the Lord who promised eternal life in the face of our mortality. We worship with the hope of the resurrection and eternal life. We declare that life will prevail.

We also declare that peace will prevail. The Lord Jesus is the Prince of Peace. In spite of the signs of impending war in eastern Europe and the reality of the on-going conflict here, we press on in peacemaking. Today I will help lead an online seminar with more than fifty young Christian leaders in India who are concerned for peace in the Holy Land.

NORTH AMERICA

G & E (UN) January 31, 2022

One of the greatest surprises to us as we have ministered to thousands of governing officials, including heads of nation, is how few understand God's concept that they are to be an instrument in the hand of God. Even so-called 'Christians' who enter government seemingly with the intent to improve lives, are often seduced by the trappings of power. If this concept is life-changing for the Christian, imagine how revolutionary it is for those from other backgrounds.

As one part of this change in perspective is our Lord's clarifying to mankind:

"For My thoughts are not your thoughts, and your ways are not My ways." This is the Lord's declaration. "For as heaven is higher than earth, so My ways are higher than your ways, and My thoughts than your thoughts." (Isaiah 55:8-9).

As we pray for and minister to public 'servants', let us help them understand the significance of the word 'servant', and help them to connect to the One they are ultimately called to serve.

Chad & Megan (NYC) February 15, 2022

Our house church has become a "team of teams" and is hoping to train 100,000 new believers/existing believers in the metro NYC area over the next 3 years. So far, we've helped start six house churches and seen thirty-five new followers of Jesus.

I've just become an elder for the Bridge Network, a network of house churches in NYC.

Meg and I are going to be team leaders for a South Asian team of missionaries with the International Project.

Meg and I are going to be Hub Leaders for a program called "Equip" which will train future missionaries in NYC and across the world.

K (UN) February 8, 2022

Due to the ongoing political struggle within this Northeast African country, "M" was posted here on an interim basis and, unbeknownst to me until today, will be returning to K (his capital) next week. So, in this sliver of time, God placed me before him for a personal meeting. In this most friendly conversation, we were also able to focus on the commonalities of our faiths (e.g. One God, man created in His image, and the Fall of man—due to the ONE sin of Adam—in Gen. 1-3).

I then openly reflected on my own personal testimony as I first understood that Jesus Christ had come to—not only "take away the sin of the world"—but to take away MY sin...to be MY own personal sacrifice. He then went to a familiar place of comfort, by acknowledging Jesus as one of their highly revered prophets, along with Moses, Mohammed, and many others. Then, I said to him, "Yes, Ambassador, all prophets are special and speak for God...but only ONE came to die for us and take us TO God...to not only point us to God, but by His own personal sacrifice on our behalf, open the door to Heaven that we might go to Him...forever! I watched as his eyes showed the depth of his own personal pondering of those words. Then, he said, "But you see, we don't believe that Jesus actually died, but that he was miraculously lifted up to heaven by God."

I closed that conversation by leaning toward the ambassador and saying with a sincere smile and tone, "Oh, Ambassador, I do so hope that you might be able to see the love and goodness of Jesus as I do someday! For I believe that He is much more than a prophet. His love, His faithfulness, His work on my behalf that I might be forgiven are truly gifts from God." His words and demeanor showed that he had received my remarks well.

I was reminded again today of a most relevant illustration that I heard many years ago: "personal evangelism is merely one beggar telling another beggar where he found bread." May we be eager and faithful to tell other "beggars" that the Lord brings into our own paths where we have found bread, and where they might find it, too!

Joe & Keijo (Florida) February 13, 2022

Pandemic restrictions and the pivoting of the Rescue Mission men to help our city with non-perishable food packaging and distribution, disrupted Joe's ability to help at their garden for the past two years. So it's been two years of fallow ground out there, and in Central Florida, that amount of time can turn any well intended garden into a jungle!

Last week a group of volunteers weeded and topped the planting beds with compost and I (Joe) will be consulting and working beside the men today to fill the beds with seeds and teaching them tips for success for the spring season; more importantly, spiritual truth with them.

Nadine (Memphis, TN) February 15, 2022

Praise! Grace Chinese church is back in person. It is much easier to interact when there are more than two children to teach. I hope to start training the Sunday school workers in March as I would be stepping away in May for summer ministry starting. My goal is that they will be ready to teach the children on their own when I leave.

Raylon attends an afterschool Good News Club on Mondays. After the Bible lesson, he told me he does not hear Jesus talking to him. He continued to tell me that he gets mad easily at some classmates and lies to his parents. After talking with him some more, I showed him the verse John 1:12. I asked him if he had ever believed in Jesus. He said, "No." I asked if he would like to do that right now, but he wanted to wait and do it when he got home. I handed him a tract and told him it had all the verses we talked about and to tell me his decision next week. It has been a couple of weeks and he has not been back to the club. Pray he comes back soon.

Vaught attends club on Tuesdays. At the end of class he came up to me and said, "Ms. Nadine I'm angry at my brother because he doesn't believe in God." I said I would pray for his brother, and challenged Vaught to pray every day for his brother. As you keep Vaught in prayer, please pray for his brother too.

Dorothy (Washington) February, 2022

Our high-powered radio program, reaching across Nigeria is costly, but in comparison to the high cost of those facing martyrdom for Christ, it is our privilege to bring them His Word and share the great news in the world with others! We have received encouraging feedback from HAUSA-speakers and IGBO-speakers. Here are a few of them:

- I need to accept Jesus because I want to be saved. What shall I do?
- I am now a Christian. I have so many challenges ahead of me, please pray for me.
- I really need to become a Christian but I am afraid of what my people will do to me. I will soon contact you, but before then just pray for me.
- I am tired of practicing witchcraft and want to come to Christ. Would you help me?