

SUMMER 2022

# V+H

MAGAZINE

VOL. 17 NO.2

# DEMONSTRATING GOD'S LOVE

STORIES FROM THE FIELD



**REACH  
BEYOND**  
VOICE+HANDS, TOGETHER

INSIDE THIS ISSUE

P.6-14 | COVER STORIES

P.4 | GLOBAL SNAPSHOTS



**LETTER FROM  
THE PRESIDENT**



## Being in His presence...

Dear friend of Reach Beyond,

Do you ever feel overwhelmed by all of the things that you need to get done? Are you worried or stressed about the challenges you are facing in everyday life? It can be easy to become so focused on **doing** things that we completely lose perspective on what is **most important**.

Mary and Martha were two sisters who had very different personalities and priorities. Luke's Gospel tells us Martha was busy with all of the preparations for dinner, while Mary simply sat at the feet of Jesus listening to His every word. Martha was not happy with Mary's lack of situational awareness. Martha was so frustrated she was the only one actually doing anything, that she went to Jesus and demanded He tell Mary to get up and help her.

"Martha, Martha," the Lord answered, "you are worried and upset about many things, but few things are needed. Really, only one. Mary has chosen what is better, and it will not be taken away from her." Luke 10:41-42

Accomplishing the tyranny of the urgent is what people wired like Martha are great at doing. God uniquely equipped each of these sisters with different spiritual gifts. Both Mary and Martha were showing their love to Jesus, but in different ways. They both had good intentions—yet Jesus made it clear that Mary's desire to be in His presence was the better choice.

This past week I was reminded again how we do not need to worry, for our God knows everything we are facing, and He will answer our prayers. God is in control of every situation, and we can depend on Him. Jesus tells us many times not to worry or be afraid. He wants us to find true freedom that comes with simply abiding in Him.

# “Love one another. As I have loved you...”

*“A new command I give you: Love one another. As I have loved you, so you must love one another. By this everyone will know that you are my disciples, if you love one another.”*

**LUKE 13:34-35 (NIV)**

At Reach Beyond we have a lot of amazing women who, like Martha and Mary, use their talents and abilities to demonstrate God’s love to others. We have women who are gifted in leadership and administration serving on many levels who keep our ministry organized and running effectively. Others are directly engaged in areas of media, healthcare, community development and discipleship. Many of our missionary moms face the challenges of raising their families in a different culture. Some women live in places where talking about Jesus publicly is risky, and so they use creative ways to demonstrate God’s love, including teaching practical skills or English classes. Many women also use their gift of hospitality to build relationships where they can privately share the Gospel, hold Bible studies and make disciples.

I hope you will be encouraged by reading what God is doing because of your faithful partnership in making the Good News of Jesus known to unreached people among the nations.

**Join us in celebrating and praising God  
for what He is doing!**



**Daniel Enns** | President

Voice + Hands Magazine is written and produced by Reach Beyond through the generosity of friends of the ministry.

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# GLOBAL SNAPSHOTS

## WHAT'S HAPPENING AROUND THE MINISTRY



### CREATIVE ACCESS COUNTRY

Thirty-two basic medical providers recently completed a training course taught by Eric\* and Tim\* who are medical professionals from Reach Beyond and a partner ministry. The 36 credit-hour course consisted of a series of basic health seminars taught over a period of several months.

Eric and Tim usually provide a coffee/tea break for the students—something that is very important in a culture that emphasizes hospitality. As they prepared for the final seminar, they realized that it would take place during Ramadan—a time when Muslims observe strict fasting until after sundown. Muslims don't even drink water during the fast, let alone coffee.

They decided to focus their energy instead on the graduation celebration when they present certificates. Eric and Tim purchased flowers and put together packets of fruit and nuts that the graduates could take home to their families to eat after sundown. As they finished handing out these special awards, Eric and Tim were surprised to find themselves on the receiving end of an unexpected presentation by Ana\*, the oldest participant.

Ana went to the front of the room and began to speak a blessing over them. She blessed them for their work and the knowledge they had shared, but more importantly, she spoke about the peace she and the other providers experienced when they came to these seminars. Ana shared that they didn't feel stressed, or that someone was critically watching over their shoulder, but rather they felt safe and encouraged. They were able to express their own fears and inadequacies regarding the pressures of their profession. Ana said they now had the courage to apply their newly gained knowledge and skills.

This moment was profound for Eric and Tim. They realized that these rural medical providers had clearly experienced the fruits of God's Kingdom.

Eric and Tim had been rather discouraged at times because they were not able to openly share about their faith through these seminars. They had been praying that the participants would see an obvious difference in their lives and how they go about their work. Ana's blessing was an answer to their prayers. Pray that Ana and the other medical providers would soon have the opportunity to learn more about the hope that we have found in Jesus.

### EUROPE/EURASIA

When the bombs began falling around their home in Kyiv, Ukraine, Sergei and Natasha were forced to make a difficult decision. Fearing for their lives, they gathered their three young children and fled to safety, leaving everything they had behind.

Sergei, Natasha and their family are among the estimated eight million Ukrainians who have sought refuge in neighboring countries. Sergei and his family ended up in Croatia where they were connected to a local church where Reach Beyond missionaries Mario and Suzi are engaged in ministry. This church is one of three churches that Reach Beyond is partnering with to provide relief to refugee families in Croatia. Additional funds are being used through the Croatian church to send humanitarian aid to Ukraine.

Reach Beyond UK has also been partnering with a nearby church to send relief aid to Ukraine. Since March, they have raised over £40,000 from generous people around the world to purchase requested medical supplies, sleeping bags and other much-needed items. Church members, friends and even local hospitals donated additional medical supplies, vitamins, and other items. Two shipments have been sent so far to a ministry partner in Poland, where they are then taken into Ukraine to be distributed by the Ukrainian church.

While Sergei and Natasha don't know what their future holds, they are grateful for the loving care they have received from the Croatian church and Reach Beyond. They sent this greeting, "We would like to say a big thank you to all of you who gave funds to help us. We are so appreciative that God is using you and others to help us and help Ukrainians. Pray for Ukraine. Thank you everyone!"



### GET INVOLVED IN THESE MINISTRIES

[REACHBEYOND.ORG/EEU](https://reachbeyond.org/eeu)

*\*names changed for security*

## SUB-SAHARAN AFRICA

The moment they heard the sound of Good Shepherd Radio on the air, the people at the church next door began praising God with dancing and singing. The pastor had just finished his sermon when Reach Beyond engineer Alfred started the first test broadcast at the station.

Alfred described what he saw, "Wow, it was awesome. When they first heard the station on the air, their mood changed, you could see that they were really happy. One of the women came out and asked who installed the radio station. Pastor Tee looked at me and said, 'It was this young guy.' The women were so happy that they wanted to lift me up and carry me. Their joy was awesome, I don't know how to explain it but it was something that came from their hearts—and you could feel it. I was really happy that I could make them smile and see the joy flow out of their hearts."

Good Shepherd Radio was installed by Reach Beyond engineers Alfred and Alex, on behalf of Radio Africa Network, a strategic partner ministry. Reach Beyond provided the transmitter and studio mixer, and Radio Africa Network provided the rest of the equipment. The radio ministry is led by Pastor Tee with both experienced and young volunteers from different churches creating programming and running the station.

Alex describes Pastor Tee as a faithful, humble servant, "You can just stand back and watch him demonstrating God's love to everyone he interacts with. We left feeling really content that the station would continue to do that same thing now for many thousands of people—loving them and drawing them closer to the Lord and discipling them."

Pastor Tee has been encouraged by the response. He recently wrote, "Good Shepherd Radio is being embraced by the entire community. We have received calls and information from places some distance away telling us about the clarity of our radio signal. People from our community and several churches have started contributing to the cause of Good Shepherd Radio. We also printed and distributed flyers to specific communities and leaders offering them access to radio time free of charge. Some village elders and leaders have walked to the studio to thank us and to utilize the station to speak to their community. This has captured the attention of thousands of people to our programs."

Pastor Tee finished by saying, "Thanks to all of you for your prayers and collectively working together to make this dream come true."

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**GET INVOLVED IN THESE MINISTRIES**  
[REACHBEYOND.ORG/SSA](http://REACHBEYOND.ORG/SSA)

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**“Thanks to all of you  
 for your prayers and collectively  
 working together to make this  
 dream come true.”**





 A background image of a woman with her back to the camera, sitting on a rocky outcrop and looking out over a river with several green, vegetated islands. The sky is bright and hazy.
 

# DEMONSTRATING GOD'S LOVE

## STORIES FROM THE FIELD

### RACHEL'S\* STORY

## BUILDING RELATIONSHIPS

Rachel is a young woman who wanted to commit her life and skills to God. A short-term trip to serve refugee women in the Asia Pacific region turned into a life-changing commitment as a missionary. "I realized that I was thinking a little selfishly, wondering what plans God had for 'my life.' The real question is, 'What is God doing in the world? And how can I give my life to that purpose?'" In 2020 Rachel became a Reach Beyond missionary and moved thousands of miles from home.

Rachel ministers to women from an unreached people group who are now also living far from home. She calls them "my girls", "Most were trafficked here to be child brides. Once the girls arrive, they're immediately married to a man who is older and who they've never met. I've heard the stories of my girls, and it's heartbreaking. But when they talk about it, they speak of it like it's normal. Because for them it is. It's all of their stories. So my goal in that is to help them see that they're precious and valuable to me, and ultimately to God."

Poverty, discrimination, and isolation have created countless challenges for these young women, including difficulty finding care during and after pregnancy. "These women do not have access to perinatal education or care in this country. They have low health literacy and education in general." Racial discrimination by local healthcare workers, costs that they can't afford,

*\*names changed for security*

and their status as illegal residents deters many of these soon-to-be moms from seeking care until very late in their pregnancies—often in their 6th or 7th month.

A nurse by trade, Rachel established a perinatal health care program that equips expecting mothers for healthy pregnancies and childbirth. It also includes postnatal checkup visits and provides additional resources and supplies. Without a program like this, these mothers would have extremely limited access to the support they need to ensure their newborns thrive. The program also provides a starting point for Rachel to engage in longer term relationships. "News of the program spreads really fast."

**“This is what  
He has  
asked of me...”**

A big part of Rachel's ministry involves maintaining relationships with women she's met through the perinatal program. Transplanted to a new country, their religion, culture, and security concerns keep them mostly isolated in their apartments. "They have many, many needs, but one of those needs is friendship. We'll cook together, eat together, go to the market, and just do life together." Rachel provides a crucial relationship—an empathetic and caring spirit—to women who have experienced an incredible amount of trauma.

*Rachel uses illustrations to engage with her girls and help them learn English.*



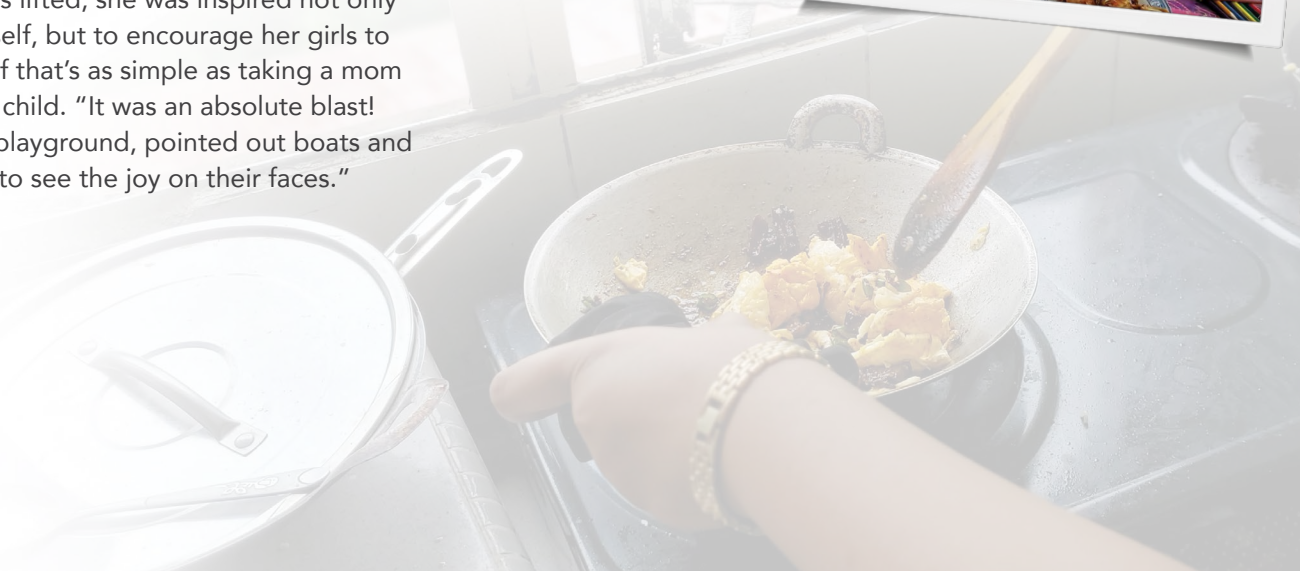
“They have many, many needs, but one of those needs is friendship.”

But building that relationship is not without its challenges. Many of the women from this unreached people group are understandably wary of strangers, to say nothing of the language barrier. “It’s a very hard language. It’s unwritten—basically no one who knows it, writes it. For the first several months I did it the old-school way. We didn’t speak each other’s language, so we would just point at things and hope for the best!” But after months of practice and God’s blessing in finding a teacher, Rachel is developing a practical aptitude for the language. And that skill makes a big difference to the women Rachel works with; learning the language further demonstrates compassion and a desire to connect, “A lot of the girls are surprised when I speak to and understand them in their language.”

COVID also presented unprecedented challenges. “A month into my stay here, COVID hit. So it’s really been wild. All the plans I had at first were pulverized.” Lockdowns drastically altered what it meant to engage in ministry. For the women Rachel serves, however, quarantine changed very little in their day to day life. While frustration and weariness weighed heavily on Rachel, as lockdowns lifted, she was inspired not only to get back out herself, but to encourage her girls to do so as well. Even if that’s as simple as taking a mom to the park with her child. “It was an absolute blast! We climbed on the playground, pointed out boats and clouds. It was great to see the joy on their faces.”

While the work of educating and caring for expectant and new mothers is crucial, Rachel doesn’t miss opportunities to capitalize on everyday activities to build relationships and equip and empower the women she works with. Rachel has a passion for art and has used the medium to connect with women, and their children. As she was beginning to develop language skills, Rachel created colorful tableaus of everyday objects, fruits, vegetables, and the apartments her girls live in. She used those drawings to help her learn new vocabulary and now she uses them to teach them English.

*Rachel builds friendship with women through everyday activities like going to the market, cooking and eating together.*





Recently, a fellow member of Rachel's church began a sewing ministry, and asked Rachel if any of the women she meets with would be interested in joining. "I know nothing about sewing. Good thing there are people who are really good at it and have the passion for teaching!" She was able to bring some of her girls along, and since then they have engaged and started attending on their own. "They have learned how to make hair scrunchies from pattern to marketable product. They make money for each item they finish, which they are pretty pumped about. I'm just so excited to see them excited, having fun, and learning skills that will help them in the future!"

Rachel lives in a sprawling apartment complex and has opportunities to connect and develop friendships with her neighbors. Those relationships are essential—a chance to introduce more people to the hope, faith, and love that Rachel possesses through Christ. But they're also as an avenue to receive friendship, support, encouragement, and sometimes share in some incredible local meals. "I can see God's fingerprints all over this neighborhood. The timing, the work we've done previously, the old connections, the new workers, the language skills. All of the pieces are in place. And these buildings are overflowing with new friends!"

As a woman uniquely equipped to minister to women in South East Asia, Rachel is living out the calling to be the voice and hands of Jesus.

REACHBEYOND.ORG

“...go where He says to go, and love who He asks me to love. It's scary and hard but I will follow the Savior and Shepherd of my soul.”

“The goal of everything that I do is to build relationships that will allow me to share His love and eventually share the Good News.” The obstacles to sharing the Gospel are numerous; the women Rachel works with know she's a Christian, but they are very entrenched in their own religion. Yet Rachel sees this as her calling, “This is what He has asked of me—to leave everything, go where He says to go, and love who He asks me to love. It's scary and hard, but I will follow the Savior and Shepherd of my soul. What a privilege it is to spend my life making Jesus known to those who have never heard!” ■







“It was really exciting...  
We watched God begin to  
transform their lives.”

### SUZANNE'S\* STORY

## ENGAGING ENGLISH LEARNERS

For Suzanne\*, the English language has been the gateway to share Jesus's love with people all over the world. “Just about everywhere you go, people want to learn English. It is the path for them to improve their lives. Some want to learn English so they can attend a college or university in the West. For others it is essential for their professional career. But more than that, the ability to speak English creates opportunities for just about anybody to find work in the restaurant, hotel or tourism industry.”

The ability to use English to reach people from another culture was a Godsend for Suzanne, “I knew that God had called me to become a missionary, but I arrived on the field struggling to speak the language. I was really bad at it. I wanted so much to minister to people in that country, but I could barely hold a conversation. I was so discouraged. I wondered if I had made a mistake by coming to field.

“I met with Jim, who was Reach Beyond's pastor to missionaries, and his wife Trish. I told them privately how I was thinking of leaving the field. I wondered if there was someplace else I could go to do ministry to non-Christians using English. They encouraged me to pray about it, and they began praying for me too.”

About six weeks later, Suzanne had a “chance” conversation with another missionary. He had just finished talking with listeners of a new radio program designed to help them learn English. The listeners loved everything about the program. One listener said that the only thing it needed was an opportunity for them to practice speaking English.

*\*names changed for security*

Suzanne knew immediately that this was what God wanted her to do. God had answered their prayers.

Suzanne enlisted others to help and they began a group where English learners could practice speaking with missionaries and expats from around the world. “We talked about all sorts of topics at these weekly meetings. We were always looking for ways to point them to spiritual truths. We asked them questions that would open the door for spiritual conversations. We were meeting in an international church, so it was easy and natural to talk about Jesus.”

While the group met to practice English, it also met a much deeper need. “Many cultures place a high value on relationships. There is a certain bond and friendship that happens when you meet with people regularly. Of course, it helps that we demonstrate God's love and grace when they make mistakes. The learners always want to know more about us, and that gives us opportunities to share what we believe.”

The end result was that many English learners began a spiritual journey that led them to follow Jesus. “It was really exciting to see what God was doing. We saw many of the learners begin to attend the international church. We watched God begin to transform their lives.

“We realized this outreach was something that could be used almost anywhere in the world.” Suzanne would move halfway around the globe to begin English conversation groups and train leaders in a completely different culture.

In 2017, Suzanne's life took an unexpected direction. “I was asked to write out my dream job description. By that time, God had laid it on my heart to reach people in the Middle East.”

God led Suzanne towards one country where traditional missionary and evangelism methods are virtually impossible. "I took a class on social media. One of the assignments was to pick an app or a platform, play with it and figure out how to use that to engage the people you want to reach. So, I did. And before I knew it, I had a ministry with people from a country I wanted to reach—the very same people that my co-workers had spent years praying for and trying to find some way to reach them."

God then connected Suzanne with a Christian couple who had fled from religious persecution in that same country. They gave Suzanne and other volunteers valuable advice on how to engage with people from that culture. The result became a collaborative ministry partnership now called The Ephraim Project.

Suzanne says, "We are able to talk about all sorts of topics on social media. But public conversations about Christianity are not safe for people living in that country. So, we look for ways we can build relationships with people and for opportunities to have private one-on-one conversations."

Building relationships and gaining trust in that context is a long journey where time is not measured in days or weeks, rather months and years. In time, Suzanne looks for ways to point people to the Scriptures and eventually invite them to regularly study God's Word with her.

**"I never imagined that God would use me to share the Gospel with people in the Middle East."**

One example is Joseph\*, who Suzanne has been engaging on social media publicly and privately for over three years. "This year he began reading the Word with me. He was so very excited when he read the Bible for the first time. We have had lots of great conversations. In the midst of one of these, I told Joseph that God is pursuing him, and Joseph responded, 'No, I am running to Him.'" Suzanne says, "This is what we are hoping and praying for!"

As Suzanne reflects on her ministry today, she says, "I never imagined that God would use me to share the Gospel with people in the Middle East. And that I'd be able to lead people like Joseph towards Jesus. God truly works in amazing ways." ■

**PLEASE PRAY FOR THE UNREACHED**

*Prayer*  
**WORLD**

You can receive prompts that will help you pray specifically for the unreached, as well as Reach Beyond missionaries, ministries, and partners around the world.

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### DAWN'S STORY

## CREATING A SWEET SPACE OF GRACE

When Dawn said “yes” to becoming a full-time missionary, she had little idea of the journey God would lead her on. A nurse by profession, Dawn travelled with a missions team to Ecuador in 1999 to serve at Reach Beyond’s hospital in Shell. During that trip she met her future husband, Vinicio, who worked on the hospital’s facilities management team.

As a newlywed couple, Dawn and Vinicio hoped to continue serving in Ecuador, but were encouraged to go back to the United States so Vinicio could complete his American citizenship paperwork. What they thought would take five years...turned into 15.

During these years they prayed as they looked at any ministry that would be a great fit for them and their entire family. As it turned out, God led them back to Shell, Ecuador.

As a mom, Dawn was concerned about how her three children would adjust to their new environment. They were going to go to Ecuadorian schools even though they needed to learn the language. “It’s tough on a parent because you never know how their future is going to go. As a missionary, you’re not sure of the hard things your children may have to live through because of your decisions.”

Dawn enrolled her children in the Ecuadorian school system and quickly saw the scarcity of resources. She decided to volunteer at the school and was surprised by its lack of reading material. Dawn knew how important books are for children as they learn to read—even more so for her own children who were also learning a new language.

“We felt like it was a little space of grace that the Lord provided for such a time as this.”

Dawn asked one of the teachers, “Where can I find reading material for them?” She replied, “Our kids here aren’t readers. There’s nothing for them to read.” Dawn wanted to rectify the situation. “I felt I had to do something to help, so I began looking for reading material for them.”

Dawn located a public library approximately 45 minutes away. “After I arrived at the library, it was hard to believe there was no children’s literature section. I then decided to drive two hours to the closest bookstore. When I arrived, there was very little children’s reading material to be found. I bought up as many children’s books as they had in the store.”

Dawn began collecting books wherever she could find them. She was thrilled to be able to provide reading materials to the school. “I wish it could have been a library, but it’s all we had, and we were grateful.”

When the pandemic hit, Dawn saw how deeply it affected Ecuadorian families because of their culture. “It’s common for people to be in close contact with each other. They touch everyone’s face, kiss each other...it’s genuinely a very close family culture.”



# COME *serve* WITH US

## CURRENT JOB OPPORTUNITIES

### SPAIN

#### Audio Technician

Record, edit and produce radio programs for FM radio station. Use your audio technology, multi-track recording, or audio engineering skills to help with other projects to reach people in North Africa and the Middle East with the Good News of Jesus.

### CENTRAL ASIA

#### Medical Professionals

Use your medical skills to demonstrate and share the Gospel as you serve among the unreached. A variety of medical professionals are needed, including physicians, mid-level providers, nurses, and others.

### SUB-SAHARAN AFRICA

#### Project Coordinator

Manage and oversee all aspect of projects that are helping reach unreached people in the region. You will develop close relationships with local media partners and work to meet their needs.

### ECUADOR

#### Training Latin Missionaries

(CORRIENTES)

Corrientes is a program for personalized training, mentoring, and equipping of Latin missionary candidates for bi-vocational missionary service around the world. Positions needed are Director, Spiritual Direction Mentor, and ESL Teacher.

### ASIA PACIFIC

#### Media Trainer

Join our excellent team of trainers as we develop and deliver online media training based on the expressed needs of ministry partners. Create content that will help local partners grow dynamic, sustainable ministries through media.

### GENERAL

#### Ministries Website Manager

Work with ministry teams regarding website design, function and maintenance. Consult with various ministries about design decisions, liaise between ministries and third-party developers when necessary, and provide support for website-related issues.

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We're also looking for community development professionals, engineers, teachers, and more!

**If any of these opportunities speak to you, let's talk. We can help!**



If you know someone who has a heart to share the Gospel and has skills that would match these needs, please feel free to share these opportunities with your social network. Thank you!

**LEARN MORE ABOUT THESE AND OTHER OPPORTUNITIES AT  
REACHBEYOND.ORG/CURRENT-OPPURTUNITIES**



"It was obvious that parents were very concerned about their children." Dawn remembered, "They could see their intense anxiety and depression and didn't know how to handle it or how to help their children."

One story that greatly impacted Dawn was a 14-year-old child who lost her grandmother, "She was supposed to be doing full-time online school as well as taking care of her grandmother who was suffering from renal failure. Her grandmother died one day while she was taking care of her. No one else was there at that moment except for her 5-year-old sibling. Her parents were away at work. She had no peers or outside help. She was hopelessly stuck in a situation—alone and afraid."

“...excited to see God working in people’s lives through this Bible study.”

"We heard this story and thought, 'Why don't we use the upstairs room of our Voz y Manos office as a space where parents could send their children to get some interaction with each other? Why don't we give them that option?' So we set up some rules to coincide with the government's COVID guidelines and began inviting families to send their children. We prayed they would."

Parents did begin sending their children, which helped them feel some sense of normalcy again. Dawn says, "We were happy we had that space available. We felt like it was a little space of grace that the Lord provided for such a time as this."

Another way Dawn connects with neighbors and families in the community is through the Sunday School class that she began teaching in 2017. The class started out as being for 12-16 year-olds. Little did Dawn know how vastly different the group would become.

The group began to grow by word of mouth. People asked, "Can I bring my little brother? I can't leave him alone." Dawn told them, "Ok, but you have to watch them while you're here." Dawn also invited Sophia\*, a \*25-year-old attorney, and 19-year-old Maria to join the class after hearing they were looking for a Bible study.

The leadership team is as diverse as the kids attending the Bible study. One guy, a computer engineer in his 20's suggested, "Why don't we do Romans?" Dawn recalls, "I thought that was a good idea, but I asked him, 'Can you find me a video series or curriculum in Spanish that can help us?'

Well, we couldn't find anything that covered the entire book of Romans, but we were able to find some videos that had overviews of the book, so we showed the video. It was sort of a panoramic view of Romans."

"As we went through the series, one of the girls in college said, 'It's too fast. We can't do Romans this way.' I didn't have video materials to run through one chapter at a time, so she asked if we could try to read one chapter at a time. I wasn't sure if I would be able to answer all their questions if we read verse by verse. I'm thinking, 'I'm a nurse, not a theologian by trade. We can read it, but we'll see what the Holy Spirit provides.'

"The way we went through the book was to divide up the chapter each week and have every small group teach a portion of the chapter to the larger group. They used 11x17 sized cardstock to create a visual aid for their teaching. The last week, we laid out all the pieces of paper side by side and I said, 'Hey guys, look what you did! You basically created a graphic commentary on the entire book of Romans.' You could see the joy on the kids' faces as they looked over their work."

Dawn is excited to see God working in people's lives through this Bible study. "When we got to the last chapter of Romans, we thought we'd do it the same way we did the other chapters, but it's basically Paul saying goodbye, giving greetings, remember this person, remember that person. I said, 'Let's see what benefit we can find for us in this last chapter.'

"We started looking at the individual people Paul was naming. We noticed such a diverse group of people who made up the Roman church, including many women. One of the older gals in the Bible study started to cry. She said, 'Look at all the women that are listed here! I am so interested to learn that women in ministry isn't a new thing! It's not a fallout from some modern political movement. It's not the church modifying itself to follow modern cultural change. This is the way it's always been!'" ■



## AMY'S\* STORY

# PATIENTLY WAITING ON HIM

"It's hard to believe it's been almost five years since we made an important life-changing decision to move to Central Asia." Amy\* was apprehensive about their move in 2017, but she and her husband Matthew\* knew that God had given each of them a heart to serve overseas. Looking back, they are very grateful for how God orchestrated their journey into the unknown.

Amy and Matthew met in college through a missions program and were married in 2006. Matthew was studying to be a physician's assistant, and they both agreed they would finish college first, and then talk about going to the mission field.

**"While we might not see the fruit yet,  
we know God is working."**

Amy remembers, "As we were finishing school, we started knocking on doors, and talking to agencies to see how we could get connected with other missionaries. Nothing felt right at that time. We felt God telling us to wait, but that wasn't what we thought was part of our plan. We had our own timing, but we know now it wasn't His timing."

School loans and other life issues needed to be dealt with, and they were being blessed with a beautiful growing family. Ten years passed before they revisited serving overseas.

Matthew was working as a physician's assistant in an EMT clinic. He approached their church pastor regarding the possibility of doing medical missions work. Their pastor

suggested that they attend a medical conference in Louisville, Kentucky. "See if you can find something for our church," was the request from their pastor.

At the conference Amy and Matthew connected with a Reach Beyond missionary who suggested they consider serving in a specific Central Asian city. "Where is that?", Amy asked. She had never heard of the city and had to look it up on a map. The staff member told them, "There are several reasons that city would be a good fit for you: There is already a medical clinic there, it's a good place to raise a family, and there is a good international school."

Matthew visited the city in 2015 and they made the decision to move forward. They began raising support with Reach Beyond and left for the field two years later.

"After we arrived, our story looked so much different than what we would have written for ourselves. We had to persevere to keep our vision." Alluding to Matthew 13, Amy recalls, "The ground was so hard, it felt like we were pulling up rocks. I'm not even sure if we've gotten to any planting yet. But we know God is at work in these people."

Being a believer in this creative access country is not easy. The church in their city was young—less than two years old—when Amy and Matthew arrived. New believers struggle with walking a spiritual path that no one in their family has walked before. Many are facing persecution at home and work. Believers have few, if any friends, who understand or support them outside of the church and Christian workers.

Bible studies allow Amy and Matthew to encourage and help people grow in their faith.

Amy is extremely busy day-to-day as a full-time mom, running the household and volunteering at a library where she reads English to the kids one day a week. And Matthew loves engaging in medical work around the country.

Restrictions limit their ability to share their faith publicly. But that doesn't stop them from demonstrating God's love to everyone they encounter. At times, it is easy to get discouraged and wonder if it's all worth it. But as Amy points out, "While we might not see the fruit just yet, we know God is working!" ■

\*names changed for security

# THANK YOU!

TO OUR **+partner** FRIENDS

AND ALL FAITHFUL SUPPORTERS FOR YOUR PRAYERS AND GIFTS!

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*\$30 provided one well baby kit: \$175 provided one mother with complete perinatal care.*

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**OUR MISSION:** Serving as the voice and hands of Jesus, we declare and demonstrate Jesus Christ through media, healthcare and community development

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