

Missions



Philippines

An Adventure
of Redemption

Austria

Reaching a Post-Christian
Society

Zambia

A Construction Team
Builds up the Lord's Work



THINKING IT THROUGH

BY MATTHEW GLOCK

Where Are You Staying?

“John stood with two of his disciples. And looking at Jesus as He walked, he said, ‘Behold the Lamb of God!’

The two disciples heard him speak, and they followed Jesus. Then Jesus turned, and seeing them following, said to them, ‘What do you seek?’

They said to Him, ‘Rabbi . . . where are You staying?’

He said to them, ‘Come and see.’ They came and saw where He was staying, and remained with Him that day.” (John 1:35–39)

In this first recorded conversation of Jesus in the Gospel of John, Jesus asks two disciples why they are following Him. Do they want to know more about who He is or what He teaches? Their answer, in the form of a question, seems to be unusual: “Where are you staying?”

“Staying” is one way that translators render the Greek word *meno* into English. A word search reveals 34 occurrences in the Gospel of John. It is also translated as “to remain” and “to abide.” The first usage is at the baptism of Jesus when John says, “I saw the Spirit descending from heaven like a dove, and he *remained* upon Him. I did not know Him, but He who sent me to baptize with water said to me, ‘Upon whom you see the Spirit descending, and *remaining* on Him, this is He who baptizes with the Holy Spirit.” (John 1:32–33) Later, in John 15:5, Jesus declares, “I am the vine, you are the branches. He who *abides* in Me, and I in him, bears much fruit; for without Me you can do nothing.”

The word *meno* is used to convey the idea of habitual presence or abiding: the Spirit abides in Jesus, Jesus abides in His disciples, and His disciples abide in Him. Hearing the Word and putting it into action—praying, having fellowship with other believers, and breaking bread—reflects what it means to abide in Jesus Christ. How does this fuller understanding of *meno* inform our comprehension of the disciples’ question, “Where are you staying?” They wanted to be in the place where Jesus was abiding. They sought to dwell with Him, to be with Him.

This reinforces another aspect of “abiding” that God teaches

us through John’s Gospel. Jesus’s answer to the disciples shows us the way. He says, “Come and see.” Jesus took them to where He was physically abiding. Followers of Jesus Christ will not only abide with Him like the branch remains in the vine, they will also “abide” by having an intentional, habitual presence in the places where they live and worship.

We live in a world that celebrates constant movement. We travel farther and faster than ever before. When we cannot go, we can simply use technology to evaporate the time and distance that separates us from our destination, giving the illusion that we have no limits. We become disconnected, as if we have no roots, lacking a sense of place, never truly dwelling where we actually live.

As followers of Christ, we need to think deeply about the condition of our world and of our place in it. We affirm, with the apostle Peter, that we are citizens of heaven and members of God’s people. We know the location of our true home, yet we

We cannot lose sight of the fact that where we live and where we gather for worship are located in neighborhoods in this world.

cannot lose sight of the fact that where we live and where we gather for worship are located in neighborhoods in this world. How do these places fit into God’s plan?

When we abide in Jesus, we become aware of what it means to live, or abide, in a place. As we assume a habitual presence in our neighborhoods, we can stop and listen to what’s being said by our neighbors, whether it be where we live or where we worship. As we demonstrate a way of living in our world that is not caught up in the lie that we are without limits, God will lead people to us and we, like Jesus, can ask them, “What are you seeking?” Then we can invite them into our homes and places of worship so that we may lead them to Jesus. ■

Matthew Glock serves in France.

Vol. 48, No. 6. Christian Missions in Many Lands (ISSN 0744-4052) is published eleven times a year by Christian Missions in Many Lands, Inc., Belmar, New Jersey. Periodical postage paid at Belmar, New Jersey, and additional mailing offices. POSTMASTER: Send United States address changes to Christian Missions in Many Lands, Inc., PO Box 13, Spring Lake, NJ 07762. Send Canadian address changes to MSC Canada, 101 Amber Street, Suite 16, Markham, Ontario L3R 3B2. MSC Canada publication agreement Number 40026478. All correspondence, including address changes, gifts for missionary work, and for expenses should be sent by Canadian readers to MSC Canada, 101 Amber Street, Suite 16, Markham, Ontario L3R 3B2 and by United States readers to Christian Missions in Many Lands, Inc., PO Box 13, Spring Lake, NJ 07762. Copyright © CMML. All rights reserved.

COVER PHOTO: Spearfishing in the Philippines—Photo by Wowie Wong of Studio H2O



Reaching the Sama Dilaut

AN ADVENTURE OF REDEMPTION

BY DANIEL MINNELLA

Staring at the steaming pile of boiled fish entrails and the side of roasted, grated cassava, I remember the missionary stories I learned in Sunday school years ago. “This is what it takes, I guess.” I squirm a little as I raise the ball of food to my mouth and see the faces of my companions watching me as if I were about to perform an impossible feat. I drop the warm, spiny ball into my mouth and chew. “Lord, please don’t let me barf,” I pray. I force a smile and say, “Ahap itu!” (“It’s good!”) Those sitting on the bamboo floor around me all smile and laugh. They offer me a communal jug of water. I graciously drink the water to wash down the small needles of bone sticking in my throat. They smile and laugh again. “Milikan-Sama na iya” (“He’s an American-Sama now”), they say. I smile genuinely.

The Sama Dilaut—or Badjao as they’re called by outsiders—are some of the most marginalized people in the Philippines. Many have given up helping these people because connecting with them is so difficult. And here was God giving me a way!

Accepting the call to go

“But why me?” Flashbacks of my former life filled my head only months before my meal with the Sama Dilaut. I was overwhelmed with the guilt of knowing how selfishly I lived my life in college when I broke ties with my Christian community to wander Prodigal-son style instead of following what I knew to be true.

The summer after graduating high school, I spent a month in Colombia, South America, sharing the Gospel in Barranquilla’s lower-income suburbs. We saw incredible changes in people’s

lives through the power of the good news. When I came back from that trip and began my college life, I was on a spiritual high—I felt like changing the whole world. My idealism quickly faded, however, as I looked around at my Christian peers on campus who were, to me, narrow-minded, hokey, and judgmental. I avoided them and eventually found myself judging modern Christianity as a whole.

As my values changed, I fell for the temptations of the world. My life became increasingly messed up as the years went by, and I found myself in trouble. To escape, I left home and headed to Texas. In the quietness of a chicken farm there, I had time to sober up and reflect on where my decisions had led me. I realized I was running from God, and I needed a turnaround. Falling in love with God again and letting Him work in my life became

my new adventure. After about a year in Texas, I felt it was time to go back home. But to what? I wanted to amend those years wasted in hedonism, but I didn't feel worthy to go abroad as a missionary again. I felt I had permanently disqualified myself from ministry.

Then, an idea surfaced: with my college degree focused on video production, I could bless missionaries by following their work and bringing their stories back to their supporters. The first candidates who came to mind were a missionary couple in the Philippines who have been in the field for 50 years. In November 2014, I arrived in Davao City with a backpack, camera equipment, and a plan to stay six weeks to make a short film about Steve and Dottie St. Clair (*Missionary Prayer Handbook* Day 9). While I was staying in their house, an electrical power surge changed everything. My camera, lights, rechargeable microphone batteries, and spare camera battery were now all useless. "Now what?" I asked God. "I haven't been here a week, and now I can't even do what I came here for!"

Forced to abandon the video idea, I went with the flow and quickly jumped into the daily activities surrounding these veteran missionaries. Amid the hubbub of the ministry's various aspects, I felt like my personal idiosyncrasies and past inadequacies were part of God's preparing me for this new, unique way of life. God didn't need me to make a video; He needed me to trust Him where I was. I felt peace in knowing I was exactly where I needed to be.

My six weeks in Davao were coming to an end. At night, I was restless. "Don't go back home" was the cryptic message of every dream. The St. Clairs agreed. They offered me a bed and three meals a day and freedom to build a relationship with God. But what about my life back home? I called my father and told him how I was feeling. "Good," he said. "Stay." So I never packed my bags.

Meeting the Sama Dilaut

Day after day, I absorbed the culture around me, pondering the language, trying all the foods, and visiting every corner of the city. After a while, understanding what was going on around me became more natural. Words made sense, cultural differences became less uncomfortable, and I found myself involved in all sorts of ministries. While ministering to the homeless in Davao, I met a Sama Dilaut man for the first time. I was at church, passing out bread and coffee during morning prayer, when he saw me. To him, I was a potential customer who might pay top dollar for the pearls he was selling. Dottie was there

and she shifted his focus to God. He invited us to his house to meet the pastor who lives in his community. This seemed quite interesting, so I accepted.

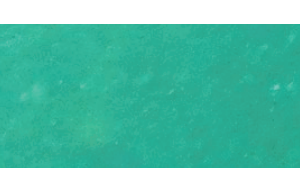
Before long, we were standing in the Sama Dilaut community, which is a group of about 325 bamboo stilt houses built over a trash-covered beach. As we walked along the narrow wooden walkway suspended above a sea of garbage and flies, Dottie asked to hold on to my shoulders to help keep her 73-year-old legs steady. Mental images of the two of us falling into the algae-covered waste below encouraged me to walk cautiously as we followed Jomar, our Sama Dilaut friend.

Entering an unlit two-story house, Jomar led us up a ladder. There, he introduced us to a non-Sama Dilaut man named Bong, who was cleaning and wrapping a Sama Dilaut boy's injured foot. Bong greeted us in perfect English and briefly explained that living and working in this community had been his God-given commitment. For the past 25 years, he has made the Gospel known to these marginalized people. My heart was moved as if a giant hand was tugging at my chest. I felt tears welling in my eyes.



Pastor Bong leads the way across the shaky, single-board walkway.

The next day, I called Pastor Bong and asked if I could come visit again. I started spending my afternoons watching Bong live like Jesus. Bong wasn't just a "Christian," he was a Jesus-follower. I listened as he told stories of God at work in the lives of those in the community. I watched as Bong took any and every request from the Sama Dilaut men, women, and children as they barged into his living space at any hour of the day without warning.



From left: The Sama Dilaut, including Pastor Idgy, are among the best in the world at spearfishing [photo by Wowie Wong of Studio H2O]; The ocean-loving Sama Dilaut reserve an area of their community for boat "parking"; Sama Dilaut leaders baptize 18 new believers in the Davao Gulf.



Sometimes, he would politely set our conversation aside to attend to a child asking for coins to buy soy sauce, a mother asking to borrow a cooking pot, or a man asking for help in reading a pawnshop paper. Other times, he might be cleaning a child's bloody foot while still carrying on our conversation as if he was only tying his shoe.

Learning about the people

The Sama Dilaut are needy people, meaning they have many physical and spiritual needs to meet. Holding animistic beliefs, they are subject to traditions and fears, which those who lead the worship of their ancestral spirits augment. The Sama Dilaut are traditionally tied to the ocean and are arguably the best in the world at free diving and spearfishing. They are known in other parts of Southeast Asia as "Sea Gypsies" as they live permanently on the ocean, gathering what they need from it or trading their day's catch for goods at the market.

In most areas of the Philippines, though, the oceans have been overfished and the coastal reefs destroyed to make room for the expanding population. Fishing is no longer a sustainable way to live, and making the transition to land hasn't been easy. To survive, they have developed a culture of begging. Even when presented with an honest day's work, many choose to beg. Few have a sense of preparing for tomorrow. They borrow but seldom return. This doesn't ever faze Bong; he has learned to live minimally. He doesn't think of any of this as a sacrifice or burden but a natural response to the love he has received from God. When the Sama Dilaut come asking for help with whatever is troubling them, Bong always opens the Bible written in their language, Sinama.

Experiencing changed lives

Bong's prowess in navigating the Scriptures blessed me, and I desired to learn more. I asked Bong to let me spend my days working with him. What I once thought to be impossible, God was making possible. God erased my notion of being disqualified for ministry and showed me what redemption is. He bought back my wasted years as a prodigal and transformed the damage and defects into diamonds. He wasn't just God anymore—He became my Father.

I asked if I could move into Bong's house with him, since much of my time was there anyway. Living in the community, I noticed things changing. The people didn't beg from me as much, they spoke to me directly in Sinama, and they shared their "beggings" with me. Never would I have imagined that a simple idea to make a video about missionaries would lead me here. God used what I felt comfortable doing to give me some-



thing so much bigger! As I see Sama Dilaut coming to faith and how God changes their perspectives and priorities, I remember how He changed me.

My time in the community made me realize that no plan can change someone’s heart. Though some success in providing temporary income has come through livelihood projects, like raising ducks, making bracelets, encouraging education, and sewing drawstring bags, it’s ultimately the Holy Spirit who provides true stability in life. When Sama Dilaut men or women are born again, it’s like a switch flips. All the lessons about basic hygiene, planning for the future, or warnings against foolishness that previously went unheeded suddenly stick. Believing men give up drunkenness, the women give up gambling, and the children want to go to school and dream of futures.

Building a future

When I realized how little I can do and how much my Father can do, I understood what Paul means when he says that he boasts in his weaknesses (2 Corinthians 12:9). My primary role is to mentor the Christian leaders of the Sama Dilaut fellowships and help them become lights in their communities by following *Isa Almasi’s* (Jesus Christ’s) example. I dream of one day traveling with a group of Christian Sama to the remote groups who have not heard the truth. I desire to encourage the believers to disciple their own whom they’ve never met and equip them with literacy materials and Bibles in their own language.

God also keeps me focused on teaching the value of work. Our first livelihood projects were tied to favorable weather conditions, so they were unsustainable. Now, we have found one that seems to be a fit: drawstring backpacks made of traditional batik fabric. The craftspeople take pride in their work, and we take pride in their efforts.

Please pray for us to learn effective ways of marketing the backpacks and for the community to see God’s value of work. But, most of all, pray for the Sama Dilaut Christian leaders as they share God’s love with their own people and for me as I seek to walk like Jesus daily. ■



Above: When saved, many Sama Dilaut people give up pastimes like gambling. **Left:** Jolpeah and her son, Gari, sew batik fabric for income, as part of a livelihood project.



Daniel Minnella is commended by Marble Hill Bible Chapel in Marble Hill, Missouri.



Austria

Practical Ministries Reach a Post-Christian Society

BY BERND & KARIN FLOCK

Graz, the city in which we serve, is Austria's second-largest city, with a population of more than 300,000. Graz's six universities contribute about 60,000 students to the population. In Graz, just over 50 percent of the population are members of the Roman Catholic Church. This number is unsurprising as Austria is predominantly Roman Catholic, even if nominally. Religion has no moral effect on the country, and the term *post-Christian* applies to Austria's society.

Graz's inner city center is one of the best preserved in central Europe, and it earned the name "City of Design" for its architectural creativity and innovation. We have been working here and in the southern part of the province since October 1983. Along with reaching out to those in Graz and the province through lifestyle personal evangelism and relationship building, the ministries of marriage preparation, discipleship training, counseling, and hospitality are close to our hearts.

Marriage preparation

When others hear about our marriage preparation ministry, they often ask us what course we use. Our answer is always "The Bible"! We begin with Adam and Eve. Then we move on to Abraham and Sarah and end with the respected marriage passages of the New Testament.

Over years of attending marriage seminars for our own refreshment, we have learned to orient our discussions of various topics around God's Word, and we now apply this method to our own ministry. Our discussions often go something like this: Genesis chapter two catches our attention first. God says it is not good for man to be alone, but then, curiously, He gives Adam the responsibility of naming all the animals. Yet, "for Adam, there was not found a helper comparable to him." (Genesis 2:20) God lets Adam discover that he is alone and lacking something. Adam observes the animals; he sees males, females, and possibly, babies. But he does not see any like him. God lets us discover for ourselves what we are missing. Great creative energy results when a man and a woman pool their resources in order to accomplish the task of having dominion over the earth and, specifically, their world.

Later, in chapter three, after the fall, God asks Adam where he is and what he has done (not that He didn't know). But did Adam know what had happened to his relationship with God and would he acknowledge his sin? Can we admit that we've distanced ourselves from the Lord and His will for our lives? Are we as couples open to the Lord and ready to admit to each other that we blew it? Or do we hide?

At Eve's creation, God commands Adam to "leave his father and mother and be joined to his wife, and they shall become

Above photos: Using a biblical scope, the Flocks help couples from various backgrounds and walks of life prepare for their weddings and lives together. Some of these couples will, in turn, help other couples prepare.



Graz's town hall is a testament to the city's history and culture.



The clock tower at the center of the city is one of Graz's cherished landmarks.



The goal of the Journey is to rebuild life-giving walls through God's guidance.



Bernd often preaches at the couples' weddings.

one flesh." (Genesis 2:24) We see that God says *become*, not *are*. *Becoming* is a process. It takes time and lots of commitment, acceptance of responsibility, and, of course, affection. Here, the word for *one* in Hebrew is not an absolute one, like one rose. It is a combined one, like a bouquet of flowers. It is the same word the Lord uses of Himself in Israel's great confession of faith: "Hear, O Israel: The Lord our God, the Lord is one!" (Deuteronomy 6:4) God is a combined One, not an absolute one. Through His choice of words, God indicates that couples have the opportunity to become a combined one just as God the Father, God the Son, and God the Holy Spirit are One. What a privilege we have of showing the world this aspect of God: unity in diversity!

This year finds us helping five couples prepare for their weddings and their lives when daily routine sets in. After seeing people turn to God first, it's wonderful to then watch them grow in faith and decide to walk together with the Lord. Two of the couples are older. They have histories with other partners, but now they want to conform to what the Lord planned marriage to be—a reflection of His being, wisdom, and glory. This endeavor is certainly a challenge in today's society.

The other three couples with whom we've been meeting are young and looking at various challenges ahead of them. One couple is moving to Romania immediately after their wedding. They are preparing to apply many of the principles that we discussed to their relationship. In time, we think they will be capable of helping other couples in Romania.

Discipleship

We are involved in training new believers and training others to do the same, following Christ's commandment in Matthew 28:18–19, which reads, "All authority has been given to Me in heaven and on earth. Go therefore and make disciples of all nations." We're still working with first-generation Christians, some of whom want guidance. Karin teaches many women on a one-on-one basis. What a joy it is to see these women grow in their faith and then reach out to teach others!

When the church in Mureck closed some years ago, several families joined another church in the area. Now, one of those men from Mureck is an elder in that church and another is in training. Bernd is often a guest speaker there, and the believers asked him to teach a group of young men who show leadership qualities and initiative. During the last year, a group of six young men, sometimes more, came to our home for supper regularly.

After each meal, we studied and discussed various biblical topics of interest. The group broke up because one young man is in Papua New Guinea for a year in missions, another is completing his civilian service, and the rest are busy with college and careers.

Skype and FaceTime are useful tools that help us to keep in touch with family and friends but also to serve as mentors. We both meet with people in cyberspace to discuss God's Word and how it applies to our lives today.

The Journey

Since 2003, our experience gained in basic counseling through the Journey (OHMin.org) has been an integral part of our various ministries. The Journey provides group seminars for people who have wounded hearts and souls. Far too often, the scars from such wounds have negative effects on relationships and lifestyles. They are like radioactive garbage: a person can hide them under flowers or behind the cross, but they still radiate! Some people are simply unable to function as the Lord intended because of continued pain.

A vital aspect of the Journey is the look at the book of Nehemiah. Jerusalem's walls were broken down. Security was at stake, freedom to worship was endangered, and their identity was at risk. Enemies could come in and destroy the city again. Nehemiah looks at the damage; then he allows himself to feel it, and he mourns for days! He comes to God in his anguish. He then asks for help and takes three days to evaluate the damage. He experiences opposition from within and without but draws near to God and seeks a renewal of faith for himself and Israel. They get the job done in record time. This is a good example of what is needed when we experience wounds, hurt, and abuse.

Hurt and wounded people deal with anger and contempt. We're always interested to learn that many believers think that anger is sin, and therefore, Christians shouldn't be angry as God is never angry. This false concept must be corrected with Scripture. Shame because of sin also needs to be clarified. Shame before almighty God leads to repentance and forgiveness. But someone's shameful deed and guilt put on another person is like a dirty, oversized sweater that restricts freedom on many levels. Forgiveness is another theme that needs careful, biblical definition. It can't be cheap. It cost God his beloved Son! It's a privilege to help people arrive at life-changing decisions and to watch breakthroughs to freedom.

This spring, our team of people from two evangelical churches in the city offered two seminar groups, one for men and one for women. To our amazement, for the first time, no women applied, but the men's group was full weeks ahead of the course. Bernd and his co-leader were thrilled! Already several men and women have indicated that they want to be at the next seminar.

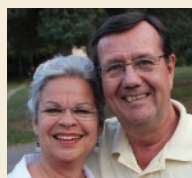
At the same time, a training week for potential leaders and participants was held in Budapest, Hungary. The goal was to see people in Eastern Europe equipped with Journey principles and materials in order to minister to the dire needs in their countries. We were there to co-lead groups, teach, and help the leadership team with meal service and clean-up.

Hospitality

Hospitality is a lifestyle for us. We set examples through our relationship with each other, our openness with guests, and what we teach and encourage around our table. What happens around a meal is transformative for our guests and often for us. A dear friend once told us that society would need fewer psychologists and therapists if we ate together and exchanged stories more often, even if it gets loud.

Following the Lord's leading

Although Graz is decidedly post-Christian, we have found that practical ministries, those that seek to enrich the daily lives and relationships of those in the region, reach the residents and provide open doors for us to engage with them on personal and spiritual levels. Our own lives have been touched by these connections, and we praise God for those He has led us to over the years and will lead us to in the future. ■



Bernd and Karin Flock are commended from Bendale Bible Chapel in Scarborough, Ontario, and Farrand Street Bible Chapel in Thunder Bay, Ontario.



Building up the Lord's Work

A Construction Team Serves in Chavuma, Zambia

BY ALAN COBURN



I was raised in a Christian home which my family and I regularly welcomed guest speakers and missionaries into. We were involved in camp ministries and helped some missionaries in Arizona, so I was used to hearing missions stories, looking at pictures of the world, and even seeing things like boa skin rolling down the chapel aisle. As I moved from childhood to adulthood, I continued to be involved in camp ministries and, eventually, met my wife there.

Although missions has been a presence in my life since childhood, I didn't experience it firsthand until two years ago. In 2017, with help from TeamWorkers Abroad, I went on my first missions work trip with my wife, my daughter Rebecca, and Dwayne Brown of Iowa. We traveled to Ireland to help with needed renovations for Dublin Christian Mission and Jim and Kathy Moriarty (*Missionary Prayer Handbook* Day 12). Not only were we blessed, but we were also able to be a blessing through accomplishing the renovation projects and fellowshiping with the missionaries. This year, the Lord presented another opportunity for me to serve on a missions trip—this time, in Africa.

Making the journey

Four men—Ken Switzer (CMML director), Daniel Gerolimatos, Craig Yany, and I—traveled to Zambia to help work on a hospital at Chavuma's mission station. We left from Newark airport, and after a 21-hour flight, we landed in Africa. We were able to accompany a young missionary nurse, Tiffany Poidevin, on the long, sometimes unsafe 17-hour drive from Lusaka to Chavuma. During this part of the trip, we experienced what other missionaries endure while traveling to their destinations. We rode down rough, potholed dirt roads and one potholed paved road with a speed limit of five miles per hour. Often, the police stopped us to make us pay a toll for passing through their com-

munity, and we traveled through at least 10. We also had to use two river pontoon crossings in order to complete the journey.

Along the way, we saw a few animals in the national park area, including baboons, antelope, mongooses, and black cobras. Otherwise, we saw miles of short, green trees, villages, homes, and people. The road is the local peoples' path to everywhere they need



to go, such as school, work, or trades. They use the traditional methods of transporting goods: women often carry baskets or bundles on their heads, bikes overflow with items, and ox carts, or an occasional car or small truck, are usually loaded with people. The people were friendly to us, as they hoped we would give them all rides to their destinations.

We stopped briefly in Loloma to refuel and visit with Tim and Joy Beer and family (MPH Day 4), who minister to the locals and elderly there. We were blessed with wonderful hospitality, a meal, and fellowship, and we delivered some much-needed school supplies. Then, we were back on the road for the last four-hour drive to Chavuma. Once we arrived, Henry Dyck (MPH



Top Row (L-R): Nick and a local helper work on a new home for a Christian school teacher; Many projects are skillfully created from the Chavuma lumber mill; The missionaries and the visiting work team treasured their fellowship around the table—(L to R) Tamako, Nick, Martha, Mary June and Jeff Speichinger (MPH Day 6—Dipalata Mission), Henry, Ken, Alan, Craig, Daniel, Lois, and Ayumi; The Chavuma bookroom is a resource enjoyed by the community. **Above (within text, from top):** The team traveled on two barges, including this one in the Kafue National Park, on their way to Chavuma; Antelope run free in the Kafue National Park.



Day 4), who provides maintenance help in Chavuma, and Nick Vandenberg, a short-term worker, greeted us. They showed us to our rooms in the guest house; then we talked a little and headed off to bed.

Working together

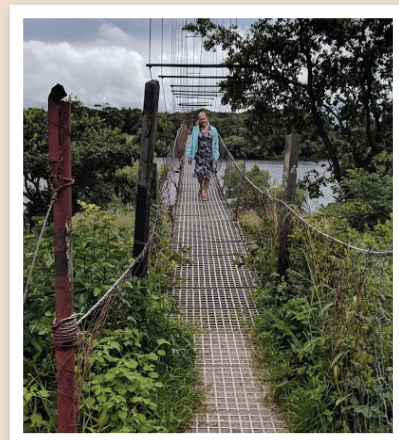
Our schedule for the week included several projects from the renovation of a TB hospital room and bathroom to several electrical needs, including solar, computer, and power issues. We helped with inspecting the facility to get an idea of what is needed to keep this hospital complex running smoothly and to care for some older buildings that need renovations. We delivered the medical supplies, tools, and equipment that we brought with us.

The local believers scheduled us to speak at the special service they held for us on Wednesday, which included a meal and a time of fellowship. Four assemblies from the area came to the meeting and the place was packed. The African people love to sing and get together for fellowship. On Sunday, we had a second time of fellowship at the chapel with a small group of believers, and we shared God's Word. Again, the saints served a wonderful meal of traditional foods, and the elders joined us for the time of fellowship.

During the week, the workers at Chavuma, including Henry Dyck, Martha Logan (MPH Day 4), Ayumi Yamamori, and Tama-ko Monobe (missionary nurses from Japan), showed us sincere

hospitality. We were grateful for the hard work of Lois Timms, a believer who came all the way from Canada to cook for us and help with work needs, and for the efforts of Dr. Vincent Chiyangi and Martin Mahenga, a hospital administrator, who joined us. We had a wonderful time of fellowship talking about the work of the Lord in Africa.

Although this trip was not easy, the blessing I experienced through the work and fellowship was beyond anything I could have imagined. My hope is to encourage you to pray and to write to missionaries so that you can get to know them and, if possible, help them with their needs. If you can, take every opportunity to visit them. Then you, like me, will see firsthand the missionaries' sacrifices, their love for the Lord and people, and their desire to use their gifts to bring the Gospel to a lost world. Witnessing these things made me rethink my own choices and redirect my God-given talents more to His service. ■



Alan Coburn is CMML's facilities manager.

Bottom Row (L-R): Visitors to the Chavuma Mission enjoy splendid views of the Zambezi river; Women joyfully sing during a special Wednesday meeting in Chavuma; The beautiful Chavuma chapel houses many services, but requires some repairs; Chavuma has many national helpers, such as Roy Chiteta (center), who help with electrical work; While skillfully carrying goods on their heads, these women greet the team as they travel. **Above (within text):** Lois Timms braves the height and movement of a well-used Zambezi river suspension bridge.



Home with the Lord

Esma Hanna

October 7, 1923 – February 27, 2019 • Missionary to Honduras

Esma Hode Hanna, née Nasralla, was born in Trujillo, Honduras, in 1923. She was one of seven children born to Palestinian immigrants. Her family members were leaders in commerce and politics, and a few were believers who became leaders in the Honduran assemblies and worked with the Ruddocks, Scollons, Sheddens, and others. Esma came to know the Lord as a teenager through the Ruddocks, pioneer missionaries to Honduras.

When she was in her early 20s, she took a trip to New Orleans. During her time there, she met Stan Hanna, who was born in Thailand to missionary parents. He was in the Navy and serving the Lord at the Good News Center, an outreach to servicemen. Esma's faithful service at the assembly in Lafayette, Louisiana, captivated Stan. In February 1950, Esma and Stan married.

Stan and Esma spent their first years of marriage in the Houston, Texas, area. In 1958, with three children and two more to come, Esma and Stan were commended from Houston assemblies to serve in Honduras. Together, they helped plant more than 250 assemblies. Esma was responsible for leading various Bible camps, conferences, discipleship programs, and all the logistics that these events required. Helping her husband was one of her highest priorities, and she taught him Spanish and guided him through the Honduran culture.

Esma was known for doing whatever it took to complete a mission. At times, that meant riding a donkey through a river or traveling the underdeveloped landscape on the back of a motorcycle. Throughout her years of service, she found herself and her family in life-threatening situations. One night, when robbers broke in and held her at gunpoint, she said that, before they shot her, she wanted to pray for them because, if they killed her, she would go to heaven, but they would go to hell when they died. The robbers stopped and went outside to rob others instead.

When Esma and Stan found themselves settled in the Honduran capital, the Lord brought to them young adults who needed room and board. Some were university students, and others were participating in the first discipleship program. Esma and

Stan fed the students physically and spiritually. At one point, the Hannas housed 15 students.

Stan's lifelong passion was to have a Christian boarding school where disadvantaged children could live and learn about Christ. This dream came true when the Lord provided an unexpected inheritance for Esma. Her sister, America, another faithful servant, bequeathed her land to build a school on. In 1995, Stan and Esma opened Escuela Evangelica Elim for first-, second-, and third-graders. Each year, they added another grade for the students until they reached ninth grade.

After Stan went home to be with the Lord in 2009, Esma continued serving at the school for the next 10 years. On February 27, 2019, this "passionate, ferocious warrior for Christ," as one missionary's daughter described Esma, also joined Stan in heaven. She had been visiting her children in California for a few months and was packing to return to Honduras when she suffered a stroke and died in her sleep at the age of 95. Esma's children took her body back to Honduras since they had promised to bury her next to Stan at the school. Hundreds of people attended her funeral, including six of those in the first discipleship program.

The school continues to transform lives. Not only are children taught how to read and write, but more importantly, they experience the love of Christ and are immersed in a Christ-centered atmosphere. Many of them come to know Christ as their Savior, and some of the students have returned to serve in the same school as counselors or teachers.

Year after year, God's unwavering faithfulness has provided the necessary means to keep the school operating. The school was dear to Esma's heart, and our prayer is that the work will continue as God provides. If you would like to send a gift for the school, please send it to CMML in memory of Esma Hanna for Escuela Elim.



Florence Wright