

# Missions

## Sangkhim Canaan School

Shining the Gospel  
Light in Cambodia

## BURUNDI

20,000+ People  
Gather to Worship

## BOLIVIA

Boat Trips to Share  
Christian Love

## TANZANIA

Interview with  
Missionary Kids



# Thinking It Through

REX TROGDON

## THINGS About Christmas

### Thinking about these things—Matthew 1:20

Everything came crashing down around Joseph when Mary, his betrothed, was found to be with child. He was a just man, but he also was *just* a man and must have been overwhelmed by these things.

We read that he was minded to put Mary away secretly. "But while he thought about these things... an angel of the Lord appeared to him in a dream." The angelic messenger calmed his fears with the good news of the birth of the Savior, Jesus, who would be born of a virgin, Mary. God's great plan was unfolding.

In the midst of the many things you and I have to do this season, we should do what Joseph did—think about these things; think about our Savior and how He came to the earth.

### Troubled by these things—Matthew 2:3

When the (not-so-wise) wise men came to Herod inquiring where the King of the Jews had been born, he was troubled by these things. Herod thought he was king of the Jews, and now he heard there is another King.

Herod would not have it and ordered the death of innocent children from two years old and under who were born in and around Bethlehem. The many tears of their mothers fulfilled Jeremiah's sad prophecy of "Rachel weeping for her children." (Jeremiah 31:15)

While Christmas is a joyful time for believers to celebrate the birth of Christ, many are sad and alone, "having no hope and without God in the world." (Ephesians 2:12) They are troubled by these things and desperately need Him.

### Marveling at those things—Luke 2:15, 18

It is fitting that the birth announcement was first proclaimed to shepherds. After all, He was the Lamb of God. How amazing it must have been when the angel appeared and the shepherds were enveloped in glory. No wonder his first words were, "Fear not!" Then, the announcement continued, "Behold, I bring you good tidings of great joy, which will be to all people. For unto you is born this day in the city of David a Savior, who is Christ the Lord." (Luke 2:10–11)

The shepherds said to one another, "Let us now go to Bethlehem and see this thing that has come to pass." They came, they found, they saw Him, and "they made widely known

the saying which was told them concerning this Child." (Luke 2:17) They were shepherds turned evangelists! And all those who heard them "marveled at those things which were told them by the shepherds."

Have we lost the sense of wonder? If so, read the Scriptures that inspire our hearts, "Great is the mystery of godliness: God was manifested in the flesh." (1 Timothy 3:16)

Sing the songs of the season with amazement and never lose the wonder of it all!

*Veiled in flesh the Godhead see; Hail the Incarnate Deity,  
Pleased as Man with man to dwell, Jesus, our Emmanuel.*<sup>1</sup>

### Pondering these things—Luke 2:19

As Mary heard these things, she did what mothers do—she "kept all these things and pondered them in her heart."

In our noisy world of buzzers and bings, we hardly find time to think. Do what Mary did. Store these thoughts away in the treasure chest of your heart until you can take time or make time to consider—to ponder these things.

### Praising God for these things—Luke 2:20

The shepherds returned to their flocks "glorifying and praising God for all the things that they had heard and seen, as it was told unto them." The shepherds are a great example of missionaries.

Think about what they heard. This is Good News for all people, so they went out and told all people! God sent His Son into this world "that the world through Him might be saved." (John 3:17) It is a global Gospel and we should tell the world to the uttermost parts!

Think about what they saw. They saw Him! Born, wrapped in swaddling clothes, and laid in a manger. The sign given to them would one day be fulfilled. The Savior would be crucified, wrapped in linen, and laid in a tomb. (Luke 2:12; 23:53) Praise God, He now is risen!

Think about what they did. They glorified and praised God for all the things they had heard and seen.

Christmas is not about things, but these are some things about Christmas to help us keep the eternal perspective of this wondrous season. ■

*Rex Trogdon is a full-time worker based in North Carolina.*

<sup>1</sup> Wesley, Charles. "Hark! The Herald Angels Sing." 1739



## Sangkhim Canaan School

### Shining the Gospel Light in

# Cambodia

BY YOUMI KIM PARK

Centuries ago, Cambodia enjoyed its splendor during the ancient Khmer Empire. However, it endured civil war and the brutal rule of the Khmer Rouge in the 1970s when two million people died. Although Cambodia has now maintained two decades of stability, it still remains one of the poorest and least developed countries in the world. Cambodia ranked 160th of 175 countries on the international corruption index. Today, the economy is dominated by agriculture, garment manufacturing, and tourism. The current government is a multiparty democracy under a constitutional monarchy. Although Buddhism is the national religion, Cambodia offers religious freedom unseen in any other country in Southeast Asia, making the door wide open for worship and evangelism. Despite such freedom, Christians are less than one percent of the population, which indicates great spiritual darkness.

**Clockwise from top:** A teacher handing out an assignment; Students lined up to go outside; Students with Kian Tan, chairman of the school; The sixth-grade class—this class is the first group that started with the school in 2009.



## A brief history of the school

Sangkhum Canaan School started with a vision and many years of prayer. Its history can be traced back to 1994 when a Korean missionary, Han Sik Kim (Youmi's father), and family answered God's call to bring the gospel light into Cambodia. In 1998 God led him to start Canaan Technical School to provide learning opportunities to many poor young people by offering free English, Korean, sewing, and computer courses while sharing the Gospel. As a result of this outreach, assemblies were established in Phnom Penh and other areas. Since 1999 brother Kian Tan, an elder and now a full-time worker of Bethesda Hall Ang Mo Kio of Singapore, made frequent business trips to Cambodia, and God led him to become an active supporter of the mission work in Cambodia in partnership with the Kims. Through his many years of involvement in Cambodian missions, Kian, along with a group of mission-minded Singaporean believers, saw the need to start a Christian school in Cambodia to build up the next generation of young people who are the most open and receptive to the Gospel.

As part of those years of preparation, one of the Kim's children, Youmi, went by the providence of God to the States for education. In her teen years she felt the call of God to serve in Cambodia through education as she helped alongside her parents' ministry. As a missionary kid, Youmi attended the local public school for five years. Despite the poor learning environment, the Lord helped her enjoy the experience and become fluent in Khmer. While Youmi worked as an interpreter for the former Korean President Chun Doo Hwan during his official visit to Cambodia, God moved the heart of the president and

his wife to help her get further education in the States. After seven years of studying and one year of teaching in the United States, she joined the team to start Sangkhum Canaan School, which became a realization in 2009. She served as a teacher and the first principal.

It was a humble beginning in the first year. After months of renovating a rented house, the first pre-kindergarten class began with 13 students and three teachers. These precious little ones made remarkable progress both academically and spiritually in a short period of time. Through word of mouth, the student body grew over the years. Many came from Buddhist families. Every year as the students moved up, a new level was added. Today, it has grown to more than 400 students attending from pre-kindergarten to grade seven with 30 teachers and support staff.

In 2012 a Cambodian principal, Mr. Hort Hor, joined the team. With his able leadership, the school continued to grow and stabilize. The founding members are prayerfully preparing local believers to gradually take up leadership positions. The school should be able to run independently, with less outside help, in 10 years of time.

## A place of hope in Kampong Chhnang

Kampong Chhnang is one of the 24 provinces and home to nearly 500,000 people. It is located about 50 miles from Phnom Penh, the capital of Cambodia. The majority of people earn their living by farming and fishing, but the area is also known for its pottery work as its name means "Port of Pottery."

There are many private and Christian schools in Phnom

Penh meant for expatriates and wealthy Cambodians, but Sangkhim (which means “hope” in Khmer) Canaan School is the first Christian school in Kampong Chhnang to cater to ordinary Cambodians. The school is welcomed and supported by the local Christian community in town. Even some of the prominent leaders and businessmen choose to send their children to Sangkhim Canaan School for a better education, knowing its strong emphasis on Christian values.

In August 2008, the Lord opened the way to purchase 13 acres of land in the capital of the province. In 2010 the “phase one” construction project commenced building the kindergarten block and the administration block that includes staff apartments. There were unexpected challenges dealing with corruption and many complicated issues while developing a trash-dumping area with almost zero infrastructure—no water and no electricity! After enjoying the beautiful new campus for the last four years, we deemed the facility was at its full use. To meet the school’s growing needs, it was necessary to start the “phase two” expansion project this year. It was another step of faith before the new school year started in October 2016. God again proved Himself good and faithful!

## The current ministry

The mission of the Sangkhim Canaan School is to share the Gospel with Cambodians through the provision of quality education. We hope to point students to the Lord Jesus Christ through the influence of dedicated Christian teachers. Even if the students do not respond immediately, the gospel seed sown in their hearts will remain with them and bear fruit one day.

A morning assembly starts each school day with singing and prayers committing the day to the Lord. There are weekly chapels and “Christian education” classes, which are Bible



**Opposite page:** The entire school family—students from kindergarten to sixth grade and their teachers.

**This page:** (top) Teachers and staff having a Bible study using the first Emmaus Correspondence Course translated into Khmer. (middle, L-R) A teacher helping a student; Teachers and staff with some of the school board members; Kindergarten students busy working. (bottom) The first-grade students during a lesson.



From left: Kindergarten students looking smart in their gowns on graduation day; The "phase two" expansion project started in April 2016.

classes. More than half of the teachers and staff are believers who come from local churches in the community. It is necessary to hire non-Christian teachers with teaching certificates to meet the government requirements. It is encouraging to see the openness of these non-Christian teachers to the things of the Lord, and the school reaches out to them through regular Bible studies and retreats.

One of the ways the school shows Christ's love is by lifting the burdens of needy families through the Student Sponsorship Program, as God enables through generous

## Sangkhim Canaan School is an exciting place where children enjoy learning and experience God's love every day!

donors. Also, the school seeks to reach out to parents whenever possible. When overseas guests visit, we invite parents to special seminars on how to be better parents. The speakers share wisdom from the Scriptures, and the response is very positive. The school also offers extracurricular activities that students can choose from that are not available in public schools, such as Taekwondo, reading club, computer, and more. Sangkhim Canaan School is an exciting place where children enjoy learning and experience God's love every day!

### View for the future

The plan is to expand the school to provide education all the way to grade 12. When completed in five years' time, there will be 1,200 students and 70 staff. The goal is to raise future generations of Cambodian Christian leaders who will be salt and light, making an impact in the community. Another vision is to start an assembly and a Bible school on the school campus as extension ministries for evangelism and discipleship. In the

years to come many more children and their family members will be able to come to know Jesus as personal Lord and Savior.

When God is at work, Satan also makes all kinds of attempts to discourage it. The school leadership seeks to be a good testimony by trusting God to open doors and by doing things God's way when difficulties arise. The testimony of the school can be summed up in these two expressions: Ebenezer ("Hitherto the Lord has helped us") and Jehovah-Jireh ("The Lord will provide"), reflecting the past decade and looking to the future. All the praises be to God alone!

### Pray for the school

Many have come alongside for this project as coworkers with their own unique contribution, whether it be time, resources, or God-given talents, not to mention all those who faithfully prayed for the school. Pray that many more workers will come to be a part of this exciting ministry. There is a great need for more Christian teachers as the school grows. The school welcomes mission teams and short-term missionaries. Pray that God would continue to provide for the school as it operates by faith. Currently, tuition is kept at only \$17 to \$38 per student to make it affordable for ordinary Cambodian families. This covers just the salaries for teachers and staff and monthly utilities. Also, prayers are greatly needed for wisdom and discernment for the school leaders as they carry on the mission of Sangkhim Canaan School, bringing hope to many lives in the Kampong Chhnang community. ■



*Youmi Kim Park was commended in 2008 by Overbrook Gospel Chapel, Greenville, South Carolina, and Community Bible Chapel, Wichita, Kansas. Her husband, Insun Park, was commended by Mokdong Assembly of Korea in 2010. They serve the Lord with Sangkhim Canaan School in Kampong Chhnang, Cambodia. Insun also serves as a country director of Emmaus ministries.*

# May We Introduce

## Leon & Clara Vining *Missionaries to Peru*



### Leon's Testimony

I was raised by a single mom who worked very hard to provide for my older brother and me. Although we did not go to church, my mom taught me about God's love. I accepted Jesus as my Lord and Savior right before junior high. My life changed dramatically in junior high as I moved from a small rural town to a large city. As I struggled to acclimate to a new environment, a neighbor boy invited me to attend an assembly. It was at that assembly that I learned for the first time that God wants to be our Father. This realization was a significant turning point for me as I was able to speak to God as the Father I never had. From there, I continued to grow in my relationship with Christ. Because of this, I have always desired to help people, which led me to get a degree in human development. This degree allowed me to have a job for five years helping those who have developmental disabilities. This experience gave me a desire to learn more, so I took counseling and Bible classes at a seminary. I have always had an interest in helping people in other countries, and I am excited to use my experience in this way.

### Clara's Testimony

I grew up as the middle child between two brothers. My parents have strong relationships with God, so I was always taught about Him and the Bible. I chose to believe in Jesus at a young age and have continued to trust Him and develop my personal relationship with Him as I matured. I consider myself very blessed for how God has protected me throughout my life. Experiencing God's love is just one reason that makes me want to always show love to others. I wanted to find a way to help others in a practical way, so I chose to get a degree in accounting. While I have been able to use my degree to give financial advice to help others, I

have always had a desire to serve people in a larger capacity and an interest in serving others overseas. My family has had a lot of experience in overseas ministry. The city in which we will serve is where my great-uncle and aunt, Bert and Colleen Elliot, served for a large portion of their ministry. Seeing their example had a great effect on me and is a huge reason why I want to be a part of what God is doing around the world.

### Together

We met during high school at Eagle Fern Camp, which is connected to the Portland, Oregon, assemblies we attended. We started dating in college and were drawn together at first by our mutual love of sports. We eventually married in 2011. In our first year of marriage, Leon's mom lost her battle with cancer. This was an incredibly hard way to start a marriage, but it helped us develop a reliance on God and each other early in our marriage as we cared for her.

We have always enjoyed ministry, especially youth ministry, and have made that a priority in our lives. We made time to counsel or direct youth camps when needed and participated in college ministry as well. We enjoy serving the Lord together, so we were excited when the opportunity arose to minister in Peru in the role of orphanage director. God seemed to be leading us in that direction, so we visited Trujillo, Peru, in early 2016 with our daughter, Jane, who was 10 months old at the time. After being there and seeing the needs of the children we would care for, we felt that God wanted us to return and serve there longer. We are excited to be a part of what God is accomplishing at the orphanage and in Trujillo. We greatly appreciate prayer as we embark on this new journey. ■



# BOAT TRIPS FOR THE GOSPEL

12 Years Sharing Christian Love  
along the Mamore River

BY ENOEL SUAREZ



**Top (L-R, from top):** Children's gospel meeting; Group photo the last day of the trip; Carrying supplies to a village. **Middle (L-R):** Dental cleaning; Children's gospel meeting; Children's leader giving a New Testament to a mother and her children. **Bottom (L-R):** Food and water distribution; Medicine table; Administering antiparasitic medication.

Photos by Enael Suarez, Jason R. Weigert and other team members.

**T**welve years ago, a local missionary invited us to go on an exploratory trip—a riverboat trip through the jungle. This opened our eyes to the needs of villagers living along Bolivia’s Mamore River. We were touched by the Lord to reach out to these people, and it was through this experience that the ministry “Boat Trips through the Jungle” was initiated.

The Lord, in His mercy, gave us a burden for the neediest people living along the Mamore River, one of the tributaries of the Amazon River. These communities have no roads and no access to needed supplies—except by river. This makes life difficult for them; it is complex even to obtain their daily essentials.

The trips continue every year, three or four per year. We’ve had eager participants—doctors, nurses, veterinarians, preachers, biochemists, teachers, and other helpers—from different parts of the world, all willing to serve the Lord.

The riverboat trips are generally held during the months of May and June, which are the perfect months to participate in a missionary boat excursion. This is due to the temperate climate at the end of the rainy season, high water levels and fewer mosquitoes and bugs.

### Physical and spiritual help

This year, the Lord led us to 22 communities where the doctors helped 605 patients. We were privileged to assist with 175 tooth extractions. In addition, 405 animals were given vitamins or antiparasitic medications and rabies vaccines. We distributed 350 gospel tracts along with 12 Bibles plus 195 books containing the Jesus story. We handed out clothing from eight large sacks and dispersed six large containers of medication. Praise the Lord, 15 adults, 67 children, and 27 young people professed to accept the Lord. Hundreds of villagers heard the Good News of the Gospel. In total, 30 volunteers gave up their time to serve on one of the available boat trips.

It was very encouraging this year to see fruit and some churches planted. Finally, after 12 years, five churches are established. A few churches have guides who are in charge of assisting, encouraging, and ministering to the people in their walk with the Lord. Others meet together in homes, sharing verses and songs of praise. These new believers need trained leaders to teach the Lord’s Word.

### A little village, huge blessing

There are many stories to share, but this one is greatly encouraging.

On the second day of our last trip, late in the afternoon, we noticed only a few houses near a river bend. I asked the captain about it, and he said that there were only three families living there. I started thinking—should we stop there for just three families? We decided we should. I went to see who lived

in the first house. A husband and wife came out. I talked to them and explained who we were and what we were doing. They were happy to see us and the man said, “My neighbor’s wife has a toothache.”

I said, “Tell her to come to the boat because we plan to stay for just a few hours; we do not have more time.”

The man replied, “Are you not going to stay to preach to us tonight?”

I asked, “How many live here?” He told me about 12. I paused in

silence. Acts 16:6–10 came to my mind. Paul wanted to go to other places but the Holy Spirit did not permit him. Then, Paul saw the Macedonian man asking for spiritual help.

I asked the man if everyone would come to the meeting. He said they would, so we decided to hold the service. At the end, we presented an invitation to become a Christian and follow Jesus. We asked them if they made that decision, and almost all of them did so! We rejoiced with them and gave these recent converts Bibles, some literature, and the book *Twelve Bottles of Milk for New Believers* by C.E. Tatham, which contains 12 lessons for new believers. I remained there teaching until after midnight, knowing that we had to leave by early morning.

### God gives the increase

When we began this ministry, we were not sure what the outcome would be. Many questions ran through our minds. Would we find enough medical assistants, evangelists, and helpers interested in this new mission? Would this ministry bear fruit? Would the new believers survive without a strong leader remaining in the community? As human beings, we cannot see the end. We take small steps of faith and trust God for the final result. The Lord does not ask us to have it all figured out on our own. He opens doors and we are responsible to seize the opportunities. He wants us to be obedient to His call, and the end result is up to Him. The wonderful part is that this ministry has blossomed beyond our imagination—all to His glory. “So then neither he who plants is anything, nor he who waters, but God who gives the increase.” (1 Corinthians 3:7)

If you are interested in participating on one of the boat trips through the jungle, or you would like more information, please contact us through MSC Canada or CMML. ■

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We take small steps of faith and trust God for the final result.

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*Enoel and Leisa Suarez were commended in 1993 by Southdale Bible Chapel in London, Ontario.*



# BURUNDI'S FRUITFUL HARVEST

20,000+ People Gather to Worship

BY DANIEL AND ANNE JOHNSON

The Lord has blessed the assembly work in Burundi by granting the believers a wonderful spirit of unity and cooperation for the work of the Gospel. This was made evident to me in a special way this summer when I attended the Assemblies National Conference, held at the 18-acre mission station property in the capital, Bujumbura.

## Thousands learn about the Rock

Since my family and I have been serving in Burundi for four years, and this conference is held every five years, it was our first time attending. The turnout was staggering. On the last day of the four-day conference more than 20 thousand people came! The crowd was composed of four or five thousand Christians from the 125 assemblies in Burundi and more than 10 thousand people from the community.

The theme passage of the conference was Matthew 7:24–25: “Everyone then who hears these words of Mine and does them will be like a wise man who built his house on the rock. And the rain fell, and the floods came, and the winds blew and beat on that house, but it did not fall, because it had been founded on the rock.”

## Hundreds profess salvation

We praise the Lord that more than 300 people made professions of faith during the conference! One thing that always impresses me about the altar calls that are some-

**From left:** Crowds gathered; Ntakiyiruta Phineas, the legal representative of the Community of Emmanuel Churches (assemblies) in Burundi, gave the opening plenary message on Matthew 7:24–25; One of the many choirs that blessed us with their songs; The conference was attended by several members of Parliament and army generals— Pictured here is one Parliament member and his wife and an army general.



times given in the assemblies here is that the church leaders are good at follow-up work. All the people who came forward to make a profession of faith were then led to the side of the platform and gathered into small groups with church elders to ask questions, get clarification on the gospel truth, and be connected to a local church.

### 70 choirs praise

One of the highlights of the conference was the church choirs. The people of Burundi love to sing, so all the assemblies were invited to bring a choir of at least 30 members to the conference. About 70 churches brought choirs this year. The amazing thing is that in preparation for the conference each choir composed songs based on Matthew 7:24–25!

Choirs play a huge role in the life of the Burundi assemblies. They are not only singing groups; a choir is many times also a small group Bible study, a support group, and an avenue for believers to use their song writing and musical gifts. Most choirs write their own songs, based on Scripture passages, to sing every Sunday. With generally two practices per week, choirs are the key way in which the assemblies keep the youth actively involved in the life of the church.

I was a little worried that 70 choirs singing on the same theme would get monotonous, but it was amazing to see the Christians' creativity and how they could sing about the same theme but all sound different in style and with their own unique emphasis on the verses. One of the benefits of them composing songs on the theme verses is that the choir members from all 70 choirs will probably never forget the theme and the lessons they learned from studying that passage!

### Outreach and prayer for the government

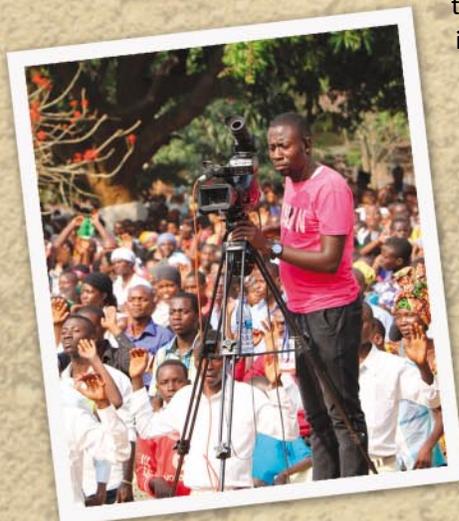
Many Burundi government leaders, including members of Parliament, military generals, a presidential aide, and the Bujumbura governor, attended the conference. I am so thankful that there are leaders in the Burundi government who care about the things of God and the work of the Gospel. I am also thankful for the way that God has placed the assemblies in Burundi in a unique position to have an impact for good on the Burundi government. In the last year, Burundi has been through a political crisis with some people intent on causing division and strife in the country. In light of this, it is a blessing to know that there are individuals in the Burundi government who fear the Lord and want to seek Him first.

Another key highlight of the conference was a special time of prayer for the country of Burundi. It was amazing to kneel, holding hands together with more than 10 thousand people—including members of the government—and pray together for peace and gospel revival in Burundi.

### Thankful for the harvest

I came away from the conference encouraged and thankful: thankful for the Lord's help and blessing during the National Conference and thankful for the assemblies' unified focus on the Gospel. Please pray for Burundi and the work of the Gospel. Pray that the political situation would continue to improve and that full stability would return. Pray that spiritual revival would happen and that many more would believe the Gospel and grow in the grace and knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ. The assemblies here face many challenges that are common to the Church worldwide, but right now we are experiencing a time of fruitful harvest and growth in Burundi. Pray that God would send more laborers into these fields that are ripe for harvest. ■

*Daniel and Anne Johnson were commended in 2012 by Oak Lawn Bible Chapel in Oak Lawn, Illinois.*



The four-day conference was broadcasted live on national television.

# MK Corner

MISSIONS Magazine Chats With Missionary Kids

## Interview with Esther, Emily and Aaron Johnson—Day 4

BY ANNIE ELLIOTT

While on a short furlough, Esther, Emily, Aaron and Michael Johnson visited CMML with their parents, Luke and Gina Johnson. The three eldest children shared with us what it's like to be missionary kids in Tanzania. The youngest, 21-month-old Michael, chose to nap instead.



Esther (9), Aaron (3), Emily (5)

### What are your ages?

**Aaron:** [Shows three fingers.]

**Esther:** I'm nine.

**Emily:** I'm five years old.

### Describe where you live.

**Esther:** There's a dry time of year and everything gets dry, and then there's a green time, where it rains a lot and everything gets green. Lake Tanganyika is about 20 feet away from where we live, but there is a hotel so we can't go right there. We take about a 10-minute drive to get to the beach.

**Emily:** There's lots of traffic—

**Esther:** Not compared to here [in New Jersey] there isn't!

### What are your favorite foods?

**Aaron:** A big chicken!

**Esther:** I don't know my favorite food in the whole world, but my favorite food there is made from a certain flour from a root. They mix it with water and boil it. It makes this doughy, sticky thing that you dip into a sauce and eat it. It's called "ugali."

**Emily:** My favorite food there is the chicken at the restaurant we go to on Sundays when my mom doesn't cook. It's called Sun City. They have chips and chicken.

### Do you speak any languages besides English?

**Esther and Emily:** Swahili.

**Emily:** And we know a little bit of Spanish.

**Esther:** We really can't talk in Spanish; we only know a couple words. We don't know a lot of Swahili, but we can communicate in Swahili.

### Can you count to ten in Swahili?

**Esther and Emily:** "Moja, mbili, tatu, nne, tano, sita, saba, nane, tisa, kumi."

### How did you learn Swahili?

**Esther:** When we moved there my dad taught us, and we went to a Swahili church, so we just heard it.

### Tell me about your friends.

**Aaron:** They are big.

**Esther:** They are much older than him: Anderson and Doto. There's a Christian school that missionaries own and they teach in English. They let kids who are poor come for free. There are kids (their mom works for that school) that live close to us, so we just run over there. They have three adopted kids: Agnes and Doto are twins, but they don't look like twins, and Anderson. They are 11 and 10.

### Do you have any other friends?

**Emily:** Lincoln and Kaysen.

**Esther:** We don't see them much—only on Wednesdays. Sometimes we babysit them. They are four and three. Their dad is Tanzanian and their mom is American.

### What do you do for school?

**Esther:** We do Sonlight. We home-school. I am supposed to be going into fourth grade but I'm not because my school books were stuck in a container for a whole year. So I am only halfway done with third grade.

**Emily:** I am done with kindergarten.

### What activities or hobbies are you involved in?

**Esther:** I like to play [jump rope] with my friends and soccer is fun. We just started to jump rope recently; soccer we have



Esther, Luke, Michael,  
Gina, Aaron, Emily



played for a while. I like to watch movies but my mom doesn't let me do it very much.

**Emily:** I do kind of like to watch movies, but not every day.

**Aaron:** I like "Thomas the Tank Engine!"

**Emily:** We have a jungle gym I like to climb on. Then we have some swings. We used to have a trampoline, but then it got broken.

**Esther:** It got broken twice and my dad wants to fix it. We also like to ride bikes, but my bike got broken and my dad has to fix it.

### How do you celebrate Christmas?

**Emily:** We decorate and borrow a Christmas tree.

**Esther:** We got a Christmas tree just last year. We were really excited, but we don't have any Christmas ornaments so we had to make some. The missionaries have a Christmas Eve meeting and there's a kids' play. Usually my family comes for Christmas and my Aunt Joy is really good at giving presents! We have fun with them when they come over. [Jesse and Joy Johnson, MPH Day 1.]

**Emily:** We make these stars that we paint.

**Esther:** Yeah, we make stars for the Christmas tree because we don't have ornaments. The angel is way too big and it always falls off.

### Do you do anything special at church for Christmas?

**Esther:** Sometimes there is a play and they sing songs, but they aren't really Christmas songs. We do a Sunday school program that's really fun 'cause all the kids dance and sing in the choir.

### Do you celebrate Thanksgiving?

**Esther:** We do. Usually it's at this lady's house, Sally Pepper. She lives really close to us.

**Emily:** We can walk there.

**Esther:** She has a big enough stove to cook the turkey. We go there and all the missionaries come. My Uncle Danny [MPH Day 1] has turkeys so we get it from him and put it in our freezer.

### In your own words, what is a missionary?

**Emily:** They tell people about Jesus.

**Esther:** They go to a different country.

### Do you help your parents with their ministry?

**Emily:** We help our mom cook.

### What do you want to be when you grow up and where do you want to live?

**Aaron:** In Tanzania.

**Esther:** I don't really want to have a job, but I have to, so I

guess I want to be a missionary. But I don't know where.

**Emily:** I want to be a missionary and live where mommy grew up—where was that?

**Esther:** Bolivia.

**Emily:** Yeah, in Bolivia.

### When someone asks you where you're from, what do you say?

**Esther:** I live in Tanzania, but I am American.

**Emily:** I live in Tanzania.

## Learn about Tanzania

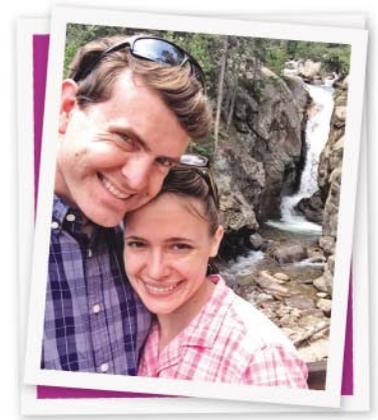
- Tanzania is twice the size of California.
- It is bordered by the Indian Ocean and eight countries.
- Mount Kilimanjaro, Africa's tallest mountain, is located in Tanzania.
- 127 languages are spoken in Tanzania.
- The official languages are Swahili and English.
- 45% of the population is under the age of 15.
- The Johnsons are the only MKs from Tanzania listed in the *Missionary Prayer Handbook*, but there are more than 60 listed in Africa.



Map: ©iStockPhoto.com/naruedom

# May We Introduce

## Nathan & Virginia Grice *Missionaries to Haiti*



### Nathan's Testimony

I was raised in a Christian home in Omaha, Nebraska, with six other siblings. At age 10, our family moved to the countryside in Iowa. In the following years, the call and drawing of God became evident in my life and, a few months before my 16th birthday, I was born again. Christ made my heart new and I haven't been the same since! But God wasn't done with His work. In 2009 I was in a severe car accident, which resulted in a fractured skull, a speech impediment, a day in the ICU, three weeks in the hospital and months of therapy. The Lord changed many things in my heart through that time, and I am so grateful for His grace and love. In 2011 I took my first trip to Haiti, rebuilding houses in the mountains for a week. At that time God began to form a desire in my heart to return and serve in a greater way there. A few months later, I went back for a year at a small mission in the mountains. During that time, I met my future wife, Virginia. Over the next years I came and went, and God continued to give me a deep desire to do His work there.

### Virginia's Testimony

Born in Tennessee and raised in a Christian home, I was born again in my early teen years. God began to lay on my heart the desire to serve Him overseas. I first went to Haiti in 2008 and was gripped by the mountain people's hunger to learn. Many of the older people are illiterate but delight to hear the Word of God. Over the years, I returned to Haiti many times and, after nursing school, I went back to work as

a nurse in Haiti for a year and a half. During that time I met Nathan. We became fast friends, meeting numerous times as he visited Haiti over the next four years. I came back to the States for a year and a half in 2012, then returned to Haiti indefinitely. I lived with my brother and his wife, teaching women's classes, assisting with medical teams, and learning the language and culture. Giving up my dreams of marriage, I did not think Nate and I would ever be more than friends. (Virginia's full testimony can be found in the March 2016 issue of *Missions*.)

### Together

Then, last summer, we both believed God was leading us into a deeper and closer relationship. Our parents blessed us and seven months later we became engaged. We were married July 9, 2016. We both see the beauty of God's plan in preparing each of us separately, then bringing us together so we are better equipped and suited to the work of the Gospel in our corner of Haiti. We see and desire to fulfill the great need for biblical teaching and discipleship. We will also help facilitate pastors' training conferences and "remote-areas" medical teams.

Please pray for us as we learn to adjust to married life and life in a foreign country. The challenges are great, but the grace and strength of our God is greater! God has been so good to us thus far, and we know He will continue to guide us and keep us as we follow Him. ■

## 2016 TAX RECEIPTS

December gifts to CMML and MSC Canada will receive a receipt for 2016 income tax returns if they are postmarked by December 31, 2016.

## HOLIDAY NOTICE

The CMML office will be closed December 23–26, 2016, and January 2, 2017. The MSC Canada office will be closed December 26, 2016, through January 2, 2017.