

Missions

Haiti

A Country of Contrasts

Ireland

Impacting Lives amid COVID-19

Peru

3D Printing Supports Health Care

France

6 Days of Refreshment for Missionaries





BY ERIC BARTON

The Sacrifice of Thanksgiving

I will offer to You the sacrifice of thanksgiving, and will call upon the name of the Lord. (Psalm 116:17)

As we approach the end of an unprecedented year, there is no doubt many people have suffered due to the COVID-19 pandemic. Even if the virus has not personally affected us, we likely know someone whom it has. It has disrupted missions work, altered church meetings, postponed weddings, canceled family visits, decimated jobs, taken loved ones, and much more. To make matters worse, fear that our physical presence might do more harm than good forced many of us into isolation and sidelined us from serving others. The pandemic has tested even the most patient among us.

Like me, you may wrestle with frustration and discouragement during the pandemic. You may focus on your problems rather than your Provider. And, while trying to make sense of it all, you may struggle to be thankful. Fortunately, we have a High Priest Who sympathizes with our weaknesses and gently draws our attention back to Himself (Hebrews 4:15; Hosea 11:4). In our unbelief, He reminds us of the words He spoke to the disciples following His resurrection: “Behold My hands and My feet.” (Luke 24:39) And, each time we behold Him, our fears subside, and our hearts grow thankful.

God never promises us a life free from suffering. On the contrary, Jesus says, “In the world, you will have tribulation.” (John 16:33) Furthermore, He says suffering is actually beneficial for us (James 1:2–4). The Bible is replete with examples of Old and New Testament saints who suffered from sin, famine, poverty, sickness, good deeds, godly living, the devil, and God’s greater purposes. We should not be surprised when trouble arrives. Rather, we should move forward in faith and confidence, knowing that God is working for our good and that our affliction will eventually produce “a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory.” (Romans 8:28; 2 Corinthians 4:17)

David was familiar with suffering. In Psalm 116, he describes it like this: “The pains of death surrounded me, and the pangs of Sheol laid hold of me; I found trouble and sorrow.” (v. 3) Amid his distress, David asks, “What shall I render to the Lord for all His benefits toward me?” (v. 12) David never lost sight of Whom the Lord is or what He did for him. In response, David’s heart overflowed with love and moved him to offer the Lord a “sacrifice of thanksgiving.” (v. 17)

The Lord Jesus was familiar with suffering too. Isaiah prophesied that Jesus would be “despised and rejected by men, a Man of sorrows and acquainted with grief.” (Isaiah 53:3) Our Lord Himself spoke of the extent of His suffering: “My soul is exceedingly sorrowful, even to death,” and “My God, My God, why have You forsaken Me?” (Matthew 26:38; Matthew 27:46) Yet the Lord Jesus maintained a thankful heart. Remember what He did on the night He was betrayed? He gave thanks for the bread and cup with perfect knowledge of the suffering they represented (1 Corinthians 11:23–25).

While our circumstances may change, Jesus Christ does not (Hebrews 13:8). He remains the God “Who forgives all your iniquities, Who heals all your diseases, Who redeems your life from destruction, Who crowns you with lovingkindness and tender mercies, Who satisfies your mouth with good things.” (Psalm 103:3–5) Even as we face adversity, He “daily loads us with benefits.” (Psalm 68:19) When our strength runs out, “His compassions fail not.” (Lamentations 3:22) What shall we render to the Lord for all His benefits? May we follow David’s and Christ’s examples and “continually offer the sacrifice of praise to God, that is, the fruit of our lips, giving thanks to His name.” (Hebrews 13:15) ■

Eric Barton is a CMML director.

All the way my Savior leads me; what have I to ask beside? Can I doubt His tender mercy, Who through life has been my Guide? Heav’nly peace, divinest comfort, here by faith in Him to dwell!
For I know, whate’er befall me, Jesus doeth all things well.
(Fanny Crosby, “All the Way my Savior Leads Me”)

Vol. 49, No. 10. 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: Marketplace in Haiti—Michael and Breanna Rudolph



Haiti

A Country of Contrasts

BY MICHAEL & BREANNA RUDOLPH



Immense poverty—natural beauty. Violent gangs—innocent orphans. Political corruption and instability—God’s infallibility and faithfulness. Haiti is a place of contrasts. Once called the “Pearl of the Antilles,” it is a beautiful country that violence, natural disasters, and corruption have torn apart since its inception. Throughout its history, Haiti has turned its back on the almighty Creator. The majority of people are desperate; many turn to crime, drugs, or other destructive behaviors. But God is at work, and people are turning from misery to His glorious light.

Our story

Michael was introduced to Haiti while accompanying medical teams with Aid for Haiti—All for Him, a Christian nonprofit. The massive January 2010 earthquake took him back to Haiti for emergency medical relief. During that trip, Michael heard God calling him to full-time missions work, so he stayed. Working as a medic took Michael into remote areas, and a cholera outbreak took him to a small clinic in the mountains of Les Palmes. There, Breanna met him while she helped care for a team that was remodeling the clinic. She met Michael when she answered the clinic’s request to return as a nursing assistant. Two and a half years later, we married and began our lives together in the small home Michael was building up the hill.

Driving the 12-mile mountain trail to Les Palmes takes two hours in a 4x4 truck. Located south of the coastal city Petit-Goâve, our remote community is completely off the grid; we

rely on solar and generator power and haul up most of our supplies from Petit-Goâve. Although isolated, Les Palmes is a well-populated area, where farming is the people’s livelihood.

The Lord has graciously given us wonderful people to labor with daily, and the need for the Gospel and opportunities to serve are everywhere. The Lord has enabled us to partner with national believers in outreach ministries: facilitating remote medical and surgical teams, holding leadership seminars, distributing literature, and assisting other missions in times of crisis. Since the addition of our children, Michael “Junior” (4) and Lydia (1), we stay closer to home. In the last two years, travel within the country, which is always challenging, has become uncertain and often dangerous. These circumstances keep us in our home community, and the Lord has blessed the local ministry.

A religious country

Nestled in the heart of the Caribbean, Haiti, which is roughly the size of Maryland, is home to 11.4 million people. The official languages are French and Creole (Kreyòl), but French is mostly reserved for official business. Especially in the mountains, Creole dominates spoken and written communication. Haiti has a humid, tropical

The good news is that Jesus Christ can set free all those who are in bondage!

Above: While Haiti is a beautiful country, it faces many contrasts, including poverty and natural disasters.

climate and suffers from hurricanes, tropical storms, severe droughts, and earthquakes. With a very high inflation rate and a very low GDP growth rate, Haiti has one of the world's most unstable economies.¹

While Roman Catholicism is the official religion, Voodoo is the cultural religion, and it is often mixed with Catholicism. Superstition and fear permeate the country, especially in the mountains where Voodoo is commonly practiced. We have seen the power of demons and curses on unbelievers. Recently, we witnessed the effects of a curse on a man's family after he sold cows that he was told to sacrifice in a Voodoo ceremony. The good news is that Jesus Christ can set free all those who are in bondage!

Evangelicals have made a mark on Haiti, yet fear and superstition affect even them. As the common saying goes, "Haiti is 70 percent Catholic, 30 percent Protestant, and 100 percent Voodoo." The fallacy of being able to outweigh bad with good is prevalent. Although evangelicals use the Bible in their preaching and teaching, biblical understanding is sorely lacking. Many misconceptions and false doctrines are taught. For example, many believe that, if you are a member of a church and tithe, you are automatically a Christian and all will be well despite the life you live. Much emphasis is placed on dreams and revelations but little on God's Word.

Haitian churches

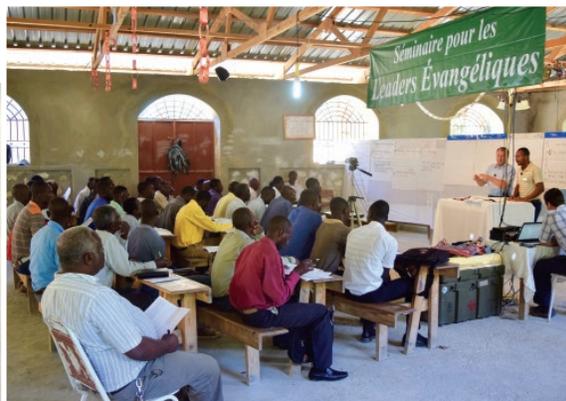
To our knowledge, no Brethren assemblies exist in Haiti. The assemblies in the neighboring Dominican Republic conduct outreach in Haiti, and two Brethren missionaries, besides our family, serve here. Haiti has many churches—it is a religious country, but religion does not save. Too often, corruption takes its toll within the leadership, and we see money controlling the pastors' hearts. We hear of the devastation and hurt that results from a church leader not acting as an undershepherd of Christ.

However, others are truly seeking "the kingdom of God and His righteousness." (Matthew 6:33) Men and women long to know more about the Word, but solid resources are scarce. We minister to these spiritual needs as the Lord enables. We hold weekly Bible studies for those interested in studying biblical truth and doctrine. We pray for the soul of our groundskeeper, who was raised as a nominal Catholic. During a study in Romans, the Holy Spirit changed his heart. About two weeks later, he told Michael his testimony—about the regeneration of his heart and mind and the ensuing peace and joy that filled his soul. The Lord is working.

Currently, we hold the times of Bible study and prayer under a bamboo and tarpaulin shelter. We are working to purchase a piece of land so that we can build a versatile meeting place

for Bible studies, seminars, and marriage conferences. Someday, we hope it will become an assembly that preaches the Word. The Lord has given us many visions and goals. However, everything takes a long time to accomplish. We try to remain patient, do what we can, and wait on God's timing and provision.

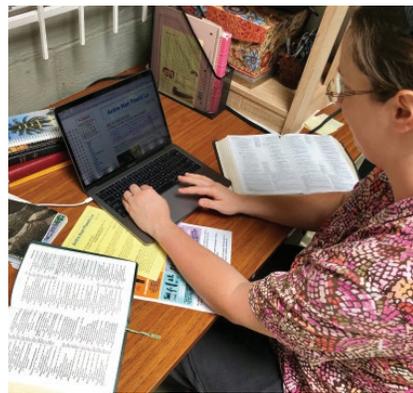
For the past eight years, God has enabled us to host annual leadership seminars for church leaders and schoolteachers during the summer school breaks. Depending on the stability of the country and the availability of resources, we do one to three weeks of these seminars each year. They require much preparation, days of travel, gifted teachers and translators, and most importantly, the Holy Spirit's presence. Our home assembly sends teachers and materials. The men receive invaluable biblical instruction, resources, encouragement, and counsel, and they are equipped to teach dozens of others. It encourages us as, year after year, we see growth in the believers' lives. We witness the Holy Spirit guiding, maturing, and teaching them, and we praise the Lord! This year, however, the COVID-19 pandemic forced us to cancel the seminars.



From left: The marketplace draws people from across the mountains as they buy and sell goods; For eight years, the Rudolphs have facilitated summer leadership seminars.



Top (L-R): The large, local marketplace is a prime location for sharing the Gospel; In the mountains, many people rely on donkeys for transportation. **Right:** The rugged terrain surrounding Les Palmes makes travel to and from the remote community slow and difficult. **Below (L-R):** The summer leadership seminars equip, counsel, and encourage church leaders and schoolteachers; Breanna creates a Creole gospel pamphlet.



The Word in Haitian Creole

We have long felt the need for Christian literature to be produced in Haitian Creole. Since the majority of adults have little education, most cannot read French, and little literature is written in Creole. This past year, God gave us the capacity, with our growing grasp of the language, to start creating a four-page Creole pamphlet titled *Antre Nan Pawòl La (Into the Word)*. We distribute 1,000 copies of each edition in the local marketplaces, where people from across the mountains come to buy and sell. The reception of and appreciation for these pamphlets are huge! Many of the materials that we hand out are carried to locations that we would be unable to reach otherwise. Pray that the Holy Spirit will work through the truths printed in these pamphlets, igniting readers' hearts and changing their lives.

Prayer and praise

As we observe Haiti's many contrasts—the needs, the systemic corruption, and violence—we see that, amid great darkness,

there is a great Light! If we were to point to one passage of Scripture as our inspiration, it would be Matthew 9:35–38. Our goal is to hold forth the truth of the Gospel of Jesus Christ and follow His example of teaching, preaching, and healing (v. 35). As Christ said, "The harvest truly is plentiful," and we give our lives to the Lord to be sent out as His laborers (v. 37).

Please pray for God's work in Haiti. Pray that the Gospel will flourish, penetrating each home, drawing the Lord's people to Himself, changing lives, and exalting God's name. Pray that He will move the hearts of Haiti's leaders to peacefully resolve the nation's political unrest. Praise God for His grace and power and for His enduring promise that the Word will not return to Him empty. It will accomplish His purposes and succeed according to His sovereign will! ■



Michael and Breanna Rudolph are commended from *Believer's Bible Chapel* in Chattanooga, Tennessee.

¹ Plecher, H. "Haiti – Statistics & Facts." *Statista*. February 8, 2019. www.statista.com/topics/4617/haiti/. Originally published by *Echoes International Missions Magazine*, August 2020. Used with permission.

AN UNCHANGING MISSION FOR CHANGING TIMES

Dublin Christian Mission Impacts Lives amid COVID-19

BY JOE MURPHY

When I was hungry, you gave me something to eat. (Matthew 25:35)

Beginning in 1828, Dublin Christian Mission (DCM) has endured and served during many difficult times, impacting lives through the Great Famine, caring for thousands during DCM's many years as a medical mission, and now, assisting amid the COVID-19 health crisis. Over the generations, DCM's mission has remained the same: to compassionately come alongside individuals, families, and communities in Dublin, providing assistance as a demonstration of God's love and sharing the message of faith and hope in Jesus. Our response to the COVID-19 pandemic is no different.



THE LIGHT HOUSE

Around the start of the COVID-19 pandemic, we surveyed other homeless services—in particular, those remaining open—and concluded that a late afternoon hot meal pack was an essential and critical need for the homeless community. At DCM's The Light House facility, we began by transitioning from a café to takeout service, setting up guidelines, instituting safety procedures, and ordering supplies.

During our first week of operating the takeout service, we handed out about 100 meal packs each day. That number quickly increased. Now, we distribute more than 300 meal packs each day. By our 12th week, we distributed more than 25,000 meal packs, each consisting of a hot meal, fruit, a pastry, chips, a chocolate bar, and a drink. We also distribute toiletry bags and essential clothing items. In the summer, as the needs increased and the shutdown lengthened, we began distributing meals, toiletries, and clothing to homeless hostels, isolation units, and other related services.

We rely on a small group of volunteers to limit exposure. We follow health-safety procedures, utilize donated PPE, and pass the meals and essentials through a protective screen to the recipients. By God's grace, the volunteers have remained healthy. We give special thanks to our committed volunteers who prepare and distribute the meal packs daily, representing the frontline of our mission.

CHANCERY PLACE

Over at DCM's Chancery Place facility, we provide seniors and families in surrounding communities with food hampers; we have distributed more

than 500 hampers door to door. Anthony and Leanne, staff at Chancery Place, connect with the youth from our clubs through activities. We are in regular contact with them, ready to help through acts of kindness.

While indoor ministries have ceased, we took advantage of this unique time to complete some overdue renovations at Chancery Place, restoring much of the historic building's original features. Our plan is to create a welcoming, vibrant community center for people of all ages to enjoy. We look forward to the day when we can resume indoor ministry activities at our renovated Chancery Place.

OUR GRATITUDE

We praise God for the amazing support of finances and supplies from individuals, churches, foundations, and corporations. We are grateful and dependent on all those who faithfully pray for us and for God's protection, provision, and direction. You are the behind-the-scenes fuel that keeps us going!

The countless faces we encounter each day—the smiles, thank-yous, and even tears—also encourage us to press on. They fill our days with heart-touching experiences: "I don't know what I would do if you were not here," many say, as they accept the hot meal packs and other essentials. Some people have tears in their eyes as we hand them cups of water. An eight-year-old gave us her \$18 of pocket money to use for the homeless. Another time, we received a donation that refueled our supply stock just as it was running out.

So we press on, anticipating that this essential service will continue operating with God's direction and through your prayers and support. We are grateful for your partnership with us. Together, many lives are being impacted. Each day, the thanks we receive from our homeless friends are for you.

OUR PRAYER

Like those before us, we engage in missions life amid challenging and unique days. God is using this time to plant seeds for the future. It is a time of learning, prioritizing, and gaining new perspectives. Through the uncertainty and hardship, we pray that many will see their need for Jesus and that we will grow in our relationship and dependency on God. He has used DCM many times before, and it is our mission that He will use us once again!

May God bless you and keep you safe and well. We pray with you. "Truly I tell you, whatever you did for one of the least of these brothers and sisters of mine, you did for me." (Matthew 25:40, NIV) ■

Joe Murphy is commended from Cheshire Bible Chapel in Cheshire, Connecticut.



Opposite page: Since 1828, DCM has supported its community during difficult times.

This page (from top, L-R): Daily, an average of 300 people, affected by the COVID-19 pandemic, visit DCM; The food packs include fresh fruits; Some volunteers prepare and package the hot meals; Some volunteers assemble the meal packs; Other volunteers help with collecting and transporting food donations.

A Hobby Becomes a Ministry

3D Printing Supports Health Care in Peru

BY ALEKS CLARK



As is true of the wider world, so it goes in Peru: the COVID-19 pandemic threatens and disrupts lives across the country. In Peru, the health infrastructure is limited. The country has 1.6 hospital beds per 1,000 people, compared to the US's 2.9, and the services a Peruvian hospital bed renders are very different from those of a US hospital bed. Due to these factors and witnessing the pandemic's impact on our local hospitals, we began manufacturing face shields, with the help of 3D printers, and donating them to local hospitals.

THE MINISTRY

For several years, I have enjoyed 3D printing as a hobby. While 3D printing is not the most efficient form of mass production, it enables the user to print whatever he or she needs at a given moment. As global supply chains break down, 3D printers allow people to turn generic supplies of plastic into helpful items, like face shields.

The Lord provided donations for this purpose, allowing us to purchase six additional printers and about 150 pounds of plastic just before supplies became exhausted here. Once we acquired the materials, we produced the face shields. With each batch, we loaded the plastic into the 3D printers and waited as they printed the parts of the face shields. The entire family pitched in with postproduction, disinfecting the pieces, and packaging them. We included gospel tracts with each face shield.

At our peak, we produced about 150 face shields per day.



To date, we donated more than 4,000 face shields to the four major hospitals in Chiclayo, the city we live in, and to health-care providers in surrounding areas.

GROWTH

The work continues, although its emphasis has shifted. As part of the coordination of similar efforts throughout the country, Aleks joined the board of directors of PeruMakers, a small nongovernmental organization. The organization facilitates donations, since the red tape in Peru is a huge barrier to making donations, and gains access to supplies and transportation during the country's lockdown. Aleks's position is temporary, but he helped PeruMakers through its early development. The organization has delivered an additional 10,000 face shields around Peru, and its efforts are growing.

Please pray that we will manifest Christ's love through this work. Pray also that God will give us the wisdom to balance work and rest while we are engaged in this outreach. ■

Aleks and Kelly Clark are commended from New Heights Chapel in Murfreesboro, Tennessee.



Top: Aleks gives the completed face shields to a hospital worker. Above (L-R): The Clarks' 3D printers manufacture face shields; The entire Clark family helps produce the face shields; The Clarks organize the disassembled face shields before disinfecting and packaging them.

European Christian Workers' Conference

6 DAYS OF FELLOWSHIP AND RENEWAL FOR MISSIONARIES

BY MAUREEN CROW

In the lovely Lake Annecy region of eastern France, surrounded by the majestic Alps, 65 Brethren missionaries from across Europe gathered for the 43rd European Christian Workers' Conference (ECWC). This year, the annual English-language conference for assembly-based missionaries in Europe began on Saturday, August 22, and ended on Friday, August 28. For many missionaries who attend, this weeklong conference is their only vacation during the year; it is a special time of relaxation, Bible-centered teaching, excellent cuisine, fellowship, and prayer. This year was no exception!

The conference's attendees

What was an exception was the COVID-19 safety guidelines, which required attendees to wear masks in all public places and wash their hands frequently. Due to travel restrictions, many people, including Dr. Ian Burness, our speaker from England, and representatives from CMML and MSC Canada, were unable to attend the conference in person. These challenges reduced the conference's usual size; however, they did not prevent those of us in attendance from spending six wonderful days together.

The accommodations were very comfortable and attractive, and the dining room provided a stunning view of the Alps. There, the fellowship enjoyed over delicious meals was a highlight of the week and afforded moments to meet new missionaries from Portugal and renew acquaintance with missionaries from Spain, Belgium, Holland, Poland, Romania, and of course, France.

The days' activities

We began each day with a time of prayer for one other. Then, our mornings were devoted to praise and worship and two teaching sessions with a short break for coffee in between. Through the use of technology, we listened to prerecorded messages from Dr. Burness, a former missionary to Africa. He based his



MATTHEW 22:10

834 Jesus is Mocked

theme, "Trouble within a Church," on 2 Corinthians, and his teaching was excellent. We also participated in several live Q&A sessions with him over Zoom, the video-conferencing platform. Several volunteers cared for the children and provided special sessions for the youth so the parents could attend the teaching meetings.

Our afternoons were free for resting, exploring the area, or enjoying the swimming pool and lake. Optional workshops took place at the end of the afternoon and before dinner. Via Zoom, Paul Rabideau, a Christian psychologist from New Jersey, led several workshops on fear and the fear of God, and Matt Glock (*Missionary Prayer Handbook Day 10*), a missionary in France, led another workshop in person.

The encouraging results

All in all, the conference was six wonderful days in delightful surroundings with fine people. We appreciated the opportunity to "recharge our batteries" and renew our minds and spirits through the Bible teaching and fellowship with fellow missionaries. Without help from our service organizations—CMML, MSC, Echoes, and Stewards Ministries—many of us would be unable to attend the ECWC, so we are very thankful for their support! ■



Maureen and Colin Crow are commended from assemblies in England and Pennsylvania.

Opposite page (from top): Over dinner, the Crows get to know Janet and Gavin Petersen, first-time attendees; Matt Glock (MPH Day 10), Beata and Mirek Marczak (MPH Day 13), Tim Gooding (UK), and Tom Marinello (MPH Day 13) hike the nearby mountains [Photo by Matt Glock]; The worship team, including Michael and Kilian Potts (MPH Day 9), leads the attendees in singing. **This page (from top):** This year, 65 missionaries gathered for the ECWC [Photo by Tom Marinello]; Jesse Remans and Anna Remans-Gifford (Belgium) lead the teen group; The attendees listen to a message from Dr. Ian Burness; Bernd Flock (MPH Day 9) leads the men's morning prayer group.



Interview with John & Abigail Harrell



New Missionaries Share about Daily Life

In 2019, John and Abigail moved to Thailand with a burden to help fill the spiritual need in a particular city, where an estimated 99.99 percent of the population is unsaved. Commended from Woodland Hills Community Church in Columbia, South Carolina, the Harrells desire to reach their Thai community through home Bible studies, gospel literature and multimedia, and discipleship. Meanwhile, they are focusing on learning the Thai language and culture while building friendships with local people. Pray for the Harrells as they learn Thai, adjust to a new culture, and welcome their first child this month.

How do you get around?

We live in a small city without a lot of public transportation, so we have a sedan and a small motorbike. The motorbike is a common and economical way to have a second vehicle and save on fuel costs.

What is the weather like?

Thailand has three seasons: cool and dry, hot and dry, and hot and rainy. We just finished the hot and rainy season and are in the cool and dry season. In this “cold” season, spanning from November to January, highs range from the 70s to 80s, and lows can reach the 50s.

What custom do you find interesting?

Familial titles are regularly used in place of given names, regardless of whether there is any kinship. To determine the appropriate title, it is common to ask new acquaintances their age. The most common titles include: older sibling, younger sibling, uncle, aunt, father, mother, grandmother, and grandfather.

What is the dominant religion in your area?

Thailand is world famous for being the capital of Buddhism—specifically, Theravada Buddhism, which is considered the orthodox tradition, handed down from Buddha and his followers. A popular saying sums up the stumbling block this religious identity is to following Christ: “To be Thai is to be Buddhist.” Most Thais practice a blend of Buddhism and animism (appeasing evil spirits and ancestors).

Do you feel settled?

Over the course of our first year, we have felt increasingly settled. However, we faced a lot of uncertainty related to the COVID-19 pandemic and our visas. We anticipate a transition on the horizon as we prepare for the arrival of our first child, due this month.

What do you miss the most?

We most miss our sending fellowship, Woodland Hills Community Church in Columbia, South Carolina.

What is a typical day for you?

We spend our mornings studying Thai at our language school. Afternoons and evenings vary more, but usually, they involve a mix of homework, errands, rest, and meeting with Thais to build relationships and practice our language skills.

How do you get to know people?

We are still experimenting with where and how to get to know people, but some examples of places where we have made friends are roadside restaurants, our neighborhood street, Thai church gatherings, and the gym.

How do you relax?

John enjoys attending group exercise classes as a way to relax while making Thai friends. Abigail relaxes by cooking familiar foods at home.

How has the COVID-19 pandemic affected your ministry and daily life?

From March to May, our opportunities to practice Thai and develop relationships came to a screeching halt, other than our online Thai classes. While national borders remain closed, things are more or less back to business as usual here. The Lord graciously spared the nation from a serious outbreak. The big impact we felt was uncertainty regarding our ability to renew our language-study visas at the end of July. We prayed that the Lord would grant us favor with the immigration officer, and we received exactly that when the officer made us aware of a rarely used visa extension, which would enable us to stay in Thailand without needing to cross the currently closed borders. The Lord provided this unexpected opportunity to extend our student visas until June 2021!

What is challenging?

We find understanding the Thai language and culture quite challenging. We're asking God to give us skill with the language, patience with the cultural differences, and compassion for the Thai people as we learn about things that sin has broken and twisted in the culture.

What is exciting?

As the Lord enables, we anticipate facilitating the translation of ROCK International's *King of Glory* into Thai. We recently learned that Thais rank second in most time spent on mobile devices. We can't wait to see the stories of the Bible accessible to Thais in the format they use most frequently and in their everyday language, which the average person can understand clearly. So much of the Thai Christian media and literature uses incredibly formal language that is difficult for the less educated to understand.

How can we pray for you?

We would appreciate prayer for the upcoming *King of Glory* project—particularly that the Lord will lead us to an excellent translator and that the existing Christian community will positively receive the easy-to-understand language. Finally, please pray that our language studies and relationships will progress. ■

From top: To move around their city, the Harrells often use their car; John enjoys making friends at a local gym; The Harrells share a meal with some of their neighbors; In the mornings, the Harrells study Thai at a language school.

