



“55 Plus” Mission Opportunities

by Ken Fleming

Short-term opportunities are available to people of all ages. The more you see the need, the more compelling the question: “How could I help?” Too few missionaries receive visits from home assemblies – let alone extended stays to help with the work. While it may be easier for mature believers to write a check to support missions, it could be a real blessing to the missionary – and to you, to give your time, ability, and experience where it is needed most. Some thoughts from veteran missionary and teacher Ken Fleming:

The “26 Below” conferences for college, career and senior high-aged young people sponsored by CMML have attracted good participation – and led to increased interest in world missions. Hearing of this, an interested person asked a CMML director, “What are you going to do for the ‘55 plus’ group?” When the question found its way into my lap I turned first to the CMML Web site where 75 short-term opportunities are listed in 19 categories, including contact information for interested Christians. The most requested categories are for education (20), construction (9), evangelism (9), maintenance (5) and children’s work (5). Other categories include renovation, food service, teaching English, camp work, medical clinics and literature work. Visit the Web sites for CMML www.cmml.us/involved/opportunities and MSC <https://secure.msccanada.org/opportunities.php> to see how you can help.

Great Opportunities for Service

Those with construction skills and helpers who have a responsive heart and a strong body will find two other Web sites that list mission construction opportunities for teams: Team Workers Canada www.teamworkers.org and Team Workers USA www.teamworkersabroad.org. Capable people lead both and will provide all necessary information about upcoming construction projects. They are arranged by date with information about leadership, travel, accommodation costs, needed tools and materials, health matters, etc. For those who want to serve in this way, your preparations will be made easy.

You Can Help

“55 plus” workers may be early retirees who have a good number of productive years ahead or people who can take time off from their employment for a few weeks or longer to help meet mission needs. Those with a recognized Bible teaching gift, combined with a language such as Spanish, French, Hindi, Swahili or Mandarin, may consider longer-term involvement. In some places you may be able to teach by translation or even use English. It may be a formal Bible school or a special series for an assembly. There are a number of countries where God could use you, perhaps for several years, or a shorter period every year. School teachers are always in demand in Missionary Kid (MK) schools. Foster grand-parenting, or even house-sitting may also be a possibility!

“55 plus” couples may both find outlets for their skills. For example, one may teach school and the other use trade skills. Teaching English as a second language (either formally or informally) is a worldwide need, and can be linked with evangelism. Some have volunteered on Zambian Mission Stations for a year or more. Physicians, dentists, chiropractors, and other medical specialists may use their expertise in meeting health needs. If administration is your strength, a school such as Faith Academy in the Philippines would welcome you for a school year. With a heart for the glory of God and the means to get there, the openings for service are huge!

Real Examples of Short-Term Assistance

A retired Chicago scientist was invited by his former business contacts to teach English to doctoral students in a restricted-access country. He and his wife responded for a few weeks at a time, not only teaching English as a Second Language (ESL), but also entertaining students in their apartment. The result—five of them put their faith in Christ and after the couple left, those five reached others. Our son Pete was a specialist in refrigeration equipment. Some years ago he went to Ecuador where he built and installed a much-needed room-sized freezer for a mission project. My brother-in-law is a doctor and made several trips to Peru with a small team of doctors holding eye clinics for people with certain eye issues. I have taken the opportunity in a short-term capacity to teach Bible courses in an assembly-related college in Myanmar.

What Will Be Your Response?

If you feel the Lord may be leading you to invest some of your available time to serve Him, why not e-mail Brian Kramer, CMML’s short-term service coordinator, at bjkramer@cmml.us and explore some opportunities that might fit your skills?

You’ll find that assisting other missions and missionaries is a worthwhile effort with eternal rewards. ■

Ken Fleming served as a missionary in South Africa for 25 years and as Chair of the Missions Department of Emmaus Bible College for 25 years until his retirement. He is also one of the instructors at the Missionary Orientation Program.