

# Transforming

Stories of making disciples in the way of Christ

Fall 2015  
VOLUME 1 • ISSUE 3



## God is the primary agent in mission



● The **Fragrance**  
of Christ PAGE 4



● **Mission** PAGE 6  
belongs to **God**



**Virginia  
Mennonite  
Missions**

*Called. Sent. Transformed.*

## Mission begins with God

BY AARON KAUFFMAN  
PRESIDENT



I grew up in a church that had altar calls. Not all the time, and not in manipulative ways, but from time to time, the leaders at Mountville Mennonite Church would invite us to respond to God by coming to the front of the sanctuary. The invitation would vary. Sometimes it would be for prayer, other times as a sign of recommitment to faith. And once in a while, it was a call to those who wanted to publicly acknowledge their faith in Jesus for the first time.

When I was 13 years old, my home church held its annual fall retreat. On Sunday morning, Pastor Ray Reitz gave one of those invitations to people who wanted to make a first-time commitment to Jesus. I was surprised to see nearly all of my peers going forward – Gina, Jewel, Kim, Abbey, Jenny, the pastor’s daughter. They were weeping as they knelt at the front of the sanctuary. It was more than I could take. I walked out.

Actually, I ran. Out the back door. Through the crunching leaves littering the lawn. Over to a lonely bench. I sat down, and I wept.

It wasn’t long before someone sat down beside me. It was my father. He put his arm around me and asked what was wrong.

I told him that I couldn’t bear to watch all of my friends go forward during the altar call. I felt pressured to join them. But I wasn’t ready. I just wasn’t ready.

What my father said next has forever impacted my life.

“It’s okay Aaron. There’s no hurry. You can wait until the time is right.”

Now I’m sure my father wanted nothing more than for me to choose the same path he had chosen years ago, to turn from sin and surrender my life to the God revealed in Jesus Christ. But in that moment, if he was anxious, he didn’t show it. He was calm, reassuring, comforting. He demonstrated what biblical scholar, Walter Brueggemann, calls *unconditional advocacy*. “This advocacy,” explains Brueggemann, “is not for certain ‘positions,’ but for the worth, value, future, and very existence of the young persons. The young need adults who are quite literally ‘crazy’ for them” (*Biblical Perspectives on Evangelism*, Abingdon, 1993).

My father was crazy enough to believe that while it was his job to model and invite faith, it was God’s job to convert me to it. He chose patience over pressure.

At Virginia Mennonite Missions, we take seriously our responsibility to bear witness to the good news found in Jesus. We ask with the Apostle Paul, “How can they believe in the one of whom they have not heard?” (Rom. 10:14). Yet we recognize that God is at work long before we ever arrive, and will continue to be at work long after we’re gone.

“So neither the one who plants nor the one who waters is anything,” Paul reminds us, “but only God, who makes things grow.” (1 Cor. 3:7). It’s God’s mission, start to finish. We’re just privileged to join in.

**Cover photo:** Adam Strode (right) and Steve Horst (with daughter Anjali) take part in a traditional water blessing ceremony at Thaichana Church, Thailand. Younger people bless their elders by pouring water over their hands. Photo courtesy of Steve Horst

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## Financial Report

Reporting: 9/1/14 to 08/31/15\*

Budget	\$2,114,641
Expenses	\$2,082,825
Contributions	\$1,910,205
Investments	(\$227,249)

\*All figures are pre-audit.

**Note:** More information about this report is at top right of page 3.

## Transforming

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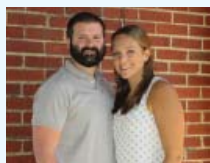
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## Mission Service

### New workers begin mission assignments



**Brent and Alisha Justice** will be serving with Serge in Bundibugyo, Uganda, in partnership with VM-Missions. Ridgeway Mennonite, Harrisonburg, Va., is their sending church.



**Joyce Crissman** is serving with Waynesboro (Va.) Mennonite Church, helping the congregation

to reach out to the local community, in various ministries including Kids Club.



**Seth and Theresa Crissman** are helping several Shenandoah Valley churches share the Good News

with children in their communities. They desire to expand Kids Club programs from several congregations to meet a wider need in the community.

**Raleigh and Opel\*** and their two children began an assignment learning language and living among Muslim people in a sensitive North African location. The assignment is in partnership with Rose-dale Mennonite Missions. \*(pseudonyms)



**Sarah K.** serves with tranSend in her neighborhood, sharing the Good News with children and their families in her diverse community. She leads a Bible Club program for the kids, serving in partnership with Covenant Presbyterian Church.



**Caitlin Tice** serves with tranSend at New Creation in Harrisonburg, Va. It is a ministry of outreach and

education to raise awareness of human trafficking and the vulnerable people impacted by it.



**Tyler and Kendra Yoder** are serving with tranSend in Harrisonburg, Va. In partnership with Eastside church,

they are focusing on discipleship among James Madison University students and nearby residents.

## Finances

### Fiscal year in review

VM-Missions' financial performance this year was mostly a cause for celebration, though there was some concern as well. We celebrate the fact that we exceeded last year's contributions by over \$62,000; that undesignated mission fund contributions were at a ten year high of over \$417,000, and that we spent \$44,000 less than last year. We are grateful to God and to you, our supporters!

The concern, however, is that investments performed much more poorly than expected, leading to a net loss for this fiscal year. Of course, the aim of investment income is steady growth over time, and that is what we have seen, averaging 5.5% over the past decade. This was simply an off year.

Even so, we have set more conservative investment expectations for the new fiscal year. And we are grateful that careful planning has provided us with a healthy reserve fund for lean years like this one.

## Birth notices

### Two worker families welcome new babies

Shawn and Laura Green, along with big brothers Lucas and Emmanuel, welcomed Matteo Timothy Green on August 3. The Green family serves with a church-planting team in southern Italy. They assist with worship, reaching out to new persons through home Bible studies, and expanding the work into new areas.

A family serving in a sensitive location in South Asia welcomed a son on September 15, born at home in Harrisonburg, Va. The family has been on home assignment in the US for several months and are returning to their overseas assignment where they live in a Muslim community, working in small business, and with the local church in discipleship, neighborhood outreach, leadership development and resource development.

## USPS Statement of Ownership

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f. Total Distribution (Sum of 1c and 1e)		3,435	4,550
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h. Total (Sum of 1f and 1g)		4,483	4,580
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## Festival of Praise

### Annual concert supports mission through song

Men's *a cappella* groups will sing songs of praise at the 14th *Festival of Praise*. An annual tradition, this concert and fundraiser for Virginia Mennonite Missions will be held at 4 p.m. on Sunday, November 1, at the Eastern Mennonite School auditorium. Each group will perform several songs and then combine to sing as a choir, directed by Jared Stutzman, music teacher at Eastern Mennonite School. There will be an offering to support the ministries of Virginia Mennonite Missions.

# ● The fragrance of Christ

Allen Umble has served in Albania as a mission worker since 1996, inviting others to faith in Jesus through a time of political and economic transition. He has also served as team leader for workers serving in Albania.



BY ALLEN UMBLE

Sizzle, crackle, pop and the lights went out as I stuck my head out the window to the display of fireworks and smoke from a nearby utility pole wrapped with electrical wires. At other times there would be a “whoomph” from a distant transformer blowing up, and the whole city would be shrouded in darkness, creating a spectacular display of the Milky Way.

I was reminded that an old system of ideology was beginning to crack and blow up with the powerful infusion of the life-changing Good News of Jesus.

In this setting, I began to teach English at the Guri i Themelit church location in Lezhë in November 1996. *Dare I use the Gospel of John for reading practice in my advanced English class? How would it be accepted?* What began as trepidation ended in joy as the Scripture triggered questions from a teenage student. She came to faith in Jesus and eventually led the congregation in worship.

Later, Chris Kratz (a member of Mt. Clinton Mennonite Church, Harrisonburg, Va.) joined the Lezhë mission team and began to teach computer classes. The daily power outages prompted the purchase of a generator.

However, this noisy beast perturbed the elderly gentleman in his apartment above the church during the afternoon rest time, and he came with a two-by-four ready to beat the monster! But we responded with a soft touch, paving the way for his attitude toward us to eventually change.

In 2008, after several years back in the States, I returned to Albania to serve in the Lushnje area. I moved into the third floor of a private home with the landlords living on the second floor.

There was a small stuffed figure hanging outside the first floor of the building. Even though I understood the purpose of this practice, to ward off the “evil eye,” I inquired of my landlord’s family about it. I responded by saying that I trust in God for protection, and left it at that. One day soon after that, I noticed the *kukulla* was no longer there.

Two things happened. One, in our Bible study that they attended, we looked at Psalm 91, which tells us that God is our protection. Secondly, they had workmen at their house installing large plate glass windows in the first floor of the



Allen Umble (second from right) invites his landlords to dinner. The elderly couple and their son attended his Bible study.





During a summer school at Lezha Academic Center in 2011, Allen taught English classes. Here he presents a certificate to one of his students at the end of the sessions. Also pictured are Klementina Shahini, principal of LAC (holding certificates) and former LAC teachers Kristina Reinhardt and David Jost. Photos courtesy of Allen Umble

house preparing to rent it for shops. And the installation went well! No one was injured! Yes, we can trust God. They began to say that God came to their house when I moved in.

This morning, when I walked on my balcony I brushed my hand against the potted lemon basil plant to breathe the rich aroma. The lovely fragrance reminded me of how we are to be the fragrance of Christ whenever our lives brush the lives of others.

In our tendency to be awe-struck by stories of the spectacular, we may not be aware of the many small ways that God is at work through our daily lives. On the other hand, if we were always aware, we might become self-conscious and proud.

In 2013, Klodi was in his last year of high school. He was the last of his siblings and parents to make a decision to believe and trust in Jesus for salvation. However, he was not so serious about his decision until one day he was expelled from school because he had been skipping classes and hanging out with his friends. His life was beginning to go in a purposeless direction along with unhealthy habits. He was fearful of what his father would say when he went home and showed him the notice from the school.

To Klodi's amazement, his father, himself a new believer, put his arms around Klodi and said, "Since Jesus has

forgiven me of my sins, I forgive you as well." Klodi was so touched by his father's response that he went to his room and cried and cried. "That is when I really committed my life to Jesus," Klodi said. He began to meet with me weekly, eating, playing ping-pong, sharing and praying together.

The following year, Klodi enrolled in a different high school from which he graduated. This past winter he attended The Torch Bearers Bible School in Erseke, Albania, and is presently serving on staff in the summer camp program at Erseke. He has expressed interest in going on to Bible School (seminary) and being a pastor or church leader.

Another young man, who visited my home many times these last six years and took part in Bible studies, experienced setbacks and challenges in his life. This past year he has matured a lot, and recently said to me, "I'd like to lead the Bible study sometime."

The new transformers and electrical systems are now providing a constant source of energy (at least in Lushnje), and our God, the primary and constant agent of mission, will bring His plan to completion.

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*Allen Umble serves in Lushnje, Albania, and is the team leader for mission workers serving in Albania.*

# Mission belongs to God

In Bangkok, first-term workers Adam and Jeanette have engaged the formidable challenges of cultural adjustment and language learning, discovering a surprising bottom-line truth about partnering with God in His mission.

BY ADAM STRODE

God doesn't *need* you. He doesn't need your youth program, your Sunday school class, or your weekly sermon. Nor does he require your mission organization, your congregational support, or your monthly tithe.

God's heart burns for the lost and cries out for reconciliation of all humanity. His passion for salvation and justice is an unquenchable fire, and He is working to accomplish his purposes in your community, your city, and in every nation with or without your assistance. Although this may seem like a harsh, even brutal, thing to say, it is an important truth which has set me free to pursue God, pursue community, and pursue the in-breaking of the Kingdom.

When my wife and I first set off for the mission field, it was with a detailed plan and high expectations, all carefully and meticulously laid in our minds.

Though this was our first time serving in

And then our expectations and our carefully crafted plans collided with the actual realities of international mission work. I couldn't preach or teach. I couldn't even communicate well enough to order a meal. Yet, simultaneously, we were confronted with suffering and need on a massive scale, far surpassing anything I'd ever experienced in the States.

The poverty was appalling: watching a newborn baby sleeping on the filthy streets of Bangkok. Witnessing kindergarten-aged children, roasting meat sticks on the sidewalk or working in hazardous construction sites filled with rebar, concrete, and rusty metal. Crippled beggars with no arms or legs—just torsos with twisted, melted flesh—landmine victims.

So many people. So much need. No idea where to begin. And it wasn't for a lack of desire, but of ability. I was impotent to change any of it. Unable to communicate, unable to aid, unable to teach or help. Over time, that need, coupled with my inability, became suffocating. I was failing these people. I needed to do more, to do something. Anything. But I couldn't.

And it was in the midst of this crisis, this brokenness, that God spoke, "You are not Jesus. He is the savior, not you."

This mission, these people, these problems, all belong to him. "The earth is the Lord's, and everything in it, the world, and all who live in it" (Psalm 24:1). God calls us to serve missionally, either at home or abroad, not because he needs us, but because he wants us to partner in his work. *We are not needed, but we are invited.*

And that invitation is not to save the world—swooping in to right every wrong—but to walk with our Father as he saves the world. It is an invitation to acknowledge we are not dispensers of grace



Bangkok's Lighthouse Church holds a retreat, joined by Adam and Jeanette.

an international capacity, we certainly weren't new to evangelically-oriented outreach. We'd worked for several years among Denver's urban and working poor, building community, discipling believers—new and old—leading studies, and teaching Scripture.

This would be different, sure, but we would be ready. We *needed* to be ready—there was too much on the line for anything else. Bangkok, after all, was a mission field with endless possibilities: 14 million people, the vast majority of whom didn't know Christ or had never heard the gospel at all (only 0.6 percent of Thailand is Christian). Not to mention sex workers, human exploitation, and political unrest. The perfect soil for the Gospel seed to take root.



Jane holds Lucy, Adam and Jeanette's daughter, at the church retreat.







The Bangkok team enjoys hanging out with their neighborhood friends P. Oat (left) and P. May. Beside them are Jeanette and Adam Strode, Bethany Tobin and daughter Anjali. Not pictured: Steve Horst. Photos by Steve Horst and Jeanette Strode

and wisdom, but crippled beggars desperately in need of such grace ourselves. It is an invitation to learn from and be transformed by God, even as he transforms the world in passing.



The Strodes share in conversation over a meal with Lighthouse Church members at the retreat.

Too often we pour ourselves out, burning the candle at both ends, because the task seems so urgent, the calling so

profound. At times, there is a sense that God does in fact need us. If we won't do the work, who will? "If not me Lord, then who?"

But I have news for all of those struggling under the burden of misconceived expectations: God doesn't *need* you and that's good news! If you falter or fail, it's okay, because God won't. He will remain faithful and true even if we should be faithless. (2 Timothy 2:13)

And in our smallness, there is freedom. Freedom to pursue God and pursue his call, even if imperfectly, knowing the outcome does not hinge on us. Success in ministry is not counted in the number of souls you win for the Lord. It is not calculated by how much money you raised or gave. It is not tallied based on how large your church is or what your Sunday attendance looks like.

The only metric for success in mission is how faithful you are in pursuing God, as he pursues the world. Accept God's invitation, in whatever form it comes, and be transformed in so doing.

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*Adam Strode serves in Bangkok, Thailand, with his wife Jeanette with their daughter Lucille. They are expecting another child in February and will soon be ending their first term.*



## Helping the Farmer who keeps scattering seeds

BY SARAH K.

**M**ay I come sit by you to copy notes?" Some days the thought that this twelve-year-old girl even wants to sit next to me, let alone copy sermon notes, is quite amazing!

I remember meeting her and her two younger sisters three and a half years ago, soon after they had arrived from Jordan. They didn't speak any English, so we stood around in their front yard while I pointed to things and practiced my colors in Arabic.

Since that day, these Muslim girls have come to church with me for months at a time on and off. We have had many enjoyable times making pancakes and going swimming. I have learned by trial and error how to deal with some of



Children enjoy parachute play in front of the gardens during the first neighborhood summer Bible school in 2012.

Photos courtesy of author

their unruly behavior. And God gives me opportunities to continue planting seeds of the Gospel and His love.

God is faithful. He created us, knows our foibles and sins, and yet, pursues us. He is the farmer who keeps on scattering seed. Every time I walk around my neighborhood and see the beautiful Ukrainian gardens, I ask Him to prepare the soil of my neighbors' hearts that the seed scattered may produce a harvest one-hundred-fold! I'm privileged to be one of God's little seed-scattering helpers.

Three and a half years ago, I moved across town to the south end of Harrisonburg to live and work with refugee and immigrant families. I had begun to get to know them through Backyard Bible Club when it began in 2009 as a neighborhood outreach of my church congregation, Covenant Presbyterian Church. It made sense to be closer and live among the people that God had called me to love, and He provided the perfect spot for me, a townhouse right on the edge of a government housing community where lots of families I knew were moving.

Thus began my adventure of living life among my neighbors from Iraq, Kurdistan, Eritrea, Ethiopia, South America, the Ukraine, and of course, the United States. Since I and others from my church started up the weekly Backyard Bible Club program in my neighborhood in 2012, I am well-known by all of the children and their families.

I am so thankful that God "determined the times set for them and the exact places where they should live. God did this so that men would seek him and perhaps reach out for him and find him, though he is not far from each one of us" (Acts 17: 26b-27). He has brought the nations to Harrisonburg! It has been an amazing privilege and joy to be used by Christ to see seeds sprout as many children have come to know and believe the Good News, as well as a mother and a previously Muslim teenage boy. For many others I know that the seed of the Word of God has landed on the soil of their hearts, and I anticipate the fruit that God will bring!



Some of Sarah's closest neighbors help her plant seeds for her front porch garden. "The kids love to help me harvest vegetables!" she said.

*Sarah serves with tranSend in her Harrisonburg, Va., neighborhood, sharing the Good News with children and their families from all over the world.*



## Who will 'bell the cat'?

BY CAROL TOBIN

Perhaps you've heard the story of the exultant mice who at long last land on a means of staying clear of their nemesis, the cat: Put a bell on the cat! Their high flying hopes crash quickly under the weight of the next question: "Who will bell the cat?"

If there is a mouse in the story who volunteers to try, that mouse is me. And what is the cat that needs "belling?" It is the fact that many who seek to serve with VMissions have little to no experience sharing the gospel. Who will show them how? Who will be the imperfect discipling model?

Despite discomfort, the tranSend trainees graciously engaged. One encounter stands out. We had gone to the hospital. Our assignment was to prayerfully hang out in the public areas, establish contact with folks to whom we felt drawn, and offer to pray for them. Sarah and I noticed a pony-tailed young man with enormous gauged earrings, and tattoos.

I figured that "weird" was an appropriate common denominator to begin our relationship: "Hi, I'm Carol and this is Sarah. It's a little weird, but we are actually here today just offering to pray for folks. Is there any way that we could pray for you?"

He looked slightly taken aback, but quickly regrouped. "Yeah. Sure." He went on to quickly tell us the health challenges his brother and mom were facing. We prayed a general prayer for them all to know God's presence and love. After the amen, we ventured to look at him—he was furtively brushing away tears.

Then came his clumsy, unforgettable thank you. "Hey, thanks. Yeah, really thank you. That's like *the nicest thing anyone has ever done for me.*" We held his eyes in this newly-formed bond that so wanted to be a hug and said a too-quick goodbye.

"Belling the cat" turned out to be an exhilarating experience not only for me but for the participants as well.

Caitlin, interning with local ministry New Creation, shared, "Allowing the Spirit to move you is very scary, yes, absolutely; but if you're not open to it, you'll miss amazing opportunities to glorify God and reach into others' lives." Joyce, who is now enjoying an internship with Waynesboro Mennonite Church, has also discovered something new. "Slowly, I am learning that, because I am a disciple of Christ, every conversation I enter into, I enter into with the life-changing knowledge of Jesus. God is continuing to open opportunities."

Martin Rhodes, director of the tranSend program, reads a blessing to the 2015 class at their commissioning service in July. Many are serving in local Virginia communities, cultivating relationships and sharing the Good News. From left: Martin Rhodes, Tyler and Kendra Yoder, Sarah K., Joyce Crissman, Chanthay Saengmanivone, and Caitlin Tice. Photo by Jon Trotter

I knew I had to do my part, thus I planned for time in public spaces to be part of my tranSend training sessions. The first looming risk I faced was the class response when I explained what we would be doing. There was suddenly no eye contact, and visible squirming and disturbance.

"My comfort zone is where I like to be: Safe, secure, familiar," Joyce reflected. "I was not looking forward to talking to strangers in a new place. Nope, not me." As Andre Stoner has aptly said of many of us: "We love service, we flirt with peace, and we are allergic to evangelism."



Carol Tobin is Virginia Mennonite Missions' Director for Asia and coordinated orientation activities for the tranSend class.



# Call to Prayer: Joining God's mission

BY SARAH SHOWALTER

**W**e see time and time again, in both the Old and New Testament, that God is on a mission to redeem all of creation. And time and time again, we see God inviting His people to take part in this mission, to join in what He is already doing. We talk often of joining in God's mission, so what does that look in our prayer life?

As humans, we are limited in our scope of understanding and can only see a sliver of the whole picture. Yet Romans 8:26 gives us the promise that "the Spirit helps us in our weakness. We do not know what we ought to pray for, but the Spirit himself intercedes for us." God is so gracious in promising to never leave us or forsake us. He never expects us to do anything by our own power, but instead invites us into partnership with His Spirit.

So when we pray, we again have the opportunity to be a part of what God is already doing. God wants us to partner with Him through prayer. We can ask, "Lord, what do you want me to pray for? What are you already doing and how do you want me to join with you? Guide my prayers, Holy Spirit."

I'm reminded of my mom and many others who use the phrase, "God put this person or this situation on my heart and so I was praying." This sensitivity to the Spirit is an example of partnering with God through prayer. We have to be tuned into the Spirit to catch these invitations to partnership.

There have been a handful of times when I've experienced this prayer partnership in profound ways.

While serving in Thailand with VM Missions, I had the chance to form a friendship with Robin (not her real name). Robin was a new believer from a next door country that is closed to the gospel. As the only believer in her extended family and her village, she desired very much share the Good News of Jesus. She came to Thailand for a

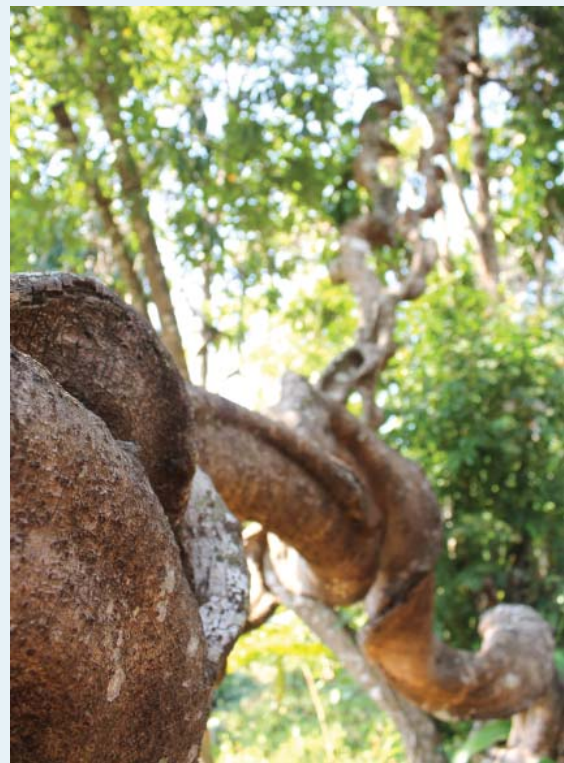
couple of weeks to study with believers from the Life Enrichment Church who are of a very similar people group and have experience sharing the Gospel in ways that are understandable in the culture. The entire church sent her back with prayers that there would be breakthrough in her family and village.

One afternoon about a week later, I couldn't get Robin off my mind. I felt an urgency to pray for her. I spent the rest of the afternoon asking for the Holy Spirit to move in her village.

The next day, I was amazed to hear a report from Robin regarding the events that had taken place during the time I had been in prayer. Robin had gone to visit her ailing grandmother that afternoon. Wanting to see God revealed to her grandparents, she prayed for healing for her grandmother. While her grandmother didn't notice any physical change, she felt as though something was different when Robin prayed, and she asked to know more about this God that Robin had prayed to. After sharing the gospel with them and even warning them of the persecution they would face if they chose to follow, Robin's grandparents believed!

I was so deeply humbled when I realized that the Lord had invited me to be a part of this incredible victory for the Kingdom. Never before have I felt so closely connected to the Lord and guided by the Spirit. It wasn't just that I prayed and something happened. God was already doing an intricate work in bringing many people, prayers, and circumstances together for this purpose, and God clued me into it and asked me to join with Him.

Another time while praying, the Lord brought my cousin Grace to my mind. Grace struggles with drug addiction and homelessness and no one in our family had heard from her for several months. I felt burdened to pray for her and to ask God to allow for some kind of connection to be made with her. Again, there was a deep



A tree with two trunks interwoven together, not far from Robin's village.

Photo by author

sense of urgency that the Holy Spirit was giving me, spurring me on to pray fervently for Grace. I ended my prayer time wondering where Grace might be at that very moment and why God has put her on my heart.

Within two hours my phone rang—it was Grace. Again, I was in awe at the way God was working all these things together. Obviously God was working in Grace, and He invited me to participate in this work.

We won't always see how our prayers directly connect to what God is doing, but we can trust the Holy Spirit is at work bridging our prayers to God's mission. Let's keep tuned into the Spirit so that we can join in the ministry of Christ in this way. What an honor it is for the children of God to be invited into God's mission through prayer.



Sarah Showalter is the Administrative Assistant for Virginia Mennonite Missions.





Anna and Robbie\* look at their extended family's garden before leaving for North Africa with their parents. Courtesy photo

## ● Worker profile: **Raleigh & Opal, Robbie, Anna\***

**Home:** Harrisonburg, VA  
(Early Church)

**Service program:** Long-term

### **Serve in Bangkok**

Serve at a small refugee center which provides services for urban refugees and asylum seekers in the city. This assignment involves Thai language and culture study, serving as a volunteer at the center and cultivating broader relationships. There are opportunities to teach, serve in the medical clinic, or provide social work assessments and help clients connect with social services. Qualified candidates should have a Bachelor's degree in education, nursing, social work, etc., and/or appropriate experience.

Go to [vmmissions.org/tranSend](http://vmmissions.org/tranSend) to learn more and to discover other service opportunities.

### **Assignment:**

After our initial few years of language and culture study, we desire to serve in agricultural development projects and in teaching English. Raleigh will engage in agricultural projects that include testing simple technologies with local farmers to increase crop yields in rural area. Opal will seek to teach English in a university setting. Our desire is to share the gospel within these settings and to see a Christ-ward movement begin in North Africa.

### **Biggest challenges:**

We anticipate that it will be difficult to be away from our network of incredibly supportive friends, church, and family. The challenge of learning two languages will also be intense in these first years. Pray for God's grace as we humble ourselves, becoming like babbling, bumbling children!

\* Names have been changed

### **Biggest joys:**

Our joy will be adventuring as a family into unknown friendships, sights, sounds, and tastes—all for the glory of God. We are also excited to live near some other family members who work in the region, giving and receiving encouragement.

### **A typical day:**

In our first week we will be setting up our apartment, learning how to get around our neighborhood, getting internet installed, purchasing a cell phone, and other activities to help us establish a "new normal" in a new place. Week two will find us interacting with neighbors in the morning and studying language in the afternoons together. As we study with a language teacher in our home, our childcare assistant will care for our two small children. We anticipate finding special places like parks and green spaces nearby to spend family time in the evening and connect with friendly people.





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# Windward

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Leaders **Linford and Janet Stutzman** will share expertise as cross-cultural mission workers and as leaders of university students sailing and studying in the lands of the Bible.



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RSVP and find more information at  
[vmmissions.org/serve/windward](http://vmmissions.org/serve/windward)

Cost is \$60/person or \$100/couple for all sessions, including meals and lodging.