

2nd Mile friends who came to say farewell and pray for us.



"Yes, LORD!"

News from
Jeff and
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Anderson,
missionaries
in Manila,
Philippines
for 33 years
with Action
International
Ministries

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All Scripture
references are
in the English
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unless other-
wise stated.

Our mission continues by paying it forward

While we were in the Philippines in April and May we dispersed our remaining belongings and concluded our residential ministry there. It was clear our thirty-three plus years there came to a close at this time for four primary reasons. They are:

- Our ministries over the past few years were intentionally turned over to capable Filipino and expatriate missionaries who served under our mentorship at one time or another. It was our plan from the beginning to develop leaders who would eventually carry on our ministries using their skills, strengths, and spiritual gifts based upon the core values, principles, best practices and policies they were taught and they caught. Their ministries are flourishing for which we praise the Lord and applaud them.
- Our missionary visa expired last November which is expensive and difficult to renew with no guarantee it would be approved.
- We have decided to live in the Minneapolis area, for now, so we can assist Mary Ann's family care for her godly parents, John and Mary Hartzell.
- In recent years we have moved more into helping develop new missionaries, especially those from the Majority World (formerly called the Third World). We have a strong sense of stewardship before the Lord to pass on to the next generation of missionaries, with ACTION and other agencies, the costly lessons we have learned, and are still learning, in God's school of grace. In the last year we've done

this in Nepal, Indonesia, Brazil, the Philippines and the US. We have invitations from other countries, which we're prayerfully considering, in the near future. We are also open to someday serve on another field or area if the Lord leads and it fits our skills, strengths, spiritual gifts and experiences.

Of course our hearts remain in the Philippines, and Lord willing, we will have opportunities to minister there again. It would have been easy to stay because we have many dear friends and faithful ACTION coworkers and ministry partners there. It was hard to say good-bye and leave but we must live up to the name of our prayer letter and say "Yes, Lord!" ***We are not retired or slowing down.*** We have only changed residence as the Lord made it clear we should. We have asked people to pray with us for clarity and this is answered prayer. Continue to pray with us as we move forward with our eyes fixed on Jesus while keeping our hands on the plow. (Read Luke 9:62 and Hebrews 12:2.)

Note that if you support us financially, please continue. You do not need to make any changes in your procedure for sending support to our general account and our travel account. The information for sending donations through the mail or online is on the back page. Thank you for your partnership with us in ministry through your prayers, support and encouragement.

“Live life, then, with a due sense of responsibility, not as men who do not know the meaning and purpose of life but as those who do. Make the best use of your time, despite all the difficulties of these days. Don’t be vague but firmly grasp what you know to be the will of God.”
Ephesians 5:15-16
(J. B. Phillips)

Yes, Lord... but first

Luke 9:51-62 (NLT)

As Jesus and His disciples walked to Jerusalem (read Isaiah 50:7 and Luke 13:22) after not being accommodated by a Samaritan village, He was approached by three would-be followers. The first said to Him, *“I will follow you wherever you go.”* But Jesus replied *“Foxes have dens to live in, and birds have nests, but the Son of Man has no place even to lay His head.”* Jesus warned this wanna-be disciple to count the cost before committing to becoming a follower. Jesus then said to another guy, *“Come, follow me.”* The man agreed, but he said, *“Lord, first let me return home and bury my father.”* But Jesus told him, *“Let the spiritually dead bury their own dead! Your duty is to go and preach about the Kingdom of God.”* This was a delaying excuse because if the guy’s dad was dead he would be involved with his burial not talking with Jesus. The third guy said, *“Yes, Lord, I will follow you, but first let me say good-bye to my family.”* But Jesus told him, *“Anyone who puts a hand to the plow and then looks back is not fit for the Kingdom of God.”* To this guy Jesus made it clear that He must be the top priority in a disciple’s life, even above one’s family (see Luke 14:26). Also by using an illustration of plowing a field His agrarian-based listeners would immediately understand that if a plowman kept looking back over his shoulder it would be impossible to plow a straight furrow. Jesus’ clear point is that His followers must focus on Him as they move forward at His command. In order to be able to do this we must loosen our grip on people, places, customs and things that normally provide us physical and emotional security.

I go through this text because in recent months we’ve met people who said they were clearly called by God to enter full-time missions when they

were young but over the years they made so-called commonsense excuses. Some procrastinated because their family pressured them not to get into ministry until they were assured of “success” or financial security or it was just plain stiff-necked disobedience. They knew better as they ran from God trying to hide from Him. They looked like “good” Christians on the outside but were miserable inside. Now they have stopped running and trying to hide. They have repented of their sin and decided to trust and obey Christ. They are not looking back as they move forward with Him. They are now happy in Jesus. We are helping some of these people grow as missionaries today. Let’s be reminded that God requires our willing obedience. Missions is the overflow of a life in love with Jesus. It was never intended to be our life.

Paying it forward

The New Oxford American Dictionary defines “paying it forward” this way, *“respond to a person’s kindness to oneself by being kind to someone else.”* Mary Ann and I have a strong desire to pay forward to new missionaries what our sending team does for us through their prayers, financial support and encouragement in many ways. We are grateful to them and have a sense of stewardship before God to pay it forward. Mentoring new missionaries is one way we are doing this.

On April 26-27 we gave orientation at 2nd Mile to three new members who are serving with the Philippine team (photo on the left).

From May 22-25 we helped train four appointees and one candidate at a Bible camp near Dallas. The appointees will serve in Uganda, the Philippines and the Middle East. The days were rich with conversations, prayer, teaching, learning, worship and fellowship from early morning till late evening. Topics discussed in Texas were: spiritual warfare, expectations, adversity and suffering, character qualities of a missionary, conflict resolution, child safety and protection, our relationship to our sending and receiving church, models of ministry, developing a prayer and financial support team, teamwork and cross-cultural relationships, resilience and self-care, the spiritual life of a missionary, leadership development, cross-cultural adjustment and adaptation, evangelism and

Our orientation in the Philippines included Prateep and Phailin a Hmong couple from Thailand and Chris from Singapore whom we wrote about in our last letter.



discipleship along with a few that were ACTION specific. There was lively Q&A during the sessions and in the evenings.

Each person received a copy of *MissionSmart: 15 Questions to Ask Before Launching Overseas* by David L. Frazier which they will go through with a mentor in their church. I highly recommend this practical book if you are praying about becoming or are a new missionary, a mentor of a new missionary, a member of a missions committee or serving as a sender of a missionary.

Everyone heartily agreed that this was a good investment of our effort, time and money. If your church, ministry or agency is interested in doing something similar, and you think we can assist you, let us know. This is all about Jesus Christ and helping develop those He is sending to labor in the fields of the world that are ready for harvest. One participant wrote an encouraging note to both of us. To me she wrote, "Thank you for all you did for the training! Your stories were helpful in pointing me back toward Christ and revealing hidden idols or expectations that I didn't know were there. Thank you for allowing yourself to be used by Him in that way!" To Mary Ann she wrote, "Just wanted to drop you a quick note to say thank you for everything you did for the training—it was such a delight to get to know you better. Thank you for your diligence in preparation and desire to walk alongside us newbies. :) Your wisdom and love were evident and I'm thankful to know you!"

When I prayerfully consider what Jesus is doing in and through them now, and potentially will do in coming years, I am amazed at the possibilities for spreading the Light, Hope and Life of the Gospel in hard-to-reach places of darkness, despair and death. Pray for these precious servants while they build their prayer and financial support team.

Paying it forward in Indonesia

We were in Sentani, Papua, Indonesia April 17-22 to visit Stephanie, a colleague, who teaches at two Christian schools. We wanted to see how she was when in mid-March the Sentani-Jayapura area was devastated by an avalanche of raging water filled with thick mud, boulders as large as houses, humongous trees and debris which cascaded down from a mountainside after days of almost nonstop



torrential rain. People said the avalanche, which happened while they were sleeping during the wee hours of the morning, sounded like nothing they've ever heard and the avalanche was higher than treetops. At last count ninety-seven unsuspecting people were killed with scores injured and missing. Thousands of families were displaced and many are living in temporary housing as they try to dig out their belongings from the mud and use small boulders to rebuild their homes. The three of us heard many heart-breaking stories as well as of miraculous survival. As we visited people we prayed and looked into who and how we can help. Before we returned to 2nd Mile we contacted an Indonesian Christian organization, with a good reputation, about partnering with them to assist people recover. Since then Stephanie and I have regularly communicated and we have partnered with this ministry. So far we have purchased water filters for families and baking equipment and supplies for women who want to learn to bake and start a bakery business. An upside of this tragedy is now evangelical churches and organizations are working together to assist victims whereas previously they were not. Stephanie, a widow, is now in the US for the summer resting and visiting her family and friends. She was okay and glad we visited her. Pray for her and the recovering Papuans.

The avalanche of mud, trees, boulders and debris destroyed many homes and communities like the one above.

Below is Mary Ann and Stephanie visiting Nita standing in front of her make-shift shelter. Not only did Nita and her community lose their homes, she was greiving the loss of five family members.



Paying it forward through books

Pastor Bernie O'Brien, is a longtime friend, who has been a serious student of God's Word and a gifted Bible teacher. He was Mary Ann's Sunday school teacher when she was in high school and she still remembers several of his lessons. He and his wife Carolyn are "paying it forward" by giving shelves of books from Bernie's library to All4Christ. On June 10 nine boxes of books were packed and shipped to Manila which will be distributed throughout the Philippines during A4C's conferences. All the books are biblically sound and will be a huge blessing to pastors, church leaders, seminary and Bible school students, missionaries and their wives for their study and teaching. In addition several ESV Gideon New Testaments, which will be used in a class teaching English to youth, and Global Study Bibles were included. The faithful crew from Maple Plain Community Church and Grace Church Eden Prairie did the packing and generous donors to A4C paid for the shipping.

Before the books were packed, Carolyn gave us several copies of Fletch Brown's excellent easy-to-read book called *Street Boy: When a street boy steals a wallet in Manila, money is not all that he finds....* We will distribute them as we have opportunity. The books were on the shelves because years ago we hosted Bernie and Carolyn in Manila as they taught at conferences

and schools. I highly recommend *Street Boy* for your Sunday school class, Vacation Bible School, social studies class or as a warm up for a missions project. It can be purchased online.

We have expressed our deep gratitude to Bernie and Carolyn for paying it forward to us. Mary Ann remembers Bernie passionately quoting Ephesians 5:15-16 from memory in the J. B. Phillips translation (see sidebar on the page 2). Oh, may those who receive these books, and each of us, live according to God's Word!

What has God called you to do?

(Mary Ann) Ephesians 2:10 says we were created for good works. In the *Strong's Concordance* one definition of *created* is "to form, shape, i.e. to completely change or transform." I am convinced that God fabricated or tailor-made us for the good work He prepared for us to do. ***So the question is, how have we been fabricated and what is the good work God uniquely prepared beforehand for us to do?*** Do we live life with a *due sense of responsibility knowing our meaning, purpose and God's will* as expressed in Ephesians 5:15-16?

While Jeff and I have traveled the past several months, I have met women who are longing to grow in their walk with the Lord but seem to be stuck for some reason. I have met other women who are wanting to move forward in God's purpose for them but are not sure what their next step is.

When I consider all the women who invested in my life through the years, I desire to pay it forward by helping women, especially those called to ministry, work through the areas of their life where they want fresh insight into how God created them and wants to use them. Studying God's Word and prayer will be our primary focus. Another tool I will use for discovering how God fabricated us with specific talents, will be CliftonStrengths (formally known as StrengthsFinder). Please pray for the Lord's guidance as I develop this ministry.

Ministry Schedule

- June 23, Elim Church, Minneapolis, MN
 - June 29-July 8, Visit our son Amos and his family, New Haven, CT
 - June 30, Groton Bible Chapel, Groton, CT
 - July 15-18, Mary Ann will attend Thrive Retreat, Beaver Creek, CO
 - August 3, Visit friends, Fargo, ND
 - August 4, Lake Eunice Evangelical Free Church, Detroit Lakes, MN
 - September 15-20, Elim Retreat, Eagle, WI
 - September 28-October 5, Mary Ann will attend Group Discipleship Training in Charlotte, NC
 - October 5-7, Visit friends, Greenville, SC
 - October 7-11, Pastoral Training in Member Care Conference, Asheville, NC
- We are available to speak in home groups, churches, schools or wherever the Lord leads. To God be the glory!

Action International Ministries

Online giving: www.actioninternational.org/anderson

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