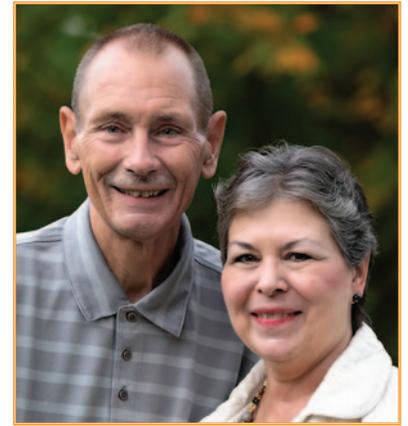


Yes, Lord,

walking in the way of your laws, we wait for you;
your name and renown are the desire of our hearts.

Isaiah 26:8 (NIV 1984)



Oneness not sameness

*News from
Jeff and
Mary Ann
Anderson,
missionaries
serving
globally with
Action
International
Ministries*

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*All Scripture
references are
in the English
Standard
Version (ESV)
unless other-
wise stated.*

Mary Ann and I currently live just north of Minneapolis, where on May 25 Mr. George Floyd died while being detained by a Minneapolis policeman. The officer was fired and is now in jail facing a 2nd degree murder charge. Floyd's death sparked peaceful protests demanding police reform and social change here, across the US and around the world. It also ignited angry riots, looting and the destruction of public and private property and many businesses. You may have seen photos and videos in the news.

In the midst of burnt-out buildings, graffiti scribbled everywhere and ongoing protests, local people and others from many places and of different walks of life, are picking up the debris and sweeping the streets while distributing essentials like water, food, items for babies and the elderly among other supplies to those in need. It is great to see people working together to rebuild communities and restore trust in one other. Many churches from rural, suburban and urban areas and of many traditions in God's family, are serving side-by-side as the hands, feet, voice and heart of Christ in badly damaged and destroyed communities of Minneapolis and elsewhere.

Now, thankfully, the rebuilding of homes, businesses, community centers, government buildings, lives and a sense of community is slowly happening. It is going to take a long time with sustained effort to recuperate, reconcile, reform, restore and rebuild but it is happening. It is especially beautiful to see the body of Christ serving in unity with love. From 1977-1985, before we went to Manila in '85, we

lived in a neighborhood close to where Mr. Floyd was killed.

Since May 25 I have spent a lot of time reading, studying and praying through various Scriptures about the unity or oneness of the body of Christ. Galatians 3:28 is one of the verses. Paul writes to the Galatians addressing the discord between Jews and Greeks in their churches *"There is neither Jew nor Greek, there is neither slave nor free, there is no male and female, for you are all one in Christ Jesus."*

Is Paul teaching that Christ erased ethnic, economic and gender differences among His followers? No, Jews are still Jews, Gentiles are still Gentiles, men are still men and women are still women. What Christ abolished is discrimination for such differences. Unity in Christ transcends our ethnic, social and sexual distinctions. I praise God for the oneness we have in God's diverse family. It would be boring if we were all the same. However, we all become children of God, brothers and sisters in Christ and members of God's household the same way, through repentance of our sin and faith in Christ Jesus. (John 1:12-13; 17:20-23; Ephesians 2:11-22) What a timeless truth to live by in our day and time. In short, Paul is teaching this biblical truth to the believers in Galatia and to us today: **we have spiritual unity in the midst of our obvious diversity, and we must not expect other believers in Jesus Christ to be the same as us.**

Here are two applications for us today:

1. Faith in Christ transcends our differences and makes all His followers spiritually one

in Him. We need to be careful to not impose our distinctions on someone else. No one in the body of Christ is more privileged or superior than another.

2. It is our natural inclination to feel uncomfortable with people who are different from us and to gravitate toward those who are like us. We need to seek out and appreciate believers in Christ who are not like us. We will discover we have things in common in addition to our faith in Jesus.

Christ's diverse people are united in Him. We need to cherish this and protect it because it is precious and a powerful witness of the transforming power of the Gospel to our divided, decaying and dying world. People are watching to see if our daily behavior matches what we say we believe on Sunday. (John 13:34-35)

Ministering at home

In May I was elected to serve a three-year term on the Board of Directors of our multi-cultural housing cooperative for 55 plus year-olds. I was put to work within a few hours so my learning curve is steep. That afternoon our memo offering to pray for our neighbors was posted on bulletin boards throughout our community. Requests for prayer started immediately. As we chatted with neighbors in the halls, common areas and parking lots people asked for prayer for themselves, their families, friends, work and other concerns, like a

daughter conducting Covid-19 tests. We also receive requests via phone, text, notes and verbally when we see people in the laundry room and mail pick up and drop off area. We've prayed with people in the halls, over the phone and in common areas throughout the day. We have a list and pray through it regularly. We pray daily for God's protection and blessing over our diverse community and for the staff that serves us well. People have told us how much they appreciate our prayer for them. We engage our neighbors with a smile, friendly conversation and genuine care. This is opening up a ministry of friendship, prayer and Gospel conversation during these stressful days. This ministry has been handed to us by the Lord. Literally this is among our near neighbors.

Ministering in Minneapolis

We are getting to know a church in downtown Minneapolis called Grace in the City. It is pastored by Ean and Wade who are grads of Minnesota Adult and Teen Challenge and local Christian colleges. They are called to pastoral ministry and skilled teachers of God's Word. Before the Covid-19 pandemic about 40 people worshipped regularly at Grace in the City on Sunday and each day of the week the church ministered to drug addicts and pushers, run-aways, people on-the-run, the homeless, street dwellers, those in and out of jail and treatment programs and others without a church. Ministry took place at the church, on the streets, in homeless camps and parks. I have served as a Barnabas to Ean and Wade and attended Board meetings as an advisor via Zoom during our stay-at-home mandate. Recently I was asked to join the Board so I am praying about that. As their older brother in Christ I am glad to be their mentor as they shepherd their unusual flock living in the shadows of downtown Minneapolis.

On June 14 Grace resumed in-person worship services which we have attended a couple times. On July 23 Mary Ann will lead a workshop for Ean, Wade and the Board on the principles of prayer letter writing.

Jeff, Ean and Wade



Ministering in South Asia

In June we participated in several daily 90-minute follow-up training sessions for new ACTION missionaries in four restricted south Asian countries. The topics were timely, our friendship was deepened and our fellowship in Christ was sweet. Our new coworkers underwent a week of orientation and were accepted by ACTION in May.

We participated and taught during the orientation as well so we already knew each other. All of them are grads of the International Graduate School of Leadership in Manila and are highly-qualified and proven servants of Christ. They are planting churches in urban slums and remote villages and working with street kids and prisoners including education for children and livelihood projects for parents. Because they studied for three years at IGSL, they know some basic Tagalog. It was heartwarming when they referred to me as “Kuya” (older brother) and



Mary Ann as “Ate” (older sister). These precious brethren in Christ are

faraway places we cannot but we are walking together in Him. They have far more formal education than us and we have very different stories but we are one in the Lord and the Spirit. We are brothers and sisters in God’s family. I am glad to carry their bags as we serve shoulder-to-shoulder. We long to have fellowship in-person someday.

Covid-19 food distribution in Manila

Metro Manila and the surrounding area, where we lived and served with ACTION for over 33 years, continues to be hit hard by the pandemic. For months it has been totally or partially locked-down with major restrictions. Our longtime good friends and faithful coworkers, Dave and Becky Majam, lead a ministry for street kids and their families called Support a



Child, Save a Future (SCSF). It is located in Cubao, Quezon City, one of the more densely populated and congested districts of Metro Manila. SCSF grew out of the Street Impact Team (SITeam), our former ministry. They are continuing the nationwide feeding ministry we started years ago in partnership with churches and agencies. During this lock-down masses of poor people have not been able to work. They lived hand-to-mouth previously so finding food now is extremely difficult.

Dave Majam in front and Becky is to his left.

SCSF has done three large Covid-19 related food pack distributions in their area in partnership with churches, schools, community leaders and health facilities. Each pack costs \$30 and contains rice, noodles, powdered milk, coffee, canned goods and biscuits. SCSF has also sent funds to reliable partners in Cebu, Cagayan de Oro, Zamboanga and Iligan Cities in Mindanao so they can provide needed food where they minister. An unexpected partner is a McDonald’s store in Cubao which provided 150 free meals for SCSF’s most recent distribution. The following day, after that distribution, a leader of the Majam’s community called Dave asking for food packs for 400 families located along two streets because their area was totally locked-down that day for an undetermined period of time. This is in addition to their desire to provide a total of 500 packs in other areas if they have the funds.

I know Dave, Becky and their SCSF team well. I mentored the Majams in ministry when they served with SITeam and Mary Ann and I helped them become ACTION missionaries.

I helped SCSF start and ministered with them when they operational. We have financially supported the Majams since they started trusting the Lord for their personal and ministry support. I know Cubao like the back of my hand. I ministered there for years. I know the vacant lots, back alleys, communities along polluted creeks and rivers, and people in the shadows, nooks and crannies. I know Cubao like I did south Minneapolis when we lived, ministered and worshipped there. **It's odd because both places feel like home.** Perhaps the Lord would lead you to assist SCSF provide food, friendship and the Gospel for their hungry neighbors during these trying times. Pray about it please. If you give, send your gift to the ACTION office nearest you designated "SCSF Covid-19 food distribution." Thank-you very much. Proverbs 14:21b says *"blessed is he who is generous to the poor."*

As an aside, we were planning to go to Manila in September with All4Christ to teach the faith-based curriculum of CliftonStrengths at a Bible school and seminary and minister at a pastors' conference. This trip has been postponed until

at least January due to Covid-19 restrictions there affecting schools and travel.

Mary Ann's Healthcare Program

Mary Ann recently started a six-month health care program to help her address nutritional needs, discover food sensitivities and strengthen thyroid health. The cost is not covered by insurance but Mary Ann is encouraged with the benefits she is already experiencing. She would appreciate prayer for wisdom, discipline and the Lord's financial provision as she follows the program.

Tomy Las Piñas Update

In July Tomy will enroll for the 3rd of his 5-year program at Philippine Missionary Institute. The school year is due to start in August but it's unclear if classes will be totally online or be able to meet in-person. Tomy is studying for degrees in Theology and Christian Education. He is now a leader of Gates of Praise Church in Silang and serves on the outreach and worship team.



Upcoming Schedule

- July 23, Mary Ann teaches at Grace in the City
- Aug 9, First Baptist Church, Anoka, MN
- Aug 23, Calvary Gospel Assembly, Estherville, IA
- Sept 13, First Baptist Church, Anoka, MN
- Sept 20-24, New member orientation at the ACTION office, Mountlake Terrace, WA
- Sept 25-30, Visit the Scott family, Spokane, WA
- Oct 9-5, Pastoral Training in Member Care Conference, Asheville, NC

We also desire to visit our son Amos and his family in New Haven, Connecticut. We are available to speak in churches, home groups, or other venues. Contact us if you would like us to be with you.

Thank you for your generous financial support and faithful prayer. **We are deeply grateful.** *We are trusting the Lord to increase our monthly support. It has dropped recently due to changes people and churches needed to make.* We continue to pray for you. If you have a need for prayer and would like to share it with us, we'd be honored to pray for you. **We love you.**

Action International Ministries

Online giving: www.actioninternational.org/anderson

NOTE: If you would like to receive our monthly email prayer letters or stop receiving our quarterly hard-copy letters in the mail, please contact Mary Ann at the email address below and she will make the change.

All donations are tax-deductible and are accepted with the understanding that Action International Ministries has complete control and administration of their use. Gifts may be sent to one of the addresses below or be given online at the above website designated for Anderson Support (40012A). Email: jeff.anderson@actionintl.org or maryann.anderson@actionintl.org.

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