

River Terrace Church

April 2020 MISSIONS UPDATE

Anthony & Sara Sytsma - World Renew in Soroti, Uganda, E. Africa

In January Anthony sent a letter, informing us of a great opportunity to bless Ugandan pastors with Bibles and God's teaching tools. Through Christian Resources International (CRI), an organization located in Fowlerville MI, donations of Bibles (and children's Bible story books), theological and pastoral books, commentaries, and other Christian books are sent to pastors all over the world. Most pastors in Uganda have no other books other than a Bible. Shipment of an entire container of books is being prepared to go to a World Renew partner in Uganda (Pentecostal Assemblies of God), with whom the Sytsmas work. This amounts to around 500 boxes of books. Other churches supporting the Sytsmas have donated 50 boxes and CRI has agreed to completely fill the rest of the container with books, using donations received from other people. The total shipping cost is \$10,000, of which a quarter or more has already been raised. Anthony is fundraising for this cost and asked if we could contribute. The Missions Committee has donated \$500 from the General Missions Fund for which RTC takes two offerings a year. Anthony wrote that whenever pastors are given books, they read them with a deep hunger for more knowledge. Part of your financial gifts to the General Missions Fund is helping pastors in Uganda to prepare themselves in sharing the Gospel in their land.

Leanne Geisterfer - Latin American team leader with World Renew in Honduras

Leanne has plans to visit her supporting churches this spring. The visit with us is scheduled for April 5, but at this time it is uncertain as to whether that will happen or even if she will be able to travel. Leanne is getting ready to retire from her work with World Renew after 37 years. She had wanted to retire for some time already when her husband Caspar began his work with Resonate Global Mission, but she loved what she was doing so continued, but is now ready to retire at the end of June. She and Caspar will continue living in Honduras and Leanne will do some consulting and training which she loves.

Adrianna & Raúl Herrera - Resonate Global Missions in Managua, Nicaragua

There's a new photo of Adrianna and her new husband Raúl Herrera on the wall in the gathering space. They serve at the Nehemiah Center in Nicaragua with our denomination's global mission agency. Adrianna is the intercultural facilitator at the Center and, along with Raúl, they work together to cultivate local support and prayer groups for Nicaraguan pastors as well as international relationships with North American churches. They also both serve as translators when North American sister church groups visit. Adrianna coordinates teams and Raúl focuses on logistics and carries out activities. In addition, Adrianna handles the administrative part of the Church Friendship

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program at the Center. Their prayer card and a new brochure are available on the missions table. The brochure states that “by being partner missionaries, they alleviate financial burdens on the Nehemiah Center, and God uses their backgrounds and hearts to bridge the gaps between Nicaraguan and North American individuals and churches.”

Carla Bieber - Graduate Internationals with InterVarsity at MSU

After 5 Chinese students left at Christmas time, our numbers reduced a bit. I was worried about who I would work with after Christmas but God provided. Another Korean visiting scholar family joined our group. They have been a joy to work with as we work on English speaking skills and understanding the Bible and the Gospel message. In the past two months I have talked with them and another couple of Koreans about why to become a Christian. They have been a part of the Sunday morning Bible Study, potlucks and ESL class. Another couple is growing in their interest in worship. Everyone is at a different place in this journey of faith. Some are in the negatives and others far along in their faith. Our work is to meet people where they are. Different RTC people help in this work. Thanks to them for partnering and to the church for supporting this mission work in their own neighborhood. Now that we can't meet anymore and some have gone home, I am trusting God will help me to see how to reach out through technology in this of time of crisis. Join me in praying for those who are searching for what is true.

Adam Umbarger - InterVarsity at Lawrence University in Appleton WI and Bellin College in Green Bay WI

Both Lawrence Univ. and Bellin College have transitioned to online classes where possible. In Adam's March newsletter he reports that "God can still use other means to train students, cultivate fellowship, and even do evangelism." He wants to help students grieve the things they are losing, particularly seniors who are ending college abruptly. In addition, he plans to use digital tools to train students for leadership and lead Bible studies. He asks supporters to prayerfully consider increasing financial support both to help reach his fundraising goals and to implement digital tools for online connection with students. Thankfully, Alison is able to continue working in a much-reduced work environment. She and Adam are expecting their third child near the end of April. Pray that the family stays healthy and that Adam's ministry with his students will continue to be a blessing.

Nigeria Partnership - Beacon of Hope Initiative through World Renew in Benue State, Nigeria

The following information came from David Tyokighir with World Renew in Nigeria: "Greetings from Nigeria with sincere appreciation for every support and care. We are remembering you in prayer as you all make difficult adjustments at individual and community levels. May our God who is in full control of His creation help us to get through this difficult development. God's blessings." David also provided information on the COVID-19

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situation in Nigeria. The first case was diagnosed on February 27 after having contact with 217 persons, one of which tested positive March 8. As of March 18, Nigeria has 8 confirmed cases of COVID-19. Travel bans begin March 21 from 13 countries with at least 1,000 cases each, and travel out of Nigeria is being restricted. Many other plans are being made to control the virus spread.