

THE GREAT COMMISSION:



## DEVOTIONAL

May 2021



## Table of Contents

3	A letter from the Mission Committee
4	Rise Malawi
5	Love Driven
6	Seeds of Promise
7	Calm
8	YAMBA
9	Youth Promise
10	HAITI OUTREACH MINISTRIES
11	HOPE ALIVE CLINIC
12	UP HONDURAS
13	MBF IMCK Good Shepherd Hospital, Congo
14	MBF Ekwendeni Hospital, Malawi
15	MBF Hopital Ste. Croix, Haiti
16	INTERVARSITY
17	SNEHA
18	GTi Hope
19	FAMILY LIFE
20	Nadia Ayoub
21	UPI UPSEL
22	Urban Promise
23	Urban Mosaic
26	CCO
27	International Graduate School of Leadership
28	Ministry links

## The Great Commission

*And Jesus came and said to them, "All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me. Go therefore and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, and teaching them to obey everything that I have commanded you, and surely I am with you always, to the end of the ages. MATTHEW 28:18-20*

Friends,

The missions committee of First Presbyterian Church of Moorestown is excited to bring you the Great Commission: Missionopoly—our first ever virtual mission fair based loosely on the game Monopoly.

In 2020, we stopped doing the things that were normal to us and make changes that were greatly inconvenient to all of us. As we move toward an end of the pandemic in the United States, we are aware that the end may not be as close to our ministry partners and missionaries across the globe.

Developing countries often do not have access to technology, and, for those who do, it often comes at a prohibitive cost. Economies that were already strained by extreme poverty, lack of food, limited access to medical necessities and prohibitive costs of education, were further taxed by the inability of workers to leave their homes to earn a living which is the only way they could feed their families. Our ministry partners and ministries have worked over the last year to ensure that the hungry in their communities have access to food, that students who could not go to school still received education remotely, and that the word of God still reached the flock.

The Great Commission: Missionopoly celebrates these partners by bringing to you their stories and giving a firsthand opportunity to travel across the globe to see God's good deeds in action from the comfort of your sofa. This virtual mission fair is based loosely on the game Monopoly. Missionopoly has several components. It starts with this devotional which we hope will encourage and inspire you. Please take a moment daily to read our devotional and learn some of the stories of our ministries. We know the power of prayer and ask that you pray with us for each of them.

Like Monopoly, Missionopoly has a game component. Each mission on the game board has either a corresponding adult and/or children's video which you can access on <https://www.fpcmoores town.org/missionopoly> Watch the videos and play the game with friends and family. You will find game pieces, instructions for the game and dice in your game bag. If you are not into the game, please watch these highly informative videos.

Join us Friday, May 21st at 7 pm via zoom for trivia night. This event is for people of all ages who want to be part of the fun and there will be incredible prizes awarded at the end. You won't want to miss it.

On Sunday, May 23rd, missionary and UPI Fellow, Luke Maxted, will preach. Following the services in the afternoon via zoom, we will have panel discussions live with various ministries. This will give you an opportunity to ask questions and hear more about the future of these wonderful organizations.

We are blessed to be able to support these amazing organizations that we can only do through your generosity. Missionopoly is also a celebration of all our mission supporters who continue to allow God's work to be done in the kingdom.

We know you will enjoy Missionopoly and encourage you to play along with us.

**FPCM Missions Committee**

## Hope to the Hopeless Community

*Hebrews 11:1 Now faith is the assurance of things hoped for, the conviction of things not seen.*

Our motto is **Raising a Generation of Hope**. RiseMalawi serves children who are living in poverty and communities that have lost hope. We serve the marginalized children who have lost hope about their future. Our programs aim at helping the children see a new life, a hopeful life of the future.

One such story of faith and hope is Veronica Mateyu. At 19, she is in 9<sup>th</sup> Grade. She joined Rise Malawi in 2016 as a camp kid in 5<sup>th</sup> Grade. She stayed out of school for three years because of her father's religious faith that does not allow girls to shave their hair or attend any form of school. Veronica didn't like being a school dropout. She hated seeing her friends going to school while she stayed home. She kept the faith for her father's sake but disliked the treatment that she was receiving because of her father's religion. Whenever she asked her father to go to school and for school supplies, her dad's response would be "stay home and take care of your sisters, girls are not supposed to be educated".

Veronica's relationship with RiseMalawi leaders helped her re-think school, reclaim her dream. RiseMalawi reasoned with her parents and offered to support the girls with their education. Luckily, her father accepted our offer. She enrolled in 5<sup>th</sup> grade at a local school when she was 16 years. She joined our After School Program for extra tutoring, counseling, bible lessons and meals.

**She worked in tobacco farms to buy her first school uniform** when she reenrolled back in school. Later, RiseMalawi through Veronica's sponsor, bought her another set of uniform and exercise books, pens, pencils and a school bag. She became unstoppable!

For four years, RiseMalawi provided her with school resources and food through the Feeding Program. For four years in elementary school, Veronica always got A's and B's in her tests. Last year, she managed to sit for national examinations at 8<sup>th</sup> Grade. This examination is used by the government to select who will attend public high schools. Out of 225,000 pupils who passed the examination in 2020, only 85,000 pupils were selected to start 9<sup>th</sup> grade at various government high schools leaving out 140,000 eligible pupils without a chance of high school unless they go to private high school which are very expensive for ordinary Malawian.



Veronica Mateyu



Tinashe Saka, Veronica, her mother and sister

Against all odds, Veronica is now a freshman in high school. Veronica is given a spot at Madisi Secondary School. Through determinations and support from people like you, Veronica is on her road to becoming a nurse.

**Prayer: Pray for the children we serve in Malawi. Specifically, pray for loving homes, provision of food, good housing, educational supplies and psychosocial support.**





## God Will Provide

The Lord will open the heavens, the storehouse of his bounty, to send rain on your land in season and to bless all the work of your hands. You will lend to many nations but will borrow from none. Deuteronomy 28:12

In January, my wife, Thoko, and I escorted two of the many children that God has blessed our family with, to college at one of the most prestigious universities in Malawi, the Polytechnic.

One of these amazing girls was Stiveria.

I met Stiveria on December of 2016 at her home. I remember it took us 2 hours on the bus to get where she stayed. It was a rainy day, and Thoko and I met her together with her grandparents. Her grandfather shared with us that “they could not provide her with all of her basic needs”. He also told us that Stiveria was forced to drop out of high school because he could not afford the fees. With faith, Thoko and I and other friends committed to supporting her education although we did not have money readily available at that point. God though did provide and today, Stiveria is enrolled in the university, pursuing her Bachelor of Commerce Degree in Internal Audit.

To say that we are super happy for her is an understatement; the truth is, we are amazed at how God works in writing better stories in the lives of others using ordinary people like you and me. There have been times when my team could not afford to pay for her fees, we were frustrated and hopeless, but God brought in game-changers from different parts of the world to give her a hand when she needed it most. To that, I am very thankful. —Ishmael Adam

### Reflect

*God’s story of love has been written all over Stiveria’s life and God’s words from the book of Deuteronomy 28:12 has been fulfilled in her life. God is ready to water your life and use you to bring a blessing to many people around you each day. Are you ready to move out of your comfort zone and say “Yes God, use me today to be the pencil in writing better stories in the lives of others”?*

### Pray

*Gracious God, thank you so much for writing better stories in the lives of people like Stiveria, whose stories have not been told yet. Please, use me, my family, my neighbors and people around my life to foster change and transformation in the lives of many around me; in Jesus name, Amen.*



LOVEDriven MINISTRIES

love | learn | lead



## TRUSTING GOD'S FAITHFULNESS

*Psalms 121:1-2 "I will lift up to the hills, where does my help come from? My help comes from the Lord, the Maker of heaven and earth."*

Seeds of Promise is a Christian nonprofit organization whose main aim is to fight extreme poverty through sustainable farming, promoting better nutritional choices and entrepreneurship training for the youth in Malawi. Seeds of Promise is based in Lilongwe with a 50 acre farm and a city office where our entrepreneurial training happens. God called me into youth discipleship and mentorship in the year 2008, especially to High School graduates living in a cycle of poverty and who do not have an opportunity to go to college. At the time God was calling me into ministry, I was earning under a dollar per day. I questioned how God would sustain my life and ministry that he was calling me to do. I heard God whispering to me, saying "You do not look for a capital to start ministry but you only need Me for my kingdom business." My question of sustainability was answered through that and it was clear that I did not need to worry about provision but to fix my eyes on God for his provision.

### A Test of a Trust in God's Faithfulness

In 2016, I was trained as a leader by Urban Promise in Camden, New Jersey and sent home to launch a youth ministry which mentors thirty youth missional entrepreneurs every year. While we were experiencing ministry growth and celebrating the fruits of our program over the past five years, Covid 19 hit the world in 2020. Our partners in Ministry were affected by Covid 19 economically. Many people lost their jobs and had to live on what little savings they had. The youth in our program were also affected by Covid 19. Due to Covid 19, our funding decreased and we were not able to run programs and receive salaries. My wife was pregnant and we had used all our savings for medical bills. We quickly realized that public hospitals were no longer a safe place for my wife to give birth because of overcrowding.



My wife said "I wish we could have gone to a good private hospital." However, we could not afford a private hospital. My wife encouraged me to apply for another job so that we can have a better pay and a more secure job. My trust in God's faithfulness and provision was tested at night and I questioned God's provision and his availability in my prayers.

God showed up in this season! My wife gave birth to our beautiful first-born daughter and called her Ramira Hadassah Ghambi. Indeed, we have seen God's faithfulness. It is in this season where our young missional entrepreneurs being mentored have been able to serve our communities by making masks for the all Malawi project and being able to make some money for self sustainability. It is in this season just at the right time our missional partners supported us through Urban Promise with funds to help us pay our staff. It is in this season through prayers that my wife has openly told me that she will continue serving God with me and will follow me wherever God is sending me to go. We are now mentoring young people together at Seeds of Promise.

Reflection: What area in your life in this season is putting your trust in God's faithfulness to test? When you feel like giving up, Trust God, He who started the good work will put it to completion.

*Pray: Heavenly father, please assist Seeds of Promise to become self sustaining. Help them prepare for the 500 students who will be joining them for summer camp in July. Encourage Luwani and the others in this ministry to continue to find strength and hope in you. Bless his family and his beautiful new daughter. Amen*





## Just On Time!

*God is our refuge and strength, an ever-present help in trouble" Psalm 46:1.*

The Corona pandemic crisis left many families all over the world struggling for food, jobs, etc. Uganda went through a total lockdown in the first few months. For families like Michael's it was hard and was very rough. The lack of enough food over many months gave Michael who is nine years old and his single mother stomach ulcers.

One evening close to dinner time, one of Children Alive Ministries' staff members visited Michael. They found him and his two younger brothers each eating a small piece of posho (maize flour bread) and cooked green vegetables. Our staff was visiting to bring them food and a few more necessities.

While their mother was receiving the gifts from us, the boys had started eating off of her plate of food. We learned that this was the last bit of food they had in the house to eat. The posho was about a quarter a kilogram and not very much to sustain them.



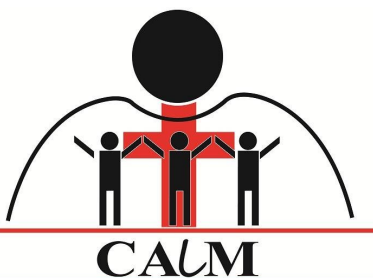
*Michael and his mom open the food box*



In Kings 17:7-17, a widow was getting ready to eat her last meal with her son. Elijah, the man of God asks her to prepare the bread and bring him the first portion and then have a rest with her son. When she did, she had food until God sent the rain on the land. Just as God showed up on time for this widow and her son, he sure did show up just on time for

*Left: Michael with his family*

*Below: food box*



*Pray: Almighty Father,  
Thank you for being a  
God who is just in time  
for the families who are  
hungry in Uganda.  
Please help CALM con-  
tinue to support those  
who are hungry. Amen*



## Teaching children to pray

*Love the Lord your God with all your heart, with all your soul, and with all your strength. Take to heart these words that I give you today. Repeat them to your children. Talk about them when you're at home or away, when you lie down or get up. Deuteronomy 6:5-7*

In February of 2020, UPI UPSELL Director, Sandy Newhall, and Linda Jagiela, visited the Yamba Campus and the schools in which we work. Our students and parents put a program together for the visitors to show them what they learned in our ministry. As part of the program, twelve primary school students stood in front of the students, guests, and parents and each recited a different bible verse. They regularly learn and recite bible verses as part of our ministry. That visit in 2020 seems like a lifetime ago. Immediately after our visitors left, the world began shutting down.

While we wait for schools to reopen in Uganda due to the COVID-19 lockdowns, we continue to emphasize spiritual values to our children. Discipleship and prayer are part of our core values with the goal of our students growing into God fearing people because of these values which they are learning and growing in faith.

Our goal in teaching them the bible and how to pray is that they will know God and make Him known. Amen!

—**KENETH NDYAMUHAKE, Founder**



### *Prayer*

*Father of all children, thank you enabling your children to be prayer leaders around the world because we know that prayer is how we speak directly to you. Open the hearts of the children in Yamba to speak directly to you and lift their joy and concerns to you. We pray for the families of this ministry and ask you empower orphans and other vulnerable children which Yamba serves with education, emotional support, and spiritual growth. We ask all of this in your name, Amen.*

### **Reflection**

Prayer is selflessness. You focus on the needs of others before you consider your own. Literally, you are a servant first. How will you pray today?

Prayer is what we cherish at Yamba Childcare. Our staff members are kind, humble, and down to earth a sign of humility by being Christ like. Our staff transmit love through being kind, empathetic, and nice to children and the return is children want to love back just because they have been loved.

We believe in every child there is a prayerful leader, and in every prayerful leader there was a child. We are focused on developing and/or growing that "leader" in children for the betterment of their faith.

Would you teach a child to be a prayer leader?



## Hope and Futures for Teens in Kenya

*"For I know the plans I have for you," declares the LORD, "plans to prosper you and not to harm you, plans to give you hope and a future." Jeremiah 29:11*



Four years ago, we started our ministry in the small town of Embu. Our goal was to provide computer mentoring and literacy to teens. This would allow them to obtain jobs or to have the opportunity to enter universities. We soon found that our goal was great, but the need was greater.

In the four years that we have been here, we have seen our students not only learning to use a computer but now having access to information for them to grow in their knowledge. They are now linked to their colleges and can take the courses that they only once dreamed. We ask them what they want to do in life, and we pray with them that they will achieve those dreams.

Pius graduated high school last year. His sister gave him a flyer we had left at her school regarding our continuing education program. He entered our program with a desire to learn. Not only did he learn, he applied his knowledge by getting accepted and recently joining Nairobi University where he is studying for a bachelor's degree in law.

We see many students like Pius who are very bright but are lost. Youth Promise gives them a hand to find their way. We pray, teach, and support them materially where we can. God is good all the time.

### *Pray*

*Heavenly Father, We thank you for the ministry of Youth Promise. We ask that you bring more young people like Pius to their door and that they may excel as he has through the training they gain there. We pray for the leaders and staff of the ministry that they have wisdom and vision for your plans. We ask this in your precious name. Amen*



## God's Masterpiece

*God saved you by his grace when you believed. And you can't take credit for this; it is a gift from God. Salvation is not a reward for the good things we have done, so none of us can boast about it. For we are God's masterpiece. He has created us anew in Christ Jesus, so we can do the good things he planned for us long ago. Eph 2:8-10*

I like to read this NLT version of this verse. Back in 1972, I visited a rural church in Southern Indiana. At the entrance door of that church, I read these words "Enter to worship"; after the worship service was finished, as everyone was leaving, we would read these words "Go out to Serve." This simple yet profound words/reminder, made a very lasting impression in my heart as a young Bible College student. After I graduated from Bible College and went back to my home land (Haiti) in 1976 to serve the Lord, every church I've started has the same expression in every entrance door "Enter to worship... Go out to serve"

I appreciate Eph.2:8-10, not only it teaches us in clear language the way we're saved - not on our own merit - but it also teaches us that God is still working in us even now to prepare us to do what He has planned for us to do a long time ago.

Either way we look at it, there is supposed to be no boasting for our salvation and no boasting for what He has allowed us to do for him after He has saved us. For it is He who is working in us by His power to do what we're to do for Him now and what He would call us to do for Him in the future. IT'S ALL ABOUT HIM!!! Boasting is excluded both from the beginning to the end. Only gratitude, thanksgiving, and praise are allowed. Thanks be to the Lord !

"We're God's masterpiece. He has created us a new in Christ Jesus, so that we can do good things He planned for us to do for Him a long time ago." What a privilege and honor we have. As God's new creation in Christ Jesus, let's continuously thank Him for giving us the opportunity and the privilege to serve Him and be faithful and grateful to Him for that as long as we have breath. Amen!

In His service in Haiti together with you,

Leon Dorleans



*Pray*

*Lord in heaven,*

*Thank you for Pastor Leon, and Haiti Outreach Ministries students, families and staff. May you bless them and keep them safe. We know that everything that is good is done through you and we thank you. Amen*



## Step out in Faith: It pleases God!

*For we walk by faith, not by sight. 2 Corinthians 5:7 But without faith it is impossible to please Him, for he who comes to God must believe that He is, and that He is a rewarder of those who diligently seek Him. Hebrews 11:6*

In my view, in our Christian walk, God seldom shows us the whole picture at once of what He leads us to do. God's timing is perfect. He shows us what we need to know, when we need to know it. When we step out in Faith, the Bible states: "it pleases God." (Hebrews 11:6)

In 1982, when God broke our hearts to help the Haitian people, we had to step out in Faith. We knew nothing about the country, its people or how we would accomplish His call to help. We prayed earnestly, and worked with other Haitian missions; but God kept nudging us to step out in Faith again. We purchased land and built our first medical clinic. In the years that followed, we established four more medical facilities in the country, a nutrition hospital, and more - all from that first step!



Our main facility in Mariani, through the years.

### Reflect

Friend, do you feel a "nudge" through God's Holy Spirit to *step out in Faith*? If this is you, remember, God has your back! He also is before you, along side of you, over you and under you!

Pray, seek His face, attain wise counsel from you Pastor, find out all you can about what God has laid upon your heart, and *step out in Faith*.

### Pray

*Father God, We thank you for those who you have helped to step out in faith and do great things in the world. We thank you for the Hope Alive ministry. Bless all of the Solace babies that they are helping to nourish. Give the staff and doctors wisdom to treat and care for your children. Amen*







## Sparks of Hope

Together as the Body of Christ, may we continue learning how to “Rejoice with those who rejoice; mourn with those who mourn.” Romans 12:15



My teammate Silvia Alvares recently shared these words:

*“Free, Sovereign, and Independent” reads our national coat of arms. As of September 15th of this year, we will be celebrating our separation from the Spanish colony 200 years ago! But is a nation engulfed in corruption, drug trafficking, violence, injustice, and impunity (among other things) really free and independent? Can a nation with an external public debt of nearly \$9 billion<sup>1</sup> be sovereign? The response is a resounding “No.” Unfortunately, since Honduras*

*was proclaimed independent in 1821 until now, we continue drifting aimlessly. Honduras is a beautiful nation with a magnificent geographical position, landscapes that transport us to paradise, kind and hard-working people, people who know how to dream; yet we continue seeing their hopes dashed.*

*I am a Honduran who loves this land. I feel proud of our cuisine, our ancestors, our music, and so many other things; but I am also a Honduran deeply outraged by the fact that this precious land that God has given me is categorized as a dictatorship and a narco-state. So when will we have that long-awaited independence? Personally, I believe this will only happen when we have leaders who understand that power is for serving and not for being served; when we have educated children and youth, not only with theoretical knowledge but also critical thinking abilities and emotional intelligence. As followers of Jesus, we offer a spark of hope, not only to teach about the servant leadership that we so badly need in our country but also to give kids and youth a family, education, life skills, values, and a reason to see God's grace even among difficulties. May we continue planting opportunities and hope in the hearts of our children and youth.*

### Reflect:

These words are heavy, yet there is a spark of hope. Lucky for us, fires often need only a spark. These words provide a humbling perspective for our own politically turbulent times in the USA—and in weary anticipation of presidential elections in Honduras this year, they provide context from which we can grow in empathy and be present in both prayer and action with our Honduran brothers and sisters.



### Pray:

Lord, you are my King and for that I am thankful. Awaken me from my sleep, so that I can see others. May your love consume and heal us, as you set fire to every spark of hope within us. Amen

## He is always working in our lives

The widow who is really in need and left all alone puts her hope in God and continues night and day to pray and to ask God for help. —1 Timothy 5:5 NIV

Imagine the stress and uncertainty of knowing something is wrong when it is time to deliver your baby. Iradom, a young first-time mother, didn't "feel right" shortly after she went into labor. It had already been a stressful few months; shortly after she became pregnant, her husband was attacked by a band of thieves and never returned home, leaving Iradom a pregnant widow.

But God blessed Iradom with a loving and caring mother. When she went into labor, her mother helped her travel 25km to Good Shepherd Hospital to give birth. By the time they arrived, the baby was in distress. Iradom immediately underwent an emergency cesarean section to deliver the baby. The operation saved both their lives.

Although Iradom was not able to pay for the care, because of First Presbyterian Church's faithfulness to our shared MBF medical mission ministry, the resources were there to care for her and her child.



### Reflect

When have things in your life not "felt right"? Looking back, how are you able to see that God was working in the midst of it?

### Pray:

*Loving and gracious Father, help me to remember that even when things don't feel right in my life, you are at work. Your timing is better than my timing, and when I come to you praying unceasingly, I will find comfort and peace.*





### Lean on the Strength of God

*Blessed is the one who perseveres under trial because, having stood the test, that person will receive the crown of life that the Lord has promised to those who love him. James 1:12 NIV*



Neither Chimwemwe nor Victor Shumba was encouraged or supported to get an education as a child. Consequently, they both dropped out of school. Together they have worked hard and now run their own small grocery shop where they live in the village of Chindoka. The shop generates enough business for them to get by ... barely. While the income helps pay for a small home and food (sometimes food that no one will buy at the store), an unexpected crisis would wipe out all they have.

So when Chimwemwe became pregnant, the plan was for her to deliver by midwife at home. But after being in labor for a while and the baby was still not delivered, Chimwemwe and Victor had no choice but to go to the hospital. She was admitted and delivered a healthy baby girl by cesarean section.

Victor worried about the cost of the hospital stay, operation, and medication. But when he found out there was no bill, he said he felt as though he was king for a day. First Presbyterian Church made this blessing possible.

#### Reflect

The Shumbas have persevered and leaned on God for their strength. What do you need to persevere through in order to receive the crown of life that the Lord has promised?

#### Pray

*Father, I pray that I will consider it pure joy whenever I face trials and have to persevere, because it is during these times my faith will grow. Help my unbelief so that others will see You reflected in me. Amen.*





### Jesus Blesses the Children

*People were also bringing babies to Jesus for him to place his hands on them. When the disciples saw this, they rebuked them. But Jesus called the children to him and said, "Let the little children come to me, and do not hinder them, for the kingdom of God belongs to such as these. Truly I tell you, anyone who will not receive the kingdom of God like a little child will never enter it."*

*Luke 18:15-17 NIV*

There is nothing like the joy and excitement of a new baby. The promise of new life! Nadine's pregnancy went perfectly. She received prenatal care and delivered successfully by a nurse/midwife at Darbonne Maternal and Child Health Clinic outside of Léogâne, Haiti.

Her beautiful daughter, Caïcha, entered into the world a healthy baby. When she was almost a year old, however, she began losing weight and having trouble keeping milk and formula down. Nadine and her husband's lives were turned upside down when the doctors said they had to admit baby Caïcha to Hôpital Ste. Croix (HSC).

Caïcha was diagnosed with an infection and the doctors said she needed to stay in the hospital for several days. Her parents are both unemployed and had no money to pay for her hospitalization and treatment, so they were prepared to take their child home. But because of First Presbyterian Church, your love for children, and your generosity, Caïcha's treatment was paid for in full.



#### Reflect

Babies and children see the world with awe and wonder. How can you be a positive influence on those around you by seeing the beauty and wonder of creation around you?

#### Pray

*Gracious heavenly Father, you have called me to be your child. You have created the world and its splendor for me to enjoy and care for. Today give me a child-like view and help me see Your fingerprints in all creation. Amen.*

## God Loves New Jersey

*“When he saw the crowds, he had compassion on them, because they were harassed and helpless, like sheep without a shepherd. Then he said to his disciples, ‘The harvest is plentiful but the workers are few. Ask the Lord of the harvest, therefore, to send out workers into his harvest field.’” - Matthew 9:36-38*

God loves New Jersey. By His grace, InterVarsity Christian Fellowship has planted 6 campus fellowships across New Jersey in the last 7 years. He longs for students to know Him, and He is making Himself known, even in the pandemic.

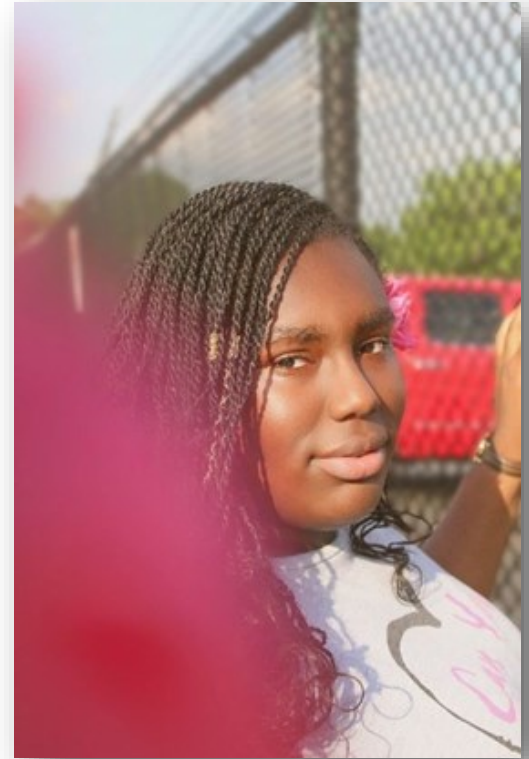
One of these new campus fellowships is Rutgers Camden. In the early days of COVID, during the transition to online ministry, we sent out hundreds of invitations to Rutgers Camden students on social media, inviting them to join the fellowship. Student leaders and Nadeen, a campus missionary, noticed that about ten of the new students who were coming regularly were nursing students.

This was an answer to prayer! For a year, an IV staff and a nursing student named Tamara (pictured) had been praying for God to move powerfully the nursing department at Rutgers. They longed for these students to come and know Jesus!

After months of praying, we had enough nursing students to launch a missional healthcare small group! Tamara is learning to lead from Nadeen, and she will take over soon!

The group meets weekly to discuss and dissect Bible stories about Jesus as healer. In turn, they reflect on how that might impact a career in medicine. Members have shared how they want to be a light on campus and in their workplace. Many have begun to lay down their fears and worries at the feet of Jesus and put their trust in Him for what’s to come.

God is at work, even in a time as limiting as the pandemic. He was at work through Tamara’s prayers, opening the door to reach those in her sphere of influence.



Tamara

### Reflect:

*Think of the communities of which you are a part. Is there one you’d like to pray for now? Consider asking God for opportunities for you to share Jesus.*

### Pray:

*God and gracious God,*

*We thank you for the campus ministries in New Jersey and especially InterVarsity. We are so grateful for your love for the students here and everywhere. We pray that you move the hearts of more students to join the bible studies and have a personal relationship with you .*

*Amen*



## God Spoke to Us

Trust in the LORD with all your heart and lean not on your own understanding; in all your ways submit to him, and he will make your paths straight. Proverbs 3:5-6 NIV

SNEHA Doon Academy exists thanks to the inspiration and dedication of Dr. Reeta and Hari Rao, who left their medical careers to help deprived communities in Dehradun. By 1995 they had a plot of land and soon after SNEHA was born. It has seen thousands of students move from class one to class twelve and has provided them with opportunities that they otherwise would not have had. Women and children in the slum community now have opportunities. Reeta was an ophthalmologist and was working as a medical director in a mission hospital in the Himalayas for ten years but she and her husband were called to work in a place that they were really needed. They took a leap and moved having no income. They could see that God was living in these homes and huts in the slums. They committed all of their savings.

They thought the need was medical, but they quickly realized that unless the children becoming educated they will not get out of the cycle of poverty. They found the children scavaging and not going to school. They took up some land and built a school. They involved the entire community in the ministry adding a sewing school and a henna program for the women in the community to teach them skills so that they could earn a living. This has given the women a great self image and has improved their standing in the community. The school has become an oasis for children who come from unbelievable poverty. SNEHA is clean. It is spacious and it is a safe place for the children. It has a science lab. It has latrines. SNEHA means love in Hindi. Through this love and the love of God, SNEHA is able to bring transformation to their community.

### Reflect

When has God spoken to you? Have you ever taken a leap of faith, trusting in the Lord with all your heart?



### Pray

Heavenly Father,

We thank you for giving the Rao's the willingness to listen and follow your commands. Open our ears and hearts that we too may hear what you want us to do. We ask that you watch over this ministry: the children, staff and community, and guide them to educate and stop the cycle of poverty in these slum areas where people are marginalized. We ask this in your name. Amen



## Blessed to be a Blessing to Others

*Genesis 12:2 I will bless you and make you famous, and you will be a blessing to others.*

Aruna is married with three small children. She graduated from an Adult Literacy class project in 2019, a project similar to one sponsored by FPC Moorestown. She not only learned how to read and write, but how to count money, the importance of saving, and much more.

She learned tailoring, received a sewing machine, and learned how to use it to make blouses and undergarments for women.

Because the literacy class taught her how to read bus signs, she can safely travel to a market in a larger community and get home again. Since she also learned how to count money, she is able to use the profits from her sewing machine business to purchase items not available in her village without fear of being cheated.



She started a store in her home to sell snacks, fruits, vegetables, eggs, and other provisions to people in her village. She created two businesses from one, is able to help provide for her family, while improving the lives of others in her village.

Aruna is teaching other women in her village how to read and how to sew. Aruna was blessed through someone like you with the gift of literacy, empowerment, hope, and a sewing machine. She is using the blessings she received to bless others!

God told Abraham that he would bless him so he could be a blessing to others. Don't hesitate to use the blessings God has given you to bless others!

*Prayer: Dear Heavenly Father, thank you for the many blessings you shower upon us, including the gift of eternal life. Help us to love you and to love others. Help us to not be selfish and to bless those in need with our time, prayers, talents, and resources. Help us to share your message of peace with gentleness and respect and to bring you glory. In Jesus' precious name, Amen.*



# GTi HOPE



## Families Disciple Families

*“What you have heard from me in the presence of many witnesses, commit to faithful men who will be able to teach others also.”  
2 Timothy 2:2*

It has become a phrase that we hear from our leadership quite often. That is one of the things that we are trusting God for in Family Life. We desire to be a part of equipping families who are living out God’s design for marriage and family to come alongside others and help them do the same. Sometimes, it may just be an individual that comes alongside another individual. That is what happened with two men (both named Tim) in different parts of the country.

For years, West Coast Tim has been using Stepping Up to help impact the lives of men in his church and community. Stepping Up is Family Life’s resource to help men live the courageous lives God has designed them for. I started working with Tim shortly after Jen and I started serving with Family Life over six years ago. One of the joys of working with Tim (and his wife, Kathy) over the years has been to watch and equip other men and couples to do the same thing they are doing...helping families discover Jesus!

Last August, I connected with East Coast Tim, who had plans to host a Stepping Up Event himself. He had plans to invite over 70 men to be a part of a one day event to help them know Jesus and His plan for their lives. I discovered over time that West Coast Tim had built a relationship with East Coast Tim and they were planning to host this event together. West Coast Tim was multiplying his life and passing on the insight that God had given him. I love when the Bible talks (in Ephesians) about God doing above and beyond all we can ask or imagine. Here is what I saw on Facebook the day following the event...

“What a great ministry event yesterday!!! God worked for sure. Thanks to Dennis Rainey (and others at Family Life) for developing Stepping Up. (We) served **300 men** in small groups and at the ranch. Special thanks to (west coast) Tim for coming in to share his amazing story with the guys. These events are powerful and will touch generations.”

I love that last sentence. The steps we take now to choose to grow (or not grow) will not only affect our lives, but generations to come. Families disciple families. **Families changing the world.**



*Pray*

*Holy Father,*

*We thank you for the ministry of Family Life and people like the two Tim’s who share Your word to others and impact generations to come. Lord, continue to bless them and this ministry. Amen*

**FAMILYLIFE®**  
Help for today. Hope for tomorrow.

| A Cru Ministry |



## Who Shall I Send?

*Then I heard the Lord asking, “Whom should I send as a messenger to this people? Who will go for us?” I said, “Here I am. Send me.” Isaiah 6:8 NLT*

I have been working in Katerini, Greece, helping refugees who are arriving by translating and assisting with their paperwork. Greece is typically just a layover until they can move on to other parts of Europe. Greece’s economy does not allow refugees to stay and find employment to support their families. When they arrive, they are often sick.

Last Sunday evening, my phone beeped. I ran to retrieve a message from Zahia. “We have arrived safely. We are at the refugee reception center. One suitcase did not make it, but I trust it will come later.”

I replied, “Thank God, you are there as you had hoped to be.” I told my friend, “Go to sleep now. You need your rest.” Zahia and her family had been traveling for three days. I hardly slept for two nights. I needed to sleep too.

Zahia arrived at the Greek border three years ago. She was fleeing from her abusive husband. A single mother with two children, Zahia is well educated and was a lawyer in Syria. The Greek Evangelical Church chose to sponsor her and her children. With care and love, Zahia felt at home in Greece, soon learned Greek, attended church, accepted Jesus into her life, and joined the church’s evangelistic events. She was able to participate in Arabic Christian Education classes to learn about Christianity in her own language. She became an interpreter with Perichoresis, where I met her for the first time.

I would often ask Zahia to help me hang curtains, make bread, or share a meal so that we could spend time together. It looked like Zahia was settling down in Greece. For many immigrants, Greece is just a stopping point on their journey. The economy and poverty in Greece do not afford enough opportunities to immigrants. When Zahia received her residence permit, she started preparing her family’s travel documents. Once the quarantine was lifted and the border reopened, she decided to leave Greece to find a better home and greater opportunities for herself and her children. We prayed that God’s will would be done for her. Zahia’s family is only one of the many families stranded in Greece that wanted to leave, in search of a better home for themselves and their families.

**Reflect:** What is God sending you to do? Has he put people in your path Like Zahia who you have felt a friendship with? What journey will you make to serve our Lord?

### *Pray*

*Lord of all Creation, We thank you for Nadia and her work in Greece. With the refugees. Help her minister to them and translate so that those who are sick may be well. Give her the strength and grace to see a light at when seems like an endless number of refugees coming to Greece. We are so thankful for Nadia and her work. Please bless and keep the refugee families safe as they leave Greece for their next journey. In all of this we pray, Amen*





## Go Make Disciples

*Matthew 28:19-20 (Amplified)*

*“Go therefore and make disciples of all the nations [help the people to learn of Me, believe in Me, and obey My words], baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, teach them to observe everything that I have commanded you; and lo, I am with you always [remaining with you perpetually regardless of circumstance, and on the every occasion], even to the end of the age.”*

When I was a child of 5 years old, I had my school years book where I would paste a school photo on the page, write what I wanted to be when I grew up, and put any awards or report cards in the little pocket. At 5, I wrote that I wanted to be a missionary. From that day on, each year I would write the exact same thing. Once I graduated from high school, I headed to Moody Bible Institute as an International Missions major. The verses in Matthew written above were my daily prayer and echoed in my ears. To my shock and dismay, about one month into my time at Moody, God clearly called me to Urban ministry in the States. I was devastated, and wondered what I had done wrong. I had wanted to go to Uganda, to make disciples of all nations. In God’s gentle way, He reminded me that all the nations of the world had been brought to our cities and communities in America. I needed to learn to love there first. Fast forward 25 years. I transitioned from UrbanPromise Camden staff, to UrbanPromise International staff. My very first trip was to, you guessed it, Uganda. I had worked with the UPI “fellows” for 6 years while working in Camden, and became very close to them. What I saw when I arrived at their ministries was humbling to say the least. The call to go and disciple was embraced by them, they had returned home to make disciples for the Lord. The impact they were making in their communities was impressive to say the least. I began to understand, they understood their culture, they understood the resources, needs, assets and potential in their communities. Within 2 years of their return from the states, microloans had changed over 100 women’s lives and family situations, schools were growing and thriving, and children were being taught about Jesus. Going back home and realizing the special part God was allowing me to play in this work was humbling. But what really struck me was that God had given me the desire of my heart. It did not look like I wanted it to, or thought it would, but His plans were so much bigger and better. What an incredible gift to be part of His plans.



God continued to walk with me, both at college, in the inner-city, and brought me to UPI where I was blessed in playing a small part in what He is doing around the world. Do you have something that God has written on your heart, maybe yesterday or maybe 40 years ago?

### *Pray*

*Dear Jesus, Today and each day may we remember that You are with us through each circumstance. Please continue to help us seek You, and ask You to place Your desires on our hearts. For those of us who are waiting to see those prayers be manifested, may we continue to go and live in a way that all who see our lives, are learning about who You are, and desire to believe in You. Amen*

### Reflect:

The verses above reminds us that Jesus remains with us perpetually, always regardless of the circumstances. If He has placed something on your heart and is your desire before Him, continue to seek Him, He is walking with you. He can still bring it to pass and maybe like with me, He has written a more amazing story. Though trips to our African ministries are not taking place this year due to Covid, take some time to look at the ministry Facebook pages, pray for them, write them a note of encouragement.



### God's Favor

*For the LORD God is a sun and shield; the LORD bestows favor and honor; no good thing does He withhold from those whose walk is blameless. Psalm 84:11, NIV*

In the world of Covid, where many people lost jobs (myself included), UrbanPromise Ministries decided to hire me full time during one of the most chaotic times I have experienced. It was during a Pandemic that I had the opportunity to recognize Gods unwavering favor shining upon me. During an unprecedented time, I found new employment, and was then guided by the faithful and dedicated leadership. Leadership allowed all of their staff the opportunity to get innovative and find unique ways to continually come together and fellowship. UrbanPromise Ministries staff, children, and their families continued to give praise to the Lord for all that he has done in the midst of a storm! Many of us, including myself, call this "favor."

I learned personally that what God has in one's future can't be accomplished on our own. There are places that He's going to take us that you can't get to by yourself. There will be obstacles that look too big, dreams that seem impossible. If it were only up to us, we would get stuck. The good news is that God has bestowed on us all something that gives us an advantage, that opens doors that we can't open, that makes us stand out. Favor will cause good breaks to come that we don't deserve. LaToya Wright

### Pray

*Father, thank You that Your favor has been upon us in so many ways. Thank You for the countless things that you've made happen for our good that we could never make happen. We are getting ready for explosive blessings that are gifts of Your favor that we don't deserve. In Jesus' Name, Amen."*



**UrbanPromise**

## Where SHALOM is Put to the Test

**"Because of the Casa de Paz (Shalom) Groups, people who didn't believe have opened their hearts to the Lord. Without a doubt there has been significant exponential growth thanks to the Casa de Paz groups started since the pandemic began last year."**

-Pastor Abel, Urban Mosaic Staff Member



"Shalom is always tested on the margins of a society." -Randy Woodley

From the center of Mexico City, you can take the metro to the east on Line A. Get off at the last stop. Then take a bus to Los Reyes and get off at the last stop. Then take a micro bus up until the hills, and get off at the last stop. As you travel, the roads will go from paved to dirt to gravel to impassable. Your surroundings will fade from shiny, tall buildings to a rolling landscape of grey unfinished structures.

And then, if you're lucky and have the location right and if Google Maps didn't send you down an impassable route, you'll arrive at the Urban Mosaic Community Center in San Isidro. It's a lovely place... and simultaneously it's a place that is most definitely on the margins of the city; a place where SHALOM is being tested and simultaneously created and birthed. And, if you ask me, it's a place as sacred and as holy as any cathedral I've ever entered.

**SHALOM is a rich word that doesn't translate well to English.** It's rightness, wholeness, thriving, peace, good relationships. SHALOM is multi-dimensional: You can experience SHALOM with God, self, community and environment. Building SHALOM with community might look like a street paving project. Seeking SHALOM with family might mean teaching kids about their emotions. But what does SHALOM with GOD look like?

I arrive at the San Isidro Community Center- a place where SHALOM is being tested. As I park, my first thought is: "Do I have a flat tire?" So many bumpy, unpaved roads...I unload my gear and head inside to find a group of youth meeting for their Casa de Paz (Shalom Group).



*Arrival to San Isidro Community Center.*

CONTINUED



This Casa de Paz has been meeting since July of 2020 but with so many COVID cases, today (March 10, 2021) is the first day they've met in person in several months. The youth are excited to see each other. Everyone seems happy and eager to catch up. The meeting starts. A Bible verse is read, a value is discussed, there's a time of prayer and then some games and activities.



This Casa de Paz has been meeting since July of 2020 but with so many COVID cases, today (March 10, 2021) is the first day they've met in person in several months. The youth are excited to see each other. Everyone seems happy and eager to catch up. The meeting starts. A Bible verse is read, a value is discussed, there's a time of prayer and then some games and activities.

*While not all Casa de Paz groups focus specifically on youth, this one does; creating a space for youth to have fun and ask questions.*

### SHALOM FILLS THE AIR

While some of the youth come from pueblos (small rural towns) outside the city and others come from urban areas, these youth have a lot in common: their lives are hard...at home they are dealing with things like domestic violence, alcoholism, mental illness and parents who are unemployed. But hardship is not the only thing they share. They also share dreams... they dream of studying, of serving their community, of traveling and of living in a peaceful, safe place. They dream of SHALOM, but while they share dreams of SHALOM for tomorrow, they laugh, learn, reflect and together-through the laughter, tears, camaraderie and prayers... SHALOM fills the air.



The Casa de Paz group pictured here is one of 200 such groups started since the pandemic hit Mexico in march 2020. In total, 2,490 people currently participating in a Casa de Paz Group.



Norberto (above left), a young community leader and Casa de Paz participant.

"Being a part of this Casa de Paz has helped me a lot," Norberto tells me. "Before this group, I didn't know many people who had big dreams and ideas... here we share a desire to learn more. I feel like I am a part of something, like I belong. Casa de Paz has helped me see diverse points of view and learn new things. This Casa de Paz isn't just a part of working with Urban Mosaic, it's creating better relationships with God, friends and also my community."



**Reflect:**

What are the margins of your city? What would it look like for you to begin to seek SHALOM there?

**Pray:**

*God open my eyes to see the margins around me. Show me how to take steps towards seeking SHALOM in those spaces.*

**Act:**

What is one bold, kind, tangible act of service you can do this week for someone in need?







CCO

## The Strategic Mission Field of the College Campus

*"Ask the Lord of the harvest, therefore, to send out workers into his harvest field." -Matthew 9:38*

transforming college students  
to transform the world

Nothing is more exciting to celebrate than new life in Christ, a college student coming to know Jesus for the first time. This is the beginning point of Great Commission work on a college campus, of growing disciples to be followers of Jesus. An example of a transformed life through CCO ministry during recent years is Stephen, student at Indian River State College in Florida.

Nothing is more exciting to celebrate than new life in Christ, a college student coming to know Jesus for the first time. This is the beginning point of Great Commission work on a college campus, of growing disciples to be followers of Jesus. An example of a transformed life through CCO ministry during recent years is Stephen, student at Indian River

Now, two years later, Stephen is being regularly mentored by Jason and is facilitating Sunday morning Bible study for college students and young adults. Every Monday morning, he meets with Jason to talk about how it's going and to pray for other students. This is the cycle of ministry to college students, and in general. We share the Gospel. We walk with them as they get to know Jesus. We invite them into leading others to Living Water. "For what I received I passed on to you as of first importance: that Christ died for our sins according to the Scriptures" (1 Corinthians 15:3).



### Reflect:

*"For this son of mine was dead and is alive again; he was lost and is found!" Luke 15:24*

One amazing thing about the parable of the Prodigal Son is that the Father did not ask the son what he had done. There was no interrogation on where he had been all this time. He did not wait until the son was standing right in front of him. He ran to him when he was far off. All the son did was start moving back in the direction of home. And the Father did the rest. So it is with your relationship with God. He is ALWAYS ready to run to you when he sees you begin a journey back. What sin do you think God cannot handle? What is preventing you from running home? Mercy and grace awaits you, whatever you have done.

### Pray:

*Good Father, I admit at times I stay away from your presence because I am ashamed of my sin. Help me to run to you without hesitation. Thank you for your love and grace. Thank you for the work of the CCO on college campuses across the country. I pray that you would provide many more opportunities for staff to share the Gospel with students who do not know Jesus. I pray that they would run to Him, even if they are ashamed. Meet them with joy and grace and may they grow as disciples.*



*"He himself gives life and breath to everything...in Him we live and move and have our being." Acts 17:25b, 28a*



### **Breathe**

by Gerri Jue Miller

Air comes in a box  
From the One who reigns Above  
Sacredly unwrapped

Air fills each second  
Empowering twenty-four  
Choices, response, life

Air vulnerable  
Imperiled, terrorized, masked  
Unwilling captive.

Captive air tightens  
Droplets, fear and unknowns lurk  
Four inhales in, out

Air waits, hopes, and prays  
For a chance to play again  
Playgrounds wait the day

Masked air need not stop  
To give praise for breath today  
Praising breath gives life.

Air of body and soul  
Remember why you exist  
Love Him, make Him known

Air comes in a box  
From the One who reigns Above  
Til we breathe Heaven.

I wrote this at the end of 2020 while still in the midst of a strict COVID pandemic lockdown in Manila, Philippines. Being an asthmatic, I realized early on the higher risk of my earthly life ending and the fear took hold. Yet God, in His grace ministered to me repeatedly, reminding me that every breath comes from Him, and He has a purpose for me in each day. For 25 years, He has been faithful to care for me for while fulfilling His calling for us to train Christians leaders for ministry in 22+nations in the very polluted city of Manila.

### **Reflect**

*How will you make each breath count for His purposes and glory?*



### **Pray**

*Lord, Giver of breath, thank you for your life in me. Please show me how you want me to make each breath count for your purposes and glory. Please help those nations who are struggling for air because of COVID, like India and the Philippines. May many come to Christ so they can breathe Heaven someday.*

## Ministry Links

### ***Rise Malawi***

<https://urbanpromiseinternational.org/our-ministries-malawi/malawi-risemalawi>

### ***Love Driven***

<https://urbanpromiseinternational.org/our-ministries-malawi/lovedriven-ministries>

### ***Seeds of Promise***

<https://urbanpromiseinternational.org/our-ministries-malawi/seeds-promise>

### ***Calm***

<https://urbanpromiseinternational.org/our-ministries-uganda/uganda-children-alive-ministries>

### ***YAMBA***

<https://urbanpromiseinternational.org/our-ministries-uganda/yamba>

### ***Youth Promise***

<https://urbanpromiseinternational.org/our-ministries-kenya/youthpromise-kenya>

### ***Haiti Outreach Ministries***

<https://www.haitiom.org/>

### ***Hope Alive Clinic and Ministry***

<https://hopealivesolace.org/>

### ***UP Honduras***

<https://urbanpromisehonduras.org/>

### ***MBF IMCK Good Shepherd Hospital, Congo***

<https://medicalmission.org/imck-good-shepherd-hospital-dr-congo/>

### ***MBF Embangweni Hospital, Malawi***

<https://medicalmission.org/embangweni/>

### ***MBF Hopital Ste. Croix, Haiti***

<https://medicalmission.org/hopital-ste-croix-hsc/>

### ***INTERVARSITY***

<https://intervarsity.org/>

### ***GTi Hope***

<https://www.gtihope.org/>

### ***FAMILY LIFE***

<https://www.familylife.com/aboutus/>

### ***Nadia Ayoub***

<https://www.presbyterianmission.org/ministries/missionconnections/nadia-ayoub/>

### ***Hekima Place***

<https://hekimaplace.org/>

### ***UPI UPSEL***

<https://urbanpromiseinternational.org/>

### ***Urban Promise***

<http://www.urbanpromiseusa.org/our-programs/camdenforward>

### ***Urban Mosaic***

<https://urbanmosaic.net/>

### ***CCO***

<https://ccojubilee.org/>

### ***International Graduate School of Leadership***

<https://igsl.asia/>