

THE MESSENGER

The Missionary Lifecycle: Part 1—Preparing to go to the field

This is the first in a four-part series of articles covering the various stages of the cycle of missionary life. We will hear directly from SAMS Missionaries themselves about their experiences. In this pre-field stage, we hear from Logan and Samantha Gates, who with their young son Lewis, are currently SAMS Missionary Candidates interning at Christ Church Vienna, Virginia, in preparation to serve in Santiago, Chile, later this year.



by Logan Gates

Samantha never thought she would be a missionary. Growing up in a Christian family, she had always thought she would support missionaries, not be one herself. But God has ways of making His calling clear! For both Samantha and me, that calling initially came from an Anglican Bishop in Chile who asked us to consider serving in a church plant there. It was later confirmed through the discernment of our church community and SAMS. Finally, the Lord affirmed it through the peace we have felt as a couple all along the way, and we are happy to share about what it's looked like for us to prepare for the mission field in 2026.

Things we didn't expect

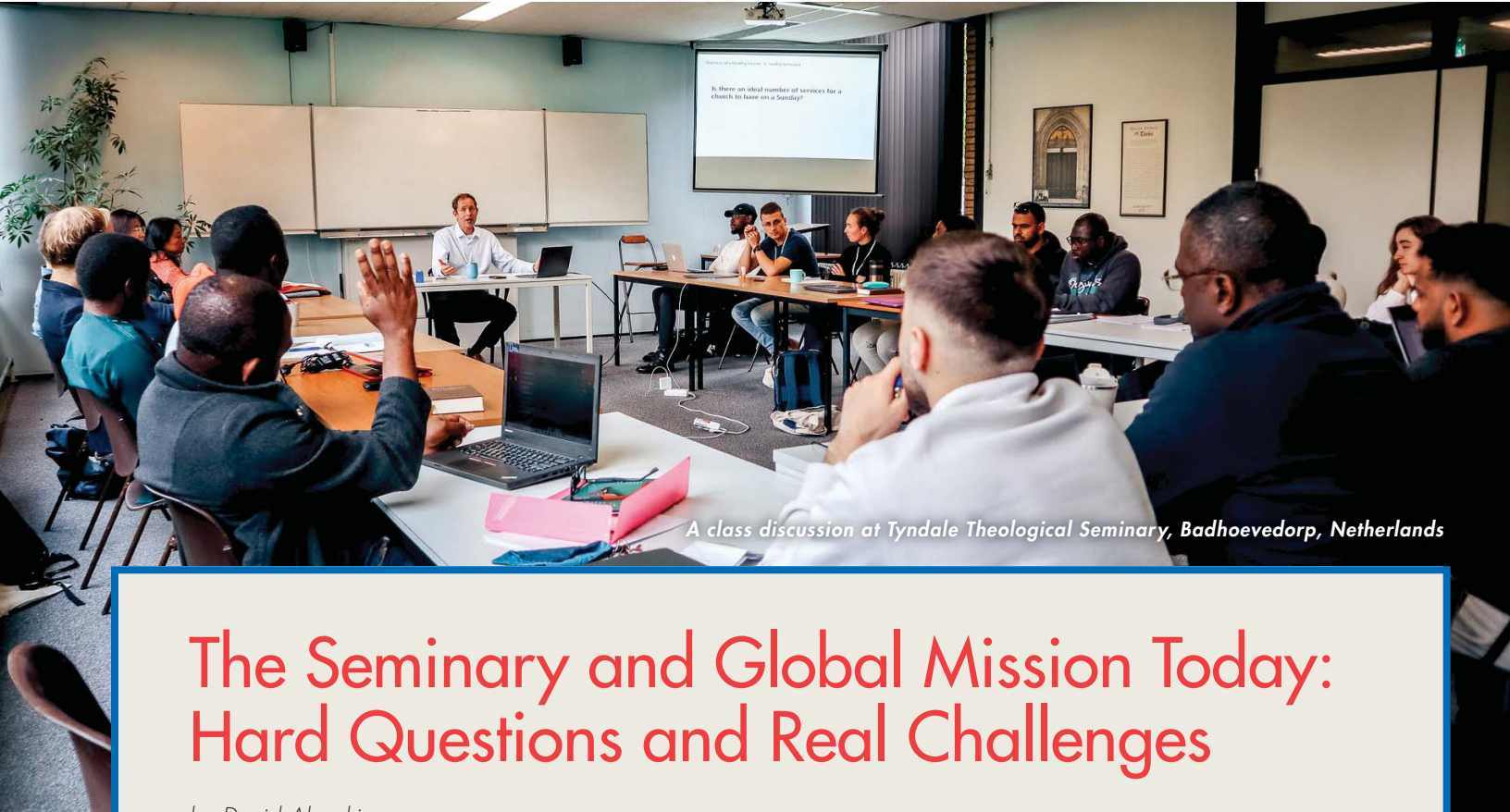
Becoming missionaries has been more challenging than we anticipated. We were aware that missionaries needed to raise support for things like housing and international health insurance, but seeing the full amount we needed to raise gave us some "sticker shock"! We also didn't realize how long it would take to find the individuals, families, and churches whom the Lord was calling to be a part of the work we'd be doing. Balancing this alongside work, parenting, training, and immigration paperwork has been more than we expected.

Nevertheless, there have been as many blessings in this season as there have been trials. We initially thought our greatest "need" would be for financial provision. Looking back, we see how God has used that practical need to help us see what we were most in need of: a team of believers

committed to encouraging us, laboring with us in prayer, as well as giving sacrificially to send us to the field.

We have been humbled by how the local church has come alongside us as well. We have not only had churches pray over and commission us, but also have had a church arrange for me to do a pastoral internship to get ministry experience in areas I would need to use in Chile, such as church planting and Spanish-language ministry. Another unexpected blessing has been the gift of moving in with family during this season of support raising. While we valued being on our own in the first seven years of our marriage, we have treasured this time of deeper relationship and dependence, and we know the Lord is preparing us to have to depend on others in a new culture and language when we arrive on the mission field.

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A class discussion at Tyndale Theological Seminary, Badhoevedorp, Netherlands

The Seminary and Global Mission Today: Hard Questions and Real Challenges

by David Alenskis

In recent years there has been a conspicuous trend in North American theological education: small, residential seminaries with strong denominational identities are those most likely to be in institutional decline, while large, interdenominational seminaries that permit online coursework are fully ascendent.

Furthermore, now that higher education is staring down the rise of an Artificial Intelligence so formidable that it can find, analyze, and synthesize biblical and theological information at the push of a few buttons, the decision to seek a seminary degree and to endure the sacrifice required to pursue it can seem outdated, even illogical. Why not simply serve in one's local church and turn to a nearby mentor – or the Internet – for guidance and training?

This new environment is forcing seminaries in North America onto their back foot, as it were, to justify their mission to students and donors. And for missionaries abroad laboring to make the case for offering robust, in-person theological education for church leaders from all around the world, promoting a traditional seminary model can be challenging. Why form these leaders in ways that demand so much time, money, and human resources?

The people I speak with regarding my family's upcoming ministry, teaching students from around the world through Tyndale Theological Seminary in the

Netherlands, routinely question the need for pastors to attend seminary – and even the idea of seminary itself. However, when I was discerning a call to ministry several decades ago, I never questioned the basic premise that I would need to relocate my life to a brick-and-mortar theological college to prepare for a lifetime in ministry. Nevertheless, today that basic premise has largely gone out the window. I regularly meet pastors who have not studied at a seminary, and many of those who have undertaken theological studies have done so part time, and often online.

Let me suggest that a look at some context – where seminaries came from, and what they offer students in residence – may help explain why they remain crucial for training leaders for the global church. Seminaries were designed as “seedbeds” for new ministers, and emerging leaders lose out when they have no affordable access to such formation.

Seminary in Years Past: the “Seedbed” for New Ministers

In his 2015 *The History of Theological Education*, Justo González observes that in early Christianity, theological education was not reserved for specialists alone. Rather, the church as a whole saw its own vocation as theological and educational: when people came to faith

in Christ, they were taught to study the Scriptures, to speak of God and for God, to grow into maturity as part of a community of disciples of Jesus. For centuries, training in Scripture, theology, and church history was an activity of the whole church for the whole church.

As the Western Roman Empire crumbled, monastic movements rose up that preserved Christian education amid societal chaos. However, while these communities transmitted vital knowledge, medieval universities had little to do with the training of the average clergyman. In contrast, the Protestant Reformation in the sixteenth century sought to equip preachers as experts in Scripture. Combining the medieval humanities curriculum – the liberal arts and sciences – with a Protestant theological curriculum, universities began producing graduates who were not only well-rounded scholars, but who also aimed at being faithful pastors. At the same time, Roman Catholic *seminaria* – literally, “seedbeds” – were being developed that offered what Protestant colleges in Europe and evangelical seminaries in North America were providing as well: a community of teachers and learners who would study Scripture, doctrine, languages, and history, all the while living and worshipping together to prepare for ministry in the church.

So, Why Make Attending a Seminary a Priority Today?

This ideal of the “seedbed” remains my preferred way to prepare leaders for the church around the world. Like González, I hesitate to draw a line between catechesis and college, between Sunday School and seminary: the whole church is called to explore the things of God and make him better known! But we live in a time when the average Christian has not been formed well at home or in the pew, and certainly not well enough to take the reins of a church and lead Christ’s flock as a shepherd in His name.

Most who are called to vocational ministry need extra study, extra exposure to the Word of God, extra time spent in worship with others who are preparing. This means having access not only to professors to guide these studies, and not only to libraries whose contents can challenge and awaken new ideas, but also to a freedom from other obligations and responsibilities. Perhaps not everyone is called to spend significant time and money to access this kind of maximized education, but some are – and above all, those who will lead.

Along those same lines, few of us have experience living together with other Christians in this kind of intentional community. Seminaries were composed as a kind of monastic fellowship, devoted to a common mission and to one’s fellow missionaries. The “life together” that happens in such fellowship while preparing to serve Christ’s church is difficult, painful, bewildering, and yet profoundly sanctifying. While a local church can and should offer the same opportunity to go deeply into this kind of intentional Christian fellowship, many do not. For most of us, our first experience of forming part of a daily fellowship of worshipers, students, and servants of Jesus Christ comes when we arrive at seminary.

Yes, the conventional seminary model is expensive to run, and the strain of study can deprive students of the leisure and space required to absorb the ideas and skills being fostered.

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David, Mary Beth, Austin, James, and Lily Alenskis

Part 1: Preparing to go to the mission field

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Firstfruits of sorrow and joy

In our cross-cultural training, we learned that mission work contains a paradox of sorrows and joys. We have been tasting some of these sorrows and joys even now, before we arrive in Chile. Preparing for the field has felt like a “long goodbye” to our family and friends. In some ways, we’re grateful for how long it has taken us to get to the field, but in other ways, we are regularly reminded that the time we have together is temporary. We’ve come to see that this season not only involves sorrow for us, but also for the family and friends who are releasing us to the mission field. There is also sadness in the good things that we are leaving behind. Both of us recently completed several years of education and are leaving behind career paths that, in many ways, are more secure and “successful.” It is hard to see our peers settling down and buying homes, while we attempt to winnow down our belongings to a few checked bags!

But we are also beginning to taste the joys that lie ahead. We feel joy in being in the center of God’s will, and in being able to make sacrifices for Christ. There has been joy in seeing His provision financially and through a team He has gathered around us. There has also been joy in having to grow in prayer and dependence on the Lord throughout this season of support raising.

Looking ahead, we are excited to learn a new culture, discover a new city, and gain a new family in Christ. We look forward to the spiritual growth that comes from depending more deeply on the Lord, and to watching Lewis experience the richness of two cultures. We are eager to serve among secular, post-Christian people in one of the largest cities in South America. Most of all, we are excited to present Christ and see Him draw people to Himself as He is lifted up (John 12:32).

Amidst uncertainty, finding peace in God’s calling

The uncertainties that lie ahead of us are many. We know there will be trials being so far away from home. We know there will be trials adjusting to a new culture – we are both introverts who like early bedtimes, while Chileans stay up late, spending time together! There will be challenges integrating into an existing church plant, building trust by taking the posture of serving and learning. We don’t yet know where we’ll be living, or who our community will be.

But amidst all these uncertainties, we have found peace in God’s calling. If He is calling us to Chile, we know that what he asks of us is simply obedience. Our trust is in God’s words in Isaiah 46:11:

**“I have spoken, and I will
bring it to pass; I have
purposed, and I will do it.”**

Owens called to lead Christ Church Bangkok

Wesley and Ana Owens are pursuing a missionary call with SAMS and the Diocese of Singapore, where Wesley has been invited to serve as the Vicar of Christ Church Bangkok, in the Anglican Church of Thailand. The call to lead this parish integrates well with Wesley and Ana's heart for building Christ-centered community with many different people, especially the lost, the lonely, and the hurting. They see amid the vendors, tourists, and temples of this capital city many opportunities for the church to engage people in this predominantly Buddhist culture, including the many young people and highly vulnerable ethnic refugees living there.

Originally from Virginia, Wesley's love for young people was born out of being a student leader in campus ministry at UVA and deepened abroad as he served among campus missionaries in East Asia and at Oxford University. After serving at St. Peter's Cathedral in Tallahassee, Florida, he pastored Incarnation Church in State College, Pennsylvania.



Pictured R to L: Wesley and Ana Owens, Rev. Cn. Yee Ching Wah, Dean of Thailand, Rev. Tim Eady, interim Vicar, Archbishop Titus Chung, Diocese of Singapore, and wife Connie, and Chichi and Okey Okafor, parish staff

Wesley is stepping down from his role as a SAMS Trustee to accept this role. Similarly, Ana has served among students as a resident assistant in college as well as a campus minister alongside Wesley at State College through CCO, the Coalition for Christian Outreach. Ana looks forward to offering her gifts in the areas of young adult discipleship and refugee ministry at Christ Church Bangkok. Please pray for this couple as they seek Senders and prepare for an expeditious move to Thailand in the early Fall.

Young Anglicans getting involved in Mission through SAMS



CJ McDowell

For young adults opportunities abound to serve cross-culturally from one month to one year through the SAMS Missionary Bridger Program. CJ McDowell, a member of The Falls Church Anglican in Virginia, is one such example. Having graduated from Regent University with a degree in psychology, CJ had been wrestling with what the Lord was calling her to do next. Even though she had spent time living abroad with her family growing up, the stories she had heard about missionaries didn't seem to apply to her. Then last summer the Lord revealed to her that He is faithful to provide a way to go where He calls, and she felt Him saying, "go to the ends of the earth." She spoke to church leaders, family, and friends while also taking two courses to learn more about missions. The Lord connected her with Lucy Chaves, a SAMS Missionary working extensively in Kenya, and she realized a door was being opened. CJ will serve for a month in Kenya before returning to Regent University this Fall to pursue a master's degree. In Kenya, she will be serving alongside the staff of Kenya Connection as they work to disciple youth and young adults, empowering them to impact their communities through supporting education, job skills, and entrepreneurship. With Lucy serving as her missionary mentor, CJ looks forward to learning how to serve in another culture and to build relationships with young Kenyans, walking alongside them as they grow to faithfully follow Jesus Christ.

The Seminary and Global Mission Today

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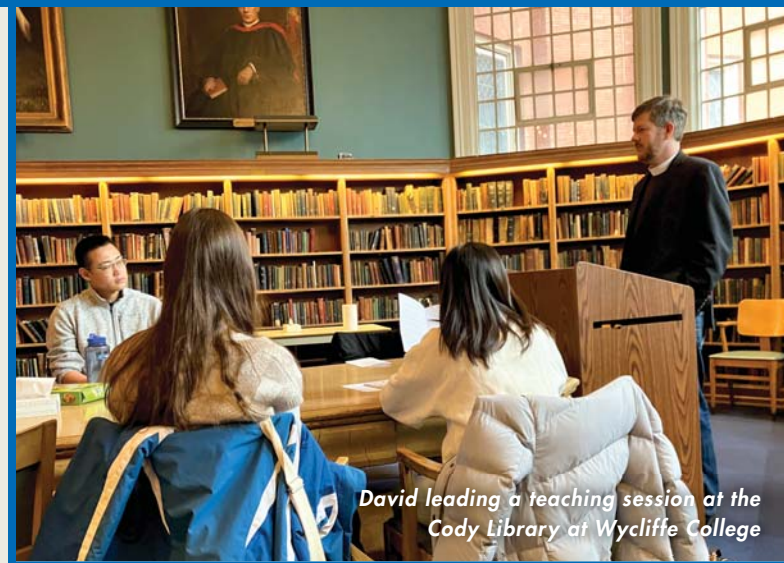
But the models of professional formation that are increasingly replacing the old residential seminary model of academic rigor and community life cannot measure up to the older ideals of relational mentorship and skillful mastery.

In some cases, new models for pastoral training are needed for economic reasons. And in others, churches may not wish to send away their best young people to receive an education far from home with little chance of their returning. Better to train them in-house for free, they might conclude, or to send them online for asynchronous coursework or AI-assisted queries, than to pay for three years of study living at a college far from the parish.

However, I am convinced that the Lord honors what we give away with no expectation of a return on the congregation's investment. Planting a young person in a "seedbed" far away is to store up treasures in heaven rather than build the kingdom on earth, to cast one's bread upon the water in hope that it will somehow return. I myself have witnessed the Lord bless the (Baptist) church that first encouraged me to go to seminary, and I have seen the Lord prosper those in the (Anglican) church who helped sustain me while I was studying at a (Presbyterian) seminary. Which is to say, to commission a seminarian to study is a group effort, not unlike sending a missionary to unknown lands. In both cases, we should be confident that obedience to Christ's command and trust in his promises will yield a plentiful harvest of righteousness that will redound to those who scattered those seeds.

Seminary Life and the Call to Global Mission Today

I am now looking forward to teaching as a missionary at Tyndale Theological Seminary, a college that is equipping new missionaries to serve Christ around the world by giving them full access to an affordable postgraduate education. Most of my missionary work until this point in South and Central America has been in areas that lacked affordable access to this "seedbed" model of ministry formation. God was visibly at work, but the barriers to leadership were visible too. It was especially hard for cash-strapped congregations to send ministry candidates to a seminary far from home. For Anglicans, this difficulty meant that fewer people were sent to train for ministry, and so smaller and more rural churches (like ours in Belize) rarely enjoyed having resident clergy. For others, this meant that many pastors never received the fuller formation that seminaries provide. Beyond certain unintended errors in doctrine, we found that these under-equipped leaders were at greater risk of emotional burnout and vocational shipwreck.



David leading a teaching session at the Cody Library at Wycliffe College

As missionaries, we came away convinced that while a seminary education is not the only path to effective ministry, it is still ordinarily the best way to equip Christians to serve as leaders in Christ's church.

All this feeds my excitement to serve at Tyndale Seminary! I look forward to teaching students from Ghana and Cameroon, Ethiopia and Pakistan, Guyana and Hong Kong, and from so many other places, who, despite differences in nationality and denomination, desire to seek God's face together. Each one who comes has seen the value of theological education in community, and each is making sacrifices to show up in person, becoming present not only to the professors in class, but to one another as well. Each has left family and loved ones, career and income, heart language, comfort food and cultural music, all to prioritize these crucial years in the "seedbed" before being transplanted back as missionaries into their native soils. My prayer is that this dedicated time and space with one another will have formed healthy roots that will serve them well throughout the years of ministry to come.



David and Mary Beth Alenskis previously served as SAMS Missionaries providing pastoral leadership in churches and schools throughout Latin America and the Caribbean, and they are currently preparing to serve at Tyndale Theological Seminary in the Netherlands.

At Tyndale, David will have the opportunity to offer Christian theological instruction to seminary students from all over the world, thereby contributing to building up well-trained leaders for service within the global Church. David recently completed his PhD at Wycliffe College and the University of Toronto, and David and Mary Beth, along with their three children, are currently U.S.-based as they seek Senders to walk alongside them in order to fulfill their calling to the Netherlands and the nations.



Alenskis Family



Kerry & Cynthia Buttram



Johann & Louise van der Bijl



Chisholm Family



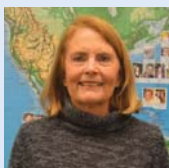
Roger & Joanne Griffin



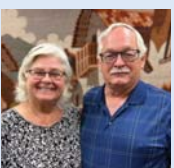
Tim & Meredith Holt



Cate Waddell



Amanda Scott



Steve & Debbie Buckner



Jack Melvin

September 1–5: Missionary Bridgers (One- to twelve-month missionary interns):

Catherine Annand (Uganda), **David & Sarah Anderson** (Southeast Asia), **Deb Carr** (Kenya), **CJ McDowell** (Kenya), and **Patrick Lutalo** (Uganda). Pray that God's grace would empower them to move further into fruitful service.

September 6–12: EUROPE: The Netherlands

Pray for **David & Mary Beth, Austin, James, and Lily Alenskis** as they prepare to offer theological education for the Global South at Tyndale Theological Seminary in the Netherlands. Pray for God's grace and provision as they seek new Senders for their growing needs and new friends for their growing children. Pray that the whole family would be safe and healthy as they take steps toward this new ministry and give them wisdom and joy in this season of preparing for their new mission assignment.

Pray with **Kerry & Cynthia Buttram** for their ongoing 'peripatetic' ministry in the Netherlands where they often serve other Anglican churches. Lift them up as they travel from Utrecht as their primary base for this Gospel ministry of evangelizing, mentoring, preaching, hospitality, and pastoral care. Pray for Cynthia as she continues her ministry of spiritual direction. Bless them both as they support clergy and spouses within the Netherlands Anglican Deanery.

Lift up **Johann & Louise van der Bijl** and the ministries of Christ Church, Heiloo, where they serve. Pray for Johann as he carries out his preaching ministry and pray for the church's Bible studies, home groups, and prayer groups this fall, including an upcoming prayer event in September. Please pray for Johann's ministry of writing and that people would come to know the Lord through his commentaries.

September 13–19: EUROPE: Portugal

Pray with **Steve & Veronica, Ayla, and Zelia Chisholm** serving Christ the King Anglican Church in Algarve, for God to provide creativity in their discipleship and outreach ministry. Pray for new families moving to Algarve to join the church. Pray for Veronica's continued healing and for no recurrence of cancer. Ask the Lord to grow Ayla and Zelia in their faith to develop a lifelong relationship with Jesus. Pray for the Young Life Portugal partnership and for a new area director to be found.

September 20–26: CENTRAL EUROPE

Pray for **Steve V.** as he continues to engage with local Christians, including those who are interested in spiritual direction. Ask the Holy Spirit to go before Steve as he distributes Bibles in public places where people can find them and read God's word. Pray that Steve would have wisdom as he meets non-Christians, including members of his own family who don't know the Lord.

September 27- October 3: NORTH AMERICA: Mexico

Pray for **Roger and Joanne Griffin** and the Chapel Fellowship in San Miguel de Allende. Pray for the formation of the vestry and for the women's development ministry, The Brilla Center, which the chapel group supports with gifts of service and tithes. The Griffins feel blessed to be preaching Christ in this "best town in the world." Join them in praising God for this amazing opportunity to reach people from all over the world.

Pray for **Tim & Meredith Holt** as they continue to minister to congregations in the Southwest U.S. and Mexico, encouraging pastors and other church leaders. Please especially pray for the raising up and equipping of mature Christian leaders in Mexico, as well as for wisdom for Tim and Meredith as they enter into their second year of marriage.

October 4–10: CENTRAL AMERICA: Honduras

Pray for **Cate Waddell, Amanda Scott, and Steve & Debbie Buckner** in Tegucigalpa at LAMB Institute for the upcoming school year. Give Cate and Amanda wisdom and compassion as they teach at Joy Christian Academy and pray for all the children and staff at the Academy and Children's Home. Lift up Steve and Debbie as they work with the kids teaching skills and celebrating special events in the life of each child.

Pray that **Jack Melvin** in Tegucigalpa will continue to be guided by the Lord, especially in his ministry providing scholarships for Honduran children. Ask the Lord to bless his work in overseeing building projects and pray that the people he meets will experience the Light of Christ through his witness.



Vivanco Family



Russ & Heidi Smith



Gates Family



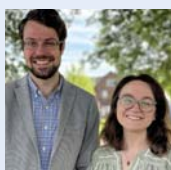
Gresser Family



Whitaker Family



Pelloni Family



Wesley & Ana Owens



Long Family



Weber Family

October 11-17: SOUTH AMERICA: Ecuador

Pray with **Roberto & Cameron, Graham, Liam, and Francis Vivanco** for the healthy growth of the micro-scholarship program, *Education=Hope*, as they provide for the education of 1,500 students in Ecuador. Pray for the life-giving and transformative nature of the English Fellowship Church in Quito, where Roberto pastors, especially for healthy leadership and discipleship of the church. Pray for the education and future opportunities for Graham, Liam, and Francis. Ask God to bless the partnership they have with the Diocese of Central Ecuador and Bishop Juan Carlos.

October 18-24: SOUTH AMERICA: Chile

Join **Russ & Heidi Smith** in praying for Rural Bible Institute students with whom they work. Lift up the class who will graduate in December 2026, and the new 2027 incoming class. Give God thanks for the growth in the Kingdom of God Church in Labranza, both in numbers and in its understanding of God's Word. Pray also for the Diocesan Adolescent Summer Camp which will begin in January.

Pray for **Logan & Samantha, and Lewis Gates** who are hopeful and eager to begin serving in Santiago, Chile, in early 2027. Pray for generous Senders who will help them reach their full support budget, for the timely processing of their visas, and for housing near the church plant where they will be serving. Please pray for God's grace to savor the final months with family, say goodbye, and make the transition to a new country and culture, trusting in Him.

October 25-31: ASIA: Cambodia

Please pray for **Gregory & Heidi, Saeeda, Brynne, Aubrey, Ivy, and Madeleine Whitaker** as they serve Church of Christ our Peace, Phnom Penh. Pray for the growth of the church as seekers come to faith. Ask that the leadership, clergy, and lay pastors across the Anglican Church of Cambodia will be equipped and encouraged and that there would be continuing growth in the church's medical outreach and witness.

Lift up **Anthony & Anna, Laurel, Bethel, Priel, Isobel, and Noel Pelloni** as they prepare for home ministry assignment from January-June 2027. Pray for Anthony as he completes his seminary studies and prepares for canonical exams in preparation for ordination to the priesthood. Pray for Anna and their daughters in the time of transition. Pray for affordable housing and transportation while living in the U.S., as well as a family who can sublet their house in Cambodia during this time. Pray for the funding needed for travel and living while on home ministry assignment.

November 1-7: ASIA: Thailand

Wesley & Ana Owens ask for prayer as they begin their missionary service in Thailand at Christ Church Bangkok. Please ask the Lord to bless Wesley as vicar (lead pastor) with every grace needed to lead this diverse church in loving God and neighbor. Please also ask the Lord to bless Ana as she ministers to urban refugees and young adults in Bangkok. Finally, please ask for many more Thai to come to know Jesus.

November 8-14: ASIA: Indonesia

Jim & Nanci, Anna, George, Mary, and Della Long give thanks to God in providing funding for Providence Anglican Church's refugee transportation ministry in Jakarta. Join them in giving thanks to God for traveling mercies over the past year, and for calling forth laborers into the harvest there. Pray for Edris as he completes his final year of seminary; for Aan as he serves dual ministry sites in Jakarta; and for Milan from Bangladesh as he takes up evangelistic ministry to stateside immigrants.

November 15-21: AFRICA: Namibia

Pray with **Robert & Traci, Andrew, Peter, Daniel, and June Gresser** for Namibia Evangelical Theological Seminary, where Bob is teaching wisdom literature and ethics as well as mentoring students. Lift up Traci as she stays busy with homeschooling, ladies Bible study, hospitality, Sunday school, and home management. Pray for their priorities, especially as Namibians look to the long term to build trust and open the door to friendship. Pray that as newcomers they will be patient in walking the long path. Pray for the Gresser children to make and be good friends.

November 22-28: AFRICA: Rwanda

Pray for **Ben & Cherie, Mae, Conor, Abigail, Jonathan, Michaela, and Shiloh Weber** as most of the churches in Rwanda remain closed with the end of July marking two years of closure. Please pray for Rwandan believers as they learn to worship together creatively. Pray that churches will be allowed to reopen. Please pray for the Webers as they send their second teen to Rift Valley Academy in Kenya this fall. Please pray for their family as they adjust to having two of their children gone most of the year.



Janine LeGrand



Richard & Martha Menees



Richard & Catherine Ranger



Benton Family



Behrens Family



Omar Family



Larson Family

November 29- December 5: AFRICA: Uganda

Join **Janine LeGrand** in praying for an end to the Ebola outbreak in this region of Africa and for Janine's good health and effective teaching in her ministry. Pray for the expansion of those who can assist her in her health work as well as financial support of her ministry. Give thanks to God for the three-year renewal of her work permit.

Pray for **Richard & Martha Menees** and their project to send from the Diocese of Kigezi the Bishop, his wife, and the Mission Coordinator to the U.S. for the Diocese of San Joaquin Convention. Pray for Martha's two mentees, Vanesa and Shakira, who are working to get further education and training in their respective fields of study. Lift up Richard and his ministry as a lecturer at Bishop Barham Theological College.

Pray that **Richard & Catherine Ranger** will have the ability to travel back to the U.S. for their planned leave, despite travel restrictions throughout East Africa due to the Ebola outbreak in Congo. Pray that they will be able to meet with family, friends, and mission partners, and have a safe return to Uganda renewed and energized to resume serving at Uganda Christian University.

December 6-12: NORTH AFRICA

Pray for **J&K and their children** as they continue to establish themselves in North Africa. Pray that the Lord gives them grace as they work to make new friends and build relationships with those they do not know. Pray that J's work of laying new foundations in the Diocese of North Africa would bear fruit. Guide their family and ask the Lord to grant His Spirit in the shaping of sustainable, long-term, locally-led ministry there.

December 13-19: OCEANIA: New Zealand

Lift up **Guy & Summer, Isaac, Quinn, Norah, and Addison Benton** as they serve in the Anglican Diocese of Wellington. Pray that God would bless their work in shaping missional communities for those seeking to live out their faith in close-knit fellowship. Pray that these communities would always be welcoming places for those who are seeking, and ask God to provide the energy and encouragement Guy and Summer need to teach, share, and live out the Gospel in impactful ways.

December 20-26: NORTH AMERICA: United States of America Refugees and Other Immigrants

Pray with **Daniel & Rebekah, Sabal, Darcy, and Mary Behrens** as they seek to deepen and enlarge their ministry to vulnerable populations of refugee families. Empower them to mobilize the church for this work as God brings ethnicities from around the globe to U.S. cities like Pittsburgh. Encourage them in their outreach to Spanish-speaking groups through monthly group meetings, retreats, and ESL classes.

Pray for **Dan & Cesiah, Lily, and Abby Omar** in Georgia, and their work of building relationships with those in and around Clarkston. Pray that they would have wisdom and insight with how to engage with young people, including students, and that they would know when to boldly and patiently share the Gospel with refugees, immigrants, and those who do not know Christ.

December 27-January 2: NORTH AMERICA: United States of America

Pray for Missionary Candidates **Eric & Liz, Zeke, and Elias Larson**. Ask the Lord to give them crystal clear discernment and a faithful community to surround them as they seek His will.

January 3-9: Associate Missionaries

David & Patricia Ayres (church planting in Germany), **Jesse & Sarah Blaine** (church planting), **Chuck & Beth Bradshaw** (theological and musical education in Uganda), **Mary Chowenhill** (entrepreneurial development in Uganda), **Cathy Clevenger** (trauma healing ministry in Uganda), **Matt & Sora Colvin** (theological education and health ministry), **Bunny Cowan** (teaching in Honduras), **Wayne & Nicole Curtis** (youth ministry in South Africa), and **Kathy Decker** (communications in Peru).

January 10-16: Associate Missionaries

John & Ninfa Dixon (outreach on the Mexican border), **Cathy Donahoe** (health ministry in the Dominican Republic), **Chris Feuillade** (education in Chile), **Tom & Maryjane Furrer** (health ministry in Nigeria), **Margarita Grachen** (children's ministry in Honduras), **Allen & Rachel Hill** (theological education), **Mike & Betty Kaszer** (education ministry in Honduras), **Grant & Wendy LeMarquand** (diocesan development in Ethiopia), and **Jacky Lowe** (women's ministry in Madagascar).



Chaves Family



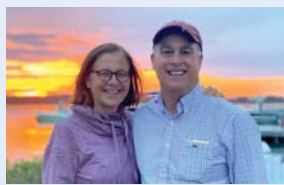
Anne Schaffer



Miller Family



Todd & Patsy McGregor



Jack & Mary McDonald



Jared & Abbi
Wensyel



Weeldreyer
Family

January 17-23: Associate Missionaries

Jeannie Loving (social outreach in Honduras), **Frank & Shawnee Lyons** (youth ministry), **Ian & Polly Montgomery** (diocesan ministry in Peru), **John & Susan Park** (leadership development in Latin America), **Trent Pettit** (Ethiopia/global Anglican mission partnerships), **Ana Reid** (social ministries in Honduras), **Maunette Tait** (education in Honduras), and **Hunter & Stephie Van Wagenen** (evangelism in Spain).

January 24-30: GLOBAL MINISTRY FOCUS: United States of America

Join **David & Lucy, Joshua, Paul, Zuri, and Mark Chaves** in praying for the SAMS Bridger Program and thanking God for the recent Bridger intern, CJ McDowell, who recently served with the Kenya Connection team. Praise God for the gift of Bibles distributed to children in the sponsorship program. Pray that each child will grow in their understanding of God's love and His story of redemption. Please pray for financial provision for the Chaves family and for David and Lucy to be faithful role models to their children.

Pray that **Anne Schaffer** will be filled with and led by the Holy Spirit as she coaches Missionaries and churches in mission. Grant her boldness and confidence in speaking and teaching and give her wisdom beyond herself as she encourages Missionaries in the difficult work of learning a new language and culture. Give her healing, protection, provision, and a sustainable vision for her ministry.

Pray for **Mike & Kim, Katherine, and Liliana Miller** as they walk alongside Missionaries and their families providing spiritual direction, coaching, and debriefing services. Ask God to give them wisdom, compassion, discernment, and attentive hearts. Pray that the Holy Spirit guides each conversation and creates a safe space for healing, reflection, renewed hope, and clarity for the season ahead. Pray for young adults in Honduras that the Millers support through educational scholarships.

January 31-February 6: GLOBAL MINISTRY FOCUS: United States of America

Ask the Lord to bless **Todd & Patsy McGregor's** ministry as mission mobilizers. Pray for an upcoming opportunity for the musical, *Miaraka: A Time to Dance*, to partner with SAMS Missionary Lucy Chaves and Kenya Connection. Please lift up Todd's ministry of life coaching. Todd and Patsy thank God for the mission work in Belize that involved their daughter and family and for the recent family reunion in Georgia.

Join **Jack & Mary McDonald** in lifting up those who attended their Farm Animal Refresher for Missions course in the fall and spring. Pray that these attendees will be drawn into both short and long-term mission work. Pray for international students across the country – that they will be befriended and shown the light and love of Christ while in this country. Pray that many will come to Christ, particularly Poojah, Neil, Arvarind, Dhisti, Shouti, Ronnie, Monica, and Seida. Pray that the Lord will bless Mary's speaking at Christian Veterinary Mission gatherings.

Join **Jared & Abbi, Theodora, and Olivia Wensyel** in praying for the church in Sudan as it continues to face incredible suffering. Peace negotiations in the ongoing war are happening, but so far, no progress has been made. Please pray for the right solution to emerge. Pray also for *Sudan Church Partner's* fundraising effort as they visit partner churches and explore new potential partnerships. Pray for the Wensyel family as they order their busy lives in this season.

February 7-13: GLOBAL MINISTRY FOCUS: United States of America

Pray for the SAMS Home Staff Team: **Nita Dempsey, Brendan Kimbrough, Julie Kirik, Howard McClellan, Dana Priest, Kelly Shane, Wade & Chelsea Weeldreyer, and Stewart Wicker**. Guide them with divine wisdom and perseverance to encourage and equip, support SAMS Missionaries and mobilize the Church in this shared calling.

Join **Wade & Chelsea, Evelyn, and William Weeldreyer** in praising God for the stability He has provided to their family as they have re-settled in the U.S. over the past year after serving in Rwanda. Praise God for the joy that Wade and Chelsea find in their work, and pray that they would continue to grow in their ability to support and resource Missionaries well. Pray that Evie and William would continue to grow in the knowledge and love of the Lord.

February 14-20: SAMS Future Missionaries

Join with us praying, "Lord we ask that you would raise up **Inquirers and Applicants** whose hearts are drawn to working to serve others cross-culturally. We ask that they would seek you, faithfully coming to understand sacrificial service, including those who desire to serve short-term from one to twelve months as **Missionary Bridgers**."

February 21-28: Senders

Join us in praise to God for all who "Send" Missionaries with their love, support, and prayer, trusting God to not only work through these **Senders** making all grace abound, but that in having all sufficiency in all things in Christ, that our SAMS Missionaries may abound in every good work.

He is Faithful

"Not to us, O LORD, not to us, but to your name give glory,
for the sake of your steadfast love and your faithfulness!" Ps. 115:1

❧ SAMS-USA: A 50-YEAR JOURNEY ❧

1976-1986

God Formed



1976 – SAMS-USA formed on December 3rd at Christ Church, Hamilton, MA



1978 – First SAMS-USA missionaries are sent to Arequipa, Peru

1987-1996

God Reclaimed



1988 – "Reconciliation Retreat" fostered a fresh start for the Society



1994 – SAMS encourages inaugural New Wineskins Missions Conference

1997-2006

God Confirmed



1998 – Hurricane Mitch relief effort reinforces Gospel mission in word and deed



2001 – First All Society Retreat: Renewal for ministry across Latin America, the Caribbean, and Spain

2007-2016

God Expanded



2009 – SAMS goes global, adopting a new name: "Society of Anglican Missionaries and Senders"



2015 – A team tops Kilimanjaro to boost vision to engage the whole church to reach the whole world with the whole Gospel

2017-2026

God Strengthened



2017 – SAMS partners with global Anglicans to make disciples across six continents



2026 – SAMS Board adopts a new sphere: USA-Focused Cross-Cultural Missionaries



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Post Office Box 399
Ambridge, PA 15003

TEL: (724) 266-0669
e-mail: info@SAMS-USA.org
www.sams-usa.org

SAMS is a non-profit voluntary missionary society dedicated to
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