

Family get-together

On July 19 we were scheduled to leave Minneapolis for our family get-together on Whidbey Island, near Seattle. We planned, budgeted and prayed about this for months with the Scotts in Spokane and the Andersons in New Haven. However, we got caught in Delta Airline's system-wide computer meltdown that week. Our flights and rebooked flights were canceled and by the time we could be rebooked again we'd be too late to join our kids and grandkids for the week. On the 19th the Andersons flew on Alaska Airlines direct to Seattle from New York City. They had a smooth flight and the Scotts had a pleasant drive from Spokane. We try doing this every other year so each family prays, plans and budgets for this anticipated event.

Mary Ann and I are disappointed that we could not join them, but we are happy the Scotts and Andersons had a good time together. The kids thoughtfully sent us photos and videos of their activities but they do not replace being together. We have committed this to the Lord and are at rest in Him. We spent our week at home. We got some projects done, watched a great video series and met new neighbors. They have a missionary background so we look forward to know them better.

You are a blessing to us and pleasing to God

Mary Ann and I are very grateful for you. You are a blessing to us. We know your praying and giving is as unto the Lord Jesus. Your sacrificial offering of prayer and financial gifts

are acceptable to God and a fragrant offering to Him. You are pleasing Him (Philippians 4:18). Additionally the profit of your ministry to us accrues to your bank account in heaven (Philippians 4:17). We do not take your praying and giving for granted. Thank-you for your investment in us and our ministry. We are not entitled and God does not owe us anything. We are debtors to Him as we praise Him for providing our daily bread through you. We pray we live up to the Lord's and your expectations of us as full-time career missionaries with ACTION. From my current study of Jude's New Testament letter we pray you experience verse two. It says *"May mercy, peace, and love be multiplied to you."*

Note: Email us if you want to receive our monthly email prayer letters.



Amos and Laura Anderson
with kids Ethan and Lydia

Danny and Micah Scott
with kids Felicity and Constance

Action International Ministries

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Yes, Lord!

The people who
know their God
shall stand firm
and take action.

Daniel 11:32b

Planning, Praying and Learning

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

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"The Blessed Controller of all things"

(1 Timothy 6:15 J.B. Phillips)

A motto I try to live by is, "Blessed are the flexible for they will not break." Both Mary Ann and I by nature are planners. We plan our days, weeks, months and chart our year ahead. We have a joint yearly calendar, individual yearly and monthly calendars, and daily to-do lists. We are backroom workers and task-orientated. Of course our plans change for various reasons so we develop contingency plans, sometimes two or three. This is the way God created us. This is clearly reflected by our individual Clifton Strengths evaluations. We are also learning, by God's grace and His Word, to bathe our plans and tasks in prayer throughout the process of brainstorming, planning, implementation, evaluation, adjustments as needed, reimplementation and reevaluation. In June and July we went through this.

We are learning, in the midst of our planning, budgeting and praying, that God's thoughts and ways are not ours. Isaiah 55:8-9 says, *"For my thoughts are not your thoughts, neither are your ways my ways, declares the Lord. For as the heavens are higher than the earth, so are my ways higher than your ways and my thoughts than your thoughts."* We know that God is good and does good as He teaches us His statutes (Psalm 119:68) even though we may not understand His thoughts and ways.

What Solomon wrote about life in Proverbs 16:9 is true. It says, *"The heart of man plans his way, but the Lord establishes his steps."* Life is full of Divine paradoxes. We are learning to hold our plans loosely. As we learn this the more flexible and stronger we become.

Ministry among slaves

We had a fruitful trip to South Asia June 19-29. Each day was full, including our long flights to and from the country and a roundtrip flight in country. On our 14-hour flight back to the USA, due to a ticketing issue, we were not given the seats with extra legroom we purchased. We were crammed into uncomfortable seats. We're probably out the money. Our days on the ground were demanding due to extreme heat and humidity, a ten-hour advanced time difference and lack of sleep. However, financially it was well-worth almost depleting our ministry funds and enduring many physical, emotional and spiritual challenges. Our dear hosts, who are faithful ACTION coworkers, and their extended family and church, were very grateful for our visit and ministry with them. Their hospitality was *"in a manner worthy of God"* (3 John 6). We ministered in their church and a small church in the area where last August about 26 churches were burnt to the ground and several homes of believers in Christ were looted and destroyed by



All Scripture
references are
in the English
Standard
Version (ESV)
unless
otherwise
stated.



Praying for a family after the roof deck church service.

extremists. This church's building was in ashes so we worshiped on a Sunday evening almost in the dark on the roof deck of a nearby building. Both Mary Ann and I gave a testimony and I preached the message. Our worship was Christ-centered, joyful and the music beautifully indigenous. After the service we prayed for a long line of people. We then enjoyed a delicious meal with the pastor and his family and leaders of the church.

The next morning we helped baptize 30 or so new believers in Christ from this church at a private pool. Before the baptismal service their pastor taught them about the significance of this ordinance and talked about the risks they are taking as followers of Jesus. In short, the service



Precious children of brick-making slaves.

risks of their new life in Christ. Pray for these dear ones please.

A day later we drove six hours one way (hours of the drive were on very rough dusty roads) to another city where our host and his church are planting new churches. Most of these sites are among enslaved (correct word) brick-makers and agricultural workers. At one site we met a man whose family has labored as brick-makers at his site for eight generations! I'm sure these baby Christians seldom have visitors, especially foreigners, therefore, they were extremely happy to receive us and hear our words of encouragement from Ephesians 6:10. Again many asked for prayer.

We then drove further "off the beaten path" to another site (we visited six). It was a long, hot, sweaty, tiring and inspiring day!

We were very encouraged to have fellowship again with two students who were in our cross-cultural training class for missions in 2022. They are now faithfully pastoring the people under their care at their sites. Even though our new brothers and sisters in Christ are financial slaves of their owners, clearly Christ has set

them free from their slavery to sin. Their worship and desire to learn God's Word and follow Jesus show it. Our host is raising money to free families from their financial enslavement. If you'd like to know about his plan and its budget let us know. This movement of the Gospel is like reading the New Testament.

Between these trips we helped our host plan his second nationwide interdenominational Great Commission Conference for early September. We were invited to participate, and we, or just me, would return because we are seeing the fruit of our first Conference in September 2021 and our subsequent training in 2022. Young people are now receiving classroom and hands-on mentorship by experienced nationals in ministering the Gospel among the estimated 850 unreached people



Baptism can be costly for these dear followers of Christ.

groups of their country (about 99% of their total population) and beyond its borders. Our host is leading this movement even as he pastors his growing church in the country's largest city. Recently while planning and praying for September's Conference we sadly realized we need to postpone it till next year for various reasons. The primary reason is a large lack of funds. We're determined to continue trusting the Lord for His timing and the needed funds.

ACTION Skills Conference

Soon after unpacking, doing laundry, getting groceries and repacking, we continued preparing for our ASC because we had a lot yet to finalize. It was held July 8-12 with the theme Standing Firm in Christ. Thankfully it went well.

Our group was intergenerational (missionary kids to retirees), and international (participants from Mexico, Brasil, Portugal, Nepal, Canada, and the USA). We were interactive and really enjoyed learning and having fun together. Our fellowship was rich during activities and prayer, over meals, while playing games and enjoying a bonfire with s'mores. We ended the week with testimonies, prayer, Communion and a challenge from the Word. Mary Ann was our lead coordinator and did a great job handling our fluid details with grace. Soon after we started people asked if we can have a similar conference next year. It is obvious people want to continue learning from one another, growing in Christ and developing cross-cultural ministry skills regardless of our time and experience in full-time ministry. We'll see if this de-



Pre-conference picnic a park along the Mississippi River in Minneapolis

velops. The ASC can be held anywhere if there's strong interest and enough people to put it together.

Here is some feedback we received:

We were wonderfully blessed meeting new ACTION fieldworkers. Having fellowship with them was great. We also had great fellowship with ACTION people that we've known over the years. The invited speakers were outstanding with fresh biblical insights and application. It was also refreshing for us to

have seen new places and scenic views that we haven't seen before. We highly recommend this conference for ACTION people who have not attended before.

The workshop topics were excellent for new appointees but also for veteran missionaries. Having everyone together helped us learn from one another and build lasting friendships. It was my first time to attend and I'm glad I did.



Our dedicated, faithful ACTION group