

## LINKING former Wesleyan missionaries to each other and to Global Partners

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### NEXT WEEKEND: SEEING ALL THAT GOD HAS NEXT!

It was April 1, 2020, when the final decision canceled all upcoming NEXT internships for the summer due to COVID-19. The devastation was tough but also required the NEXT team to dream of creative ways to engage the next generation in God's mission. Thus, NEXT Weekend was created. The goal was to provide weekend-long immersion experiences to provide a glimpse into a NEXT internship.



On August 7-9, seven participants and two leaders gathered in Dearborn, Michigan, to seek all the Lord had for us. Four of the seven participants were supposed to be on NEXT internships this summer, and three of them are looking at doing NEXT internships in the future.

The Dearborn team graciously hosted us with a weekend full of prayer walking, cultural context teachings, community engagement, and incredible Middle Eastern food. In those days together, we saw the Lord work in ways we could never ask or imagine. Many explained that the weekend was causing them to recognize passions, gifts, and callings the Lord had on their life. They left with a greater desire to pursue missions in the future. We can truly see that in times of uncertainty, doubt, and disappointment, the Lord is working in the seen and unseen. We know God is raising up this next generation to be Kingdom Force leaders.

It is our hope and desire to continue providing opportunities like NEXT Weekend to help young adults explore who they are in God's mission. In the spring of 2021, we will have three internship sites, and, in the summer of 2021, we will have six sites for internship opportunities. Be sure to check out our website at [serve.gponline.org/NEXT](https://serve.gponline.org/NEXT) to learn more and apply!

*by Michala Veach, Global Partners Mobilizer, and a GP Missionary to Eastern Europe*

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## *Field and Friends . . .*

### *Keith and Sandra Nash, South Asia*

The Church in Nepal continues to grow. New churches are being added. Four new congregations have been started with new believers in the past year. One of our congregations has relocated onto land purchased by our Church network. A large congregation and satellite churches started by Youth For Christ has recently joined our church network.

Our national leader (Obad) has recently enrolled in a Master's Degree program in Pastoral Leadership. This will enable our Nepal Wesleyan Church to have greater ministry opportunities in the future, and to have greater government freedom.

The Myanmar Church has been provided the funding to implement much more efficient ministry in remote areas through a fully computerized pastoral leadership. This was made possible by the generous donations of several of our partners in ministry.

### *Dan and Pada Merillat, Thailand*

We want to let you know that we are doing fine here in Bangkok. The State of Emergency was lifted on July 1 and schools opened and most things have began to return to "normal" (including traffic and pollution). Thank you so much for your continued prayer for us. We really, really appreciate it and have tangible evidence of the effectiveness of your prayers on our behalf.

We praise the Lord for Dan's health that continues to dramatically improve. Pada has been able to touch many people's lives and her Mom has continued good health.

### *Robert and Karolyn Bickert, Alumni*

After her second knee replacement, Kay continues to gain improved mobility and strength for walking longer distances. Last week she walked about half a mile on one of our favorite hiking trails from years past. Kay does therapy twice a week at the Guilford Orthopedic Therapy Center and then works on their recommended regimen twice a day at home. As of now, her last therapy and evaluation is September 10. We hope to be back in Wilmore the following week.

Our School Of Evangelism Board in Baguio City, Philippines had hoped to resume classes this month with the fifteen enrolled students but this has not been possible. One Board member wrote last week that the virus cases there increased. Baguio residents are only permitted to leave their house twice a week for shopping. However, church gatherings have been permitted with limited numbers and all the requirements we have. We are hoping that the virus will be under control by next year so that we can return for teaching.

### *Tom and Grace Ensz, Brazil - South Asia*

Well, Brazil went to Asia through East Timor and Asia called to us. We will both help plant a new work in East Timor and give leadership to the South Asia region. We are thinking about living in Kathmandu, Nepal. Tom was appointed as the new South Asia Regional Director, giving leadership and encouragement to national leaders and missionaries across 6 countries reaching out to 1.9 billion people in the region. Tom and Grace sensed that this was God's direction and have accepted that position. Grace will bring her expertise in training workers and pastoral leaders to South Asia.



In August, with Japan's infection rates up from April's, the pastors chose to move church back online. Who knows when we will meet in person again. The good news is that starting in September, Japan is lifting the travel ban for permanent residents so if for some reason I need to leave Japan, I will now be able to get back in more easily.

This past week Japan's longest serving Prime Minister, Shinzo Abe, stepped down. Thankfully in Japan, a change of leadership is done peacefully; however, there are uncertainties changing leadership during these precarious times, especially with Japan still set to hold the Olympics next year. Thank you for praying for Japan and the next Prime Minister.

Sadly, a couple of weeks ago, one of our local Japanese pastors, who I've requested prayer for in the past, lost his battle with cancer. They lost their son to cancer just a few years ago as well. Thank you for continuing to pray for his family and the church.



In August, I enjoyed some vacation time. First, I was invited to spend a couple of days with another missionary family on a lake near Mt. Fuji. Then I headed to a nearby peninsula and explored the beautiful nature there. I am thankful for the chance to spend some time with friends as well as do some low-risk exploring.

*by Andrea Swarthout, GP career missionary to Japan*

*(Andrea lives in Kyoto, Japan and is preparing to set up a Coffee Shop ministry for inviting people to know Christ as Lord. Establishing relationships enables speaking into the lives of people about Jesus. Another approach is that of Robin and Yoko White in Nagoya by publishing Christian comics that all ages read with great interest. Christians in Japan are from 1 to 4 % of the population and evangelism is urgent. Pray for these missionaries at the forefront of witnessing in Japan today.)*



*Hi everyone,*

Yoko and I here in Canada, are finally getting some in-person ministry opportunities after months of doing everything online. It's a nice change! In August we visited Saint John First Wesleyan, It was fun to connect with the church in a new way and share our story with both the small crowd gathered there as well as those watching online. SJ1 is doing a great job figuring out how to do church gatherings with the current limitations.

We enjoyed worshiping at River Valley Wesleyan in their first in-person service since March. We gathered outside at a local beachfront park, which made for another fun and fresh ministry opportunity. Then we went to Heartland Wesleyan to connect with our friends there.

Please pray for our church visits and for more opportunities to connect with churches in our region. We'd also appreciate your continued prayers for our partnership needs to be met. We are at 75% of our financial goal. Please pray for Yoko's application to extend her stay in Canada to be approved. Thank you for partnering with us to build spiritual bridges in Japan!

*by Robin and Yoko White, GP career missionaries*



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## **Pioneer Missionary Bios**

**David Tsutada – a man from Japan**

The year 1931 was a bad one in Japan. Rich men became poor, village farmers moved to the cities, and some people left the country. The path to war brought the death of the prime minister and other government officials. Some Japanese preached about peace. David Tsutada believed in Jesus Christ as Savior and taught the true meaning of peace. He started a church in downtown Tokyo that reached almost a thousand members by 1941. He was born in Singapore in 1906 with ten siblings. David was sent to family in Japan for school where he excelled in studies and athletics. To prepare for becoming a diplomat, he went to England to study law. A passenger on the ship witnessed to him from the scriptures about “everlasting life.” Two years later, he gave up the good life, and gave his life to Jesus and became a Christian. A year later, God called him to become a minister. His father sent him a telegram, “Obey God.” At age 25, David began his church in Tokyo with enthusiasm and vision – and a love for people. He was a man of faith and many of his converts became ministers. David refused the order for all people to worship at shrines to the emperor and was thrown into prison. He languished there for two years and prayed and planned a new “Immanuel” church. Thirty years later there were over 8000 members and 80 churches across the country with a seminary-Bible School in Yokohama City to prepare ministers. The Immanuel Wesleyan Federation started in 1952 to incorporate Wesleyan missionaries and churches they had started. Today there is an Immanuel church in every prefecture and missionaries in several countries overseas. Dr. Tsutada died in 1971.

*Written by Jim Huffman.*

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## **COVID-19 Global Response Fund**

The Wesleyan Church is active in 102 countries globally. In all of these contexts, we are deeply committed to serving vulnerable populations in the name of Christ. As the world reels from the COVID-19 pandemic, we are called to be people of hope.

When you give to the COVID-19 Global Response Fund, you are actively: providing assistance for salaries of pastors who are left with little income as church giving declines; placing funds at the discretion of the local leaders to serve impacted people in their congregations; and partnering with outreach projects initiated by global churches.



## **20th Century Archives**



In March 1999, this couple and their sons began their service as career missionaries in Suriname, South America. They moved on to Belgium and in Europe, he was charged to pursue a doctorate in preparation for long-term ministry preparing pastors and leaders and missionaries as needed. This husband and wife team are deeply committed to leadership development.

They currently serve in the Philippines in graduate level education for pastors, teachers, and leaders for Asia and the Pacific. Theology, worship and music flow out of their lives as they envision Ephesians 4 to “equip His people for works of service.”

Can you name all six of them?