



ONWARD

Mission Society of the Moravian Church Newsletter

September/October 2025

Volume XLV—Issue 5

Short-term Mission Trips

The Mission Society supports short-term mission trips each year. Here are updates from two different trips supported by the Mission Society this year.

Czech Republic Mission Trip by Donna Hurt

Since 2010 I've been traveling to the Czech Republic to make friends with Moravians there and work with some of their 30 churches. Earlier this summer, I was blessed to experience my 7th trip to that part of the world where our church began, spending 12 days moving from one town to another, as I had requested when my dear friend Ester Brozova and I were planning everything. She found me repeatedly as I shifted from one location to another.

The visit began in Mlada Boleslav with pastor Dan Dostrasil's congregation. Dan and I have been well-acquainted for years, and whenever I visit with his church, he wants me to be actively involved with the members. So during my four days in that location, he asked me to lead programming with the ladies group, the men's group, and the seniors. Plus I spent some special hours with the young mothers and their preschool children who come to the church three mornings a week.

When it was time for me to move to the next location, pastor Patrik Muller (who I made friends with several years ago) picked me up and we headed to his town of Hradek. Since nearly all of the Czech churches are very small in membership, they have to run 1-2 businesses on the side to have enough income for survival. So one day I helped the members and Patrik with their beekeeping duties, trying to withdraw honey (to be sold) from the beehives they owned, and another day about a dozen of us went into the fields where they were growing Christmas trees that they planned to sell later in the year. After a few hours of removing the brush and weeds from around the trees, we enjoyed a picnic lunch they had brought table, chairs, and all.

On Sunday, I attended worship at the church in Chrastava, where my longtime friend David Just is the pastor. Their services typically last about two hours since they include a lot of time sharing family news and any kind of prayer concerns, followed by considerable time in small group prayers, and then followed by a 15-minute break before the worship part of the service begins. There were 34 members present, quite typical. That afternoon the congregation celebrated their 20th anniversary with a 4-hour outside party that I enjoyed attending and interacting with as many people as possible.

The next day it was time to change locations again, moving to the town of Hejnice to spend the final part of my trip at the new Moravian high school, the only Christian secondary school in the whole country. The principal is Tom Vagner, a special friend I met many years ago. He was quite excited to show me the new cafeteria/dorm building (about one-third of the students live on campus). It was Tom's wish that I sit in with as many classes as possible during my four days there, so the teens could get to know someone from America. Sometimes the teachers needed to translate, sometimes not.

Every evening I was invited to dinner with a different group of teachers, all of whom are Christian. Many times they asked me when I would return and I knew that 8th trip would need to happen within a few years. Because the Czech Republic is a very atheistic country (thanks to forty years of Communist control), the way their small churches do ministry is quite different. I greatly appreciate being able to share in those opportunities and also being used by God however He chooses, all the while deepening my friendships with so many dedicated Czech Moravians.



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MISSIONARY UPDATE

Annual Report 2024-2025

 **40**
Campuses in the USA

 **215** ↑25%
Chapter Ministries

 **267** ↑33%
Decisions to follow Jesus

 **4,179** ↑33%
Students Impacted



Dusty Harrison Update

As I mentioned in my June Ministry Update, I recently began a new ministry role as Associate Director of Discipleship for Greek InterVarsity nationally. Following an exciting year of unprecedented growth, Greek InterVarsity remains committed and uniquely positioned to help fraternity and sorority students explore and grow in their faith at a pivotal time in their lives. I am excited to continue to help with this in this new role.

Do you know college fraternity or sorority students (or any college student) who may be seeking Christian community on campus? Feel free to reach out to let me know, or just to say hello!

Michael Tesh

Here in Kenya, we have been blessed with cool and rainy days since April. Our corn harvest is

now drying, and we thank God for His provision. This August, Cecilia is in Mombasa continuing her studies, while the rest of us are at home caring for the compound and animals. As a family, we are deeply grateful for every prayer and act of support you extend to us. We pray that God will bless you far more than you have blessed us.

In July, Pastor Samuel and I spent two weeks in Ikutha planting a new church. By God's grace, we ministered in 12 different homes, and two families have now begun attending our church. It was physically challenging because of the walking, but the weather was cooler than last time, making it more bearable. We also held two community film outreaches. On the first Saturday, we showed The Jesus Film, and on the second Saturday, we showed the story of Moses and the Red Sea. Each event drew around 100 people, and before each film, we shared the Word of the Lord. We visited a nearby school twice. The first Friday, we showed David and Goliath and encouraged the children that God can help them overcome challenges and fears. On the second visit, we showed the story of Jonah, teaching them to listen to God's voice and obey His call. During our visit, we were also able to bless a young student by paying her school fees for the entire year. We hope to add more children from Ikutha to Ray of Hope Academy in the future. We are praying to return to Ikutha for another two weeks in September (2nd and 3rd weeks). We are trusting God for the remaining \$400 needed for the trip.



Magi-land Update

Greetings from hot, hot "Magi-land," where the temperatures are hitting the 120s and we are trying our best to stay cool! We are so thankful that, at the end of June, the instability and war here in the Middle East finally calmed down, and our airport opened back up. Unfortunately for us, the airport opened just a few days too late, and we had to leave for vacation by making the 7-hour trip across the land border in order to fly to meet our family. Even so, we were grateful to have some time for rest and relaxation (and thankful to have some credit card points built up to pay for most of our travel!). We were able to meet our parents in Europe and we had a great time of seeing old friends, history (like the Dachau Concentration Camp in Munich), and fun sights (like the "Sound of Music" tour in Salzburg). We were thankful to see summer rain and have cooler temperatures, too!

When we arrived back home in Magi-land (where the temps were 2x what we left in Europe!), we

MISSIONARY UPDATE

jumped back into relationships and life. With our Saturday Magi house group, we walked them through an evangelism training. It was great to see them understand more of the reasons why we share, learn how to share their own testimonies, and think through who they might begin praying for and sharing with (although we have encouraged this from the beginning). Please pray with us that they would follow-through and be active in sharing the truth with their family and friends.

Michael and Naomi Woo

Since our last newsletter, Samuel graduated from Colorado Christian University and life has never been the same! He mentioned a teaching position opened up in the education department that didn't require a doctorate- assistant professor of education. The reason Naomi began her doctoral study last year at Liberty was to pursue her dream job of teaching at the college level. This was very much ahead of our any of our plans but she stepped out in faith with her resume and applied for the position. After vigorous interviews and scrutiny they offered her the position, and she said "Yes!"

What does that mean for our family? There will be all new rhythms this fall with Naomi's teaching schedule at CCU. Here are some family updates. Evie is excited to start Pre-K 4 half-days a week. Zach switched from soccer to the golf team and got a job at Red Robin. Salem will play middle school volleyball, and Isaac will continue soccer. Busy, busy.

Michael has started into his new role as Regional Mobilization Director for OMF USA. His task is to help facilitate a mission involvement movement in the Denver area and help direct other regional teams to bring about movements. Currently we have 5 different regions and hope to expand into 2 more areas by the end of the year. There is a great need in mobilizing people in the USA right now as God's heart for the nations seems to be lacking in many churches and our culture as a whole. God's heart is for everyone to have an opportunity to hear of Jesus's love and work of salvation!

Allen and Deedee Iobst

The Gospel of Luke tells us how Jesus sent out 72 disciples to proclaim the Kingdom of God. After they returned and gave Him their report, He exclaimed (Luke 10:23-2): Blessed are the eyes that see what you see! For I tell you that many prophets and kings desired to see what you see, and did not see it, and to hear what you hear, and did not hear it. We are likewise blessed to see teams and volunteers step out in faith proclaiming God's Kingdom, and to hear about how the Lord is working. Thank you for being a key part of this ministry, through your prayers and support! At the end of the summer, I (Allen) will travel back to Southern Spain to work with another visiting Operation Transit team, in the outreach to North African travelers. This summer in Tarifa, Spain, an Operation Transit team from Puerto Rico saw 3 local people make decisions to follow Jesus, while another requested prayer for help to believe. This summer was not the first time they had heard the gospel; local Christians had talked with them about Jesus before. Please pray that these new believers will join with local Christian fellowship for encouragement and growth in their faith.

Our Alcance staff continue to mobilize church congregations in Spain, with the goal of making disciples of Jesus among the local diaspora of people from North Africa and the Middle East. They also lead a special educational and humanitarian project in North Africa, which is happening right now. Please pray that God provides for them and guides their ministry, and that He greatly blesses the people they serve! Please keep praying for everyone who has been taking part in the different summer outreach projects. We thank God for them! Pray that as they each return to their own homes and routines, they would continue to listen to Jesus and keep demonstrating God's love through their service and in all their interactions.

While I am in Spain, Deedee will be at a conference to help prepare new people who are coming to serve short-term in North Africa, the Middle East, or Central Asia. Please pray for everything to go very well!



SHORT-TERM MISSION - continued

2025 Cuba Summer Camp Mission Trip

Mission Team: Karen Hill, Cynthia Redwine, Molly Williams, Will Cuthbert



The Armando Rusindo Mission Foundation (ARMF) is dedicated to bringing hope to Cuban communities. For over a decade, the foundation has actively supported various churches in Havana, Matanzas, Santa Clara, Camagüey, and Guantánamo. Their efforts include providing material supplies, food, summer camps, and monetary gifts, as well as fostering strong relationships within these communities.

In 2023, a youth group from North Carolina traveled internationally to Cuba to support the national summer camp. Our mission focused on building relationships. As a result of these connections, a small mission team was committed to supporting the summer camps in 2025. The team members are Karen Hill, Cynthia Redwine, Molly Williams, and Will Cuthbert. We provided hands-on support at the camp in Jagüey Grande, while Will had the opportunity to visit all three camps. The team departed from their homes on Sunday, August 3rd, to begin their mission journey. We arrived a day early to meet with the summer camp leaders and visit the farm. On Monday, we had lunch at Nilo and Lillian's house before touring Nilo's farm. Joe Jarvis, the founder of ARMF, expressed interest in supporting the farm, making our visit essential for its ongoing success. During our farm visit, we identified two critical needs: a water well and a couple of new tires for Nilo's truck. The water well would provide a water supply for the farm during the dry season, which is vital given the scarcity of water at this time of year. Additionally, Nilo requested two new tires for his truck. This truck is important for transporting church members, including youth and elders. Without it, many members are unable to attend church services.

After the farm visit, we met with Tania, the president of the national churches in Cuba. Joe provided us with a list of questions to ask Tania, focusing on the growth and needs of the church, as well as concerns about transportation. Will, Molly, and I sat down with Tania to discuss these important topics. Tania expressed her desire to start an after-school program and a daycare. She believes these programs would not only benefit families but also allow the church to engage with them on spiritual matters. Tania also emphasized the necessity of having a church van. We had a very successful first day in Cuba.

The rest of the week, we focused on summer camp, a hospital visit, and the purchase of artwork. Summer camp began on Tuesday and included breakfast, worship, activities, lessons, free time, and evening programs. The highlight of the morning was the worship music, which was upbeat and involved dancing, singing, and praising God. After the worship session, the youth received a lesson on faith from the Book of Romans. Paul spoke about not being ashamed of the Gospel and the importance of living righteously because of their faith in Christ. Following our wonderful morning program, Will served hot dogs from Costa Rica for lunch. This allowed the youth to enjoy a diverse cross-cultural meal, and we felt it was important to share our culture with our Cuban friends.

Throughout the week, we engaged in various activities that crossed cultural boundaries, such as serving pancakes for breakfast and hosting a campfire on Friday night. We also shared Moravian traditions, including vespers and an Agape/Lovefeast service. The Agape service featured foot washing, as described in John 13:2-14, where Jesus told Peter that since He washed his feet, Peter ought to wash the feet of others, emphasizing that no servant is greater than his Lord. In addition, we trimmed candles, enjoyed Mrs. Hanes' Moravian cookies, and refreshed ourselves with Gatorade. Following the service, we lit a single candle representing the light of Jesus and shared that light with others, creating a beautiful sense of unity throughout the camp."



The entire camp week was dedicated to honoring God with hope, faith, and love—the hope of a new generation of believers to lead others to Christ, faith in our Lord and Savior, and the love that transcends borders. We expressed our love through hugs, conversations, playing games, attending a candlelight service, making visits, and offering prayers. Our team was fully present with everyone we encountered. We enjoyed the food, fellowship, and service. We showcased our faith during the vesper service, taking turns to share our relationships with Christ and emphasizing the importance of hope amid struggles and hardships. The joy and peace that come from Christ transcend our circumstances.

On the final night of camp, we provided all campers with school supplies for the upcoming school year. Regardless of your location in the world, receiving new school supplies signals a fresh start to the new school year.

SHORT-TERM MISSION - continued



Unfortunately, we also experienced rolling electrical blackouts, shortages of food and hope, lack of clean water, and a complicated interplay of political, economic, and religious power structures, rendering a system that is difficult to navigate. In response, we listened, prayed, and are committed to ongoing, long-term relationships that empower our local partners to help themselves and one another. We learned more about Cuba, the Moravian Church, hope, and resilience.

As part of our mission, we visited the Psicopedagogico Medical Center, which inspired the establishment of the ARMF. Joe first visited the medical center in 2013, and the experience motivated him to start a foundation to address its needs. During our visit, Joe wanted us to "check in" with the medical center to see if there were additional resources we could provide. During our visit, we learned that the medical center is severely understaffed compared to the number of patients it serves. We also discovered an urgent need for a proper stove, as meals are currently prepared three times a day over a charcoal-filled barrel. While touring the facility, we listened carefully to the staff as they shared their challenges and needs.

The final step of our mission was to purchase an art piece from renowned Cuban artist Franco. This artwork was later auctioned at the ARMF dinner fundraiser, with all proceeds dedicated to supporting the ongoing needs of the Cuban church. In conclusion, our team was blessed to contribute our gifts and talents, which allowed us to accomplish the mission's goals. Throughout our time, we witnessed how God's hand is at work in the lives of those serving the church and medical center. Their dedication to serving the people and community with the love of Christ deeply inspired us. It was truly a privilege and honor to serve, listen, and walk alongside our Cuban brothers and sisters in Christ. Looking ahead, our desire is to continue building relationships, investing in the youth, and serving faithfully on the ARMF board. We are deeply grateful to the Mission Society for making this mission project possible.



MISSIONARY PRAYER REQUESTS

- The Magi-land missionaries ask for prayers for their home group to find a good time to worship together. They also ask for prayers for an English-language learning program to come together.
- Michael Tesh asks for prayer for God's favor with the people in the area, good health and strength during their travels, and God's protection as they travel and minister.
- Michael and Naomi Woo ask for prayer for his role leading the Regional Mobilization team. Please pray for opportunities to meet with local church leaders, international students, and individuals interested in missions.
- Continue to pray for the impact of short-term mission trips on our mission area partners and partner provinces in the Unity.

"Then you will call upon me and come and pray to me, and I will hear you." Jeremiah 29:12

PRAY EVERY DAY—SEPTEMBER

1. Blessed are they whose transgressions are forgiven, whose sins are covered. Pray for disaster relief workers and Moravian Disaster Response.
2. You see at just the right time, when we were still powerless, Christ died for the ungodly. Pray for Michael and Brenda Brent in Croatia.
3. So also grace might reign through righteousness to bring eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord. Pray for Joey Yokeley with Fellowship of Christian Athletes.
4. For what the law was powerless to do in that it was weakened by the sinful nature, God did by sending his own Son in the likeness of sinful man to be a sin offering. Pray for Charlie and Vicki Brent in Texas.
5. Neither height nor depth, nor anything else in all creation, will be able to separate us from the love of God that is in Christ Jesus our Lord. Pray for Anna Faircloth with YoungLife.
6. I will have mercy on whom I have mercy, and I will have compassion on whom I have compassion. Pray for short term mission teams.
7. Everyone who calls on the name of the Lord will be saved. Pray for Safiatu Braima and Sierra Leonne.
8. Oh the depth of the riches of the wisdom and knowledge of God! Pray for seminarians and candidates for ordination.
9. I urge you, in view of Gods mercy, to offer your bodies as living sacrifices, holy and pleased to God-this is your spiritual act of worship. Pray for the Moravians in Peru.
10. Love must be sincere. Hate what is evil. Cling to what is good. Pray for the Clinica Evangelica Morava in Ahaus.
11. As surely as I live, says the Lord, every knee will bow before me; every tongue will confess to God. Pray for Moravians in Cuba and the Armando Rusindo Foundation.
12. May the God of hope fill you with all joy and peace as you trust in him, so that you may overflow with hope by the power of the Holy Spirit. Pray for PEC members, bishops, and other church leaders.
13. No eye has seen, no ear has heard, no mind has conceived what God has prepared for those who love him. Pray for Moravians in Honduras and Nicaragua.
14. For we are God's fellow workers; you are God's field, God's building. Pray for the Raipur Foster Child Project.
15. Now you are the body of Christ, and each one of you is a part of it. Pray for the Michael and Ceci in Kenya and Ray of Hope Orphanage.
16. And now these three remain; faith, hope and love. But the greatest of these is love. Pray for Phil and Eunice Raiford in Mexico.
17. Be on your guard; stand firm in the faith; be men of courage; be strong. Do everything in love. Pray for The Dwelling and homeless shelters.

18. Now the Lord is the Spirit, and where the Spirit of the Lord is, there is freedom. Pray for Adopt-a-Village in Tanzania.
19. Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation; the old has gone, the new has come! Pray for Moravians in Brazil and Bolivia.
20. My grace is sufficient for you, for my power is made perfect in weakness. Pray for Vani and Shanti Pradhan in Nepal.
21. There is neither Jew nor Greek, slave nor free, male nor female, for you are all one in Christ Jesus. Pray for the Unity Women's Desk.
22. Therefore, as we have opportunity, let us do good to all people, especially to those who belong to the family of believers. Pray for the Hoffmans in HIV/AIDS ministry.
23. But because of his great love for us, God, who is rich in mercy, made us alive with Christ even when we were dead in transgressions-it is by grace you have been saved. Pray for Michael and Naomi Woo with OMF International.
24. Be imitators of God, therefore, as dearly loved children. Pray for Kevin and Charity in the Middle East.
25. Be completely humble and gentle; be patient, bearing with one another in love. Pray for Dusty and Christin Harrison with Greek Intervarsity.
26. Serve wholeheartedly, as if you were serving the Lord, not men, because you know that the Lord will reward everyone for whatever good he does. Pray for Brian and Heather Marx with Mission Aviation Fellowship.
27. But whatever was to my profit I now consider loss for the sake of Christ. Pray for Alan and DeeDee Iobst in France.
28. Rejoice in the Lord always. I will say it again: Rejoice! Pray for Annie B Missions and Star Mountain.
29. I can do everything through him who gives me strength. Pray for the Board of World Mission.
30. Since then you have been raised with Christ, set your hearts on things above, where Christ is seated at the right hand of God. Pray for Estamos Unidos Moravian Ministry.

We want to remind you that the Mission Society is offering funds applications for short-term mission trips. These can be used for Laurel Ridge mission camp at \$50, and for other mission trips further afield at \$125 for domestic, and \$300 for international mission trips. Please contact the Mission Society for the application form.

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Save the Date
Mission Lovefeast, November 2, 3:00 PM

ONWARD
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