

Missions and  
 **KIDS**



4-14

FOUR-FOURTEEN  
HOPE FOR THE NEXT GENERATION

SPECIAL ISSUE  

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FAMILIES AND FAITH

# Missions and KIDS

Missions And Kids (MAK) is the missions education program for children of The Pentecostal Assemblies of Canada (PAOC). Missions And Kids exists to help local churches, pastors and parents develop a missionally-minded generation of children who see their world through Jesus' eyes by...

**INSPIRING** kids in Canada to do all they can do to help spread the Good News of Jesus to people who do not yet know Him.

**EDUCATING** children about the world around them and about those who still need to hear the message of God's love.

**SUPPORTING** missions projects that care for children around the world.

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**ASSISTING** missionary families financially so their children can receive quality education on the field.

**PRAYING** for current and very real needs in the world today.

*Together, we make a difference in a world that needs to know, hear and see God's love at work in very real ways.*

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## Pray, Give, Connect!



## SUPPORT A MAK GLOBAL WORKER FAMILY TODAY!

To learn how, contact  
Jodey Hutchings at

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# MY COVID-19 GIFT

By Jenni Colwell

Family Life Pastor at Christian Life Assembly in Langley, B.C.



COVID-19 has catapulted us all into a scary, challenging, and exhausting season. As someone who loves Kids' Church, I've missed the time I had together on Sunday mornings with children. Families have been pressured by the changing demands on their time, the heightened anxiety of this season, and the constant pivoting. Our children might not even know yet, what they have lost. Leaders, volunteers, families and children, are all missing the spiritual impact that Kids' Ministry had from Sunday to Sunday.

In British Columbia, we haven't had Kids' Church since March 8, 2020. I write this article on a rainy February day in 2021, and I still find it so hard to believe that almost a whole year has slipped away. No one could have predicted how long this season would be. But, as a Family Life Pastor, COVID-19 has presented me with a gift - and that gift is Family Discipleship.

I genuinely believe that for children to grow strong in their relationship with God, parents need to be the primary spiritual influence in their children's lives. That's the biblical pattern according to Deuteronomy 6:4-9. As Pastors, we are the cheerleaders, the ones who resource, and the equippers of the saints (Eph. 4:12). COVID-19 gave me a gift because that's all it left me access to - Family discipleship!

Church happens now on couches and in rec-rooms or even snuggled in bed on a Sunday morning with a device! It happens at dinner tables, in the car or as children are tucked into bed each night! Discipleship isn't just relegated to Sunday at 10 am; it happens anytime, anywhere, with a video, a worksheet, a craft or a meaningful conversation and a prayer. And sure, discipleship was happening in homes before COVID, but I believe this season has heightened parents' sense of responsibility and intentionality. I know it has heightened my own sense of responsibility and intentionality to invest in parents! As we plan for the future, we as pastors need to keep family discipleship

at the forefront of our minds and hearts to work out in our plans and actions.

So, what is discipleship? Discipleship is investing in a life so that the outcome is spiritual maturity, and that maturity results in replication of ministry. We're not just raising kids; we're raising future adults. It's not just teaching Bible stories or saying grace at dinner; it's exercising spiritual muscles to be on mission too. What is our mission? Jesus summed it up in the *Greatest Commandment* and wrapped it in *The Great Commission*. Love God, love people, and GO make disciples! GO -- put your faith into action! That is what we want for our children -- an active faith because faith without works is dead! We need to be a church on mission. A missional church is a community of God's people that defines itself by and organizes its life around the real purpose - being an agent of God's mission to the world. In other words, the Church's true and authentic organizing principle is mission.

Therefore, a *missional family* is a group of people that defines itself by and organizes its life around being agents of God's mission to the world. To have a missional church, we need to have *missional families* that make up the body of Christ. To have missional families, we need to be leaders who inspire families to be on mission together. When children

are preschoolers, that might look like encouraging families to bake muffins for an elderly neighbour. When children are middle schoolers, it might look like encouraging families to serve somewhere in the community or even go on a mission trip together locally or globally. The possibilities are as varied as the families you serve. Let me tell you a story of one family I serve...

Last fall at CLA Kids, we produced an online series based on *The Prayer Covenant* ([www.theprayercovenant.org](http://www.theprayercovenant.org)). The Cruz family from Maple Ridge, B.C., started praying the prayer covenant as a family. The next online series was *Advent: Miracle on My Street*, and the family discipleship piece was a 25-day Advent Calendar that included 25 devotionals and 25 missional tasks. We challenged families to be on mission together and be the miracle on their very own street! So, the Cruz family decided to add Bible reading and mission to their prayer time! They blessed neighbours, classmates, even strangers. And at the end of the 25 days, which was Christmas Day, the task was to evaluate the added discipleship's impact. *And what did they come up with?* They realized, "You know what, we can do this, we can read the Bible, pray and be on mission together regularly."

By laying a foundation of prayer and providing simple, engaging materials as a scaffold for their faith, these parents became confident over time to invest spiritually in their children. *In a year of losses, this was a huge win*, and the intentionality of the Cruz family will reap a harvest! Along with so many other families, they will continue to discover their purpose and mission together as they daily look into God's Word, seek His face, and put their faith into action.

God has created families for a unique purpose that unfolds as we spend time with Jesus! What is your family's purpose? Don't wait; disciple them when they are young! Invest now! It's our calling as Christ-followers!



# GLOBAL WORKER FAMILY FEATURES

## THE CHIRISERI FAMILY

*Felix, Cecelia and Hannah Chiriseri in South Africa*

2020- A YEAR LIKE NO OTHER!



I would say that 2020 was an interesting year. Would you agree with me? I am Hannah, and I am almost seven years old. I live in South Africa with my mom and dad, Cecelia and Felix. South Africa is an exciting place to live, and I love it! We have lots of sunshine, lots of warmth, neat places to visit like game parks, and this year we did a lot of bird watching.

Our year turned out very differently than we thought it would, mainly because of COVID-19. I was looking forward to being in my cousin's wedding, but that got cancelled because of COVID-19, and we couldn't travel. It was disappointing because I had never been in a wedding before, and I would wear a new, fancy dress. It was difficult to understand why we couldn't go, but my parents helped me understand that lots of things had to be cancelled because of this disease.



My dance classes were cancelled, and I couldn't play with any of my friends. Our country was on lockdown for almost eight months, and we only went out a few times. My dad did all the shopping, and my mom and I were able to stay home. We were able to continue with school and do other fun things like baking, cooking, gardening, and learning to ride my bike! That was so exciting for me. One day my dad took off my training wheels and told me to go. I lost my balance a few times, but then I could ride so fast, I just took off! That was a good thing about lockdown!

I also graduated from Kindergarten during the lockdown. That was a fun day because we were able to have our own little party at home, and we went on Skype with family in Canada to celebrate! It was lots of fun. Sometimes it isn't easy to only visit people over the internet, but I am used

to it, and we are thankful that we can do that. I read some books for school about missionaries in the old days, and once they left their homes and families, they may have never seen or heard from them again. At least not for a very, very long time. I am glad it isn't like that anymore.

My mom and dad work with pastors in different communities around Pretoria, South Africa, helping them to reach out to other people and show them the love of Christ. They do this by growing fresh vegetables and giving them to people who need it most. They also now are able to teach ladies how to sew. This helps them to be able to work and buy food and clothes for their children. I find it interesting that some of them have started a sewing business and have worked very hard to keep it going during COVID-19.



We didn't visit the people very much this year, but because my dad had a special permit, he could go out on the roads. At first, we didn't know if we would be able to visit because of the new rules about driving around, but after we prayed about it, God answered our prayer, and my dad got special permission to be able to go out! If the police or army stopped him, he could show them that he had special permission to drive and help people. That made us feel special because God answered our prayers.

Another exciting thing was that I was able to help raise money for food to give to the people. Many people could not work during this time, and many had no food to feed their children. This makes me very sad, so I decided that I wanted to help! I learned twenty-six memory verses during the year - one for each letter of the alphabet. And when I recited them online, some people gave money towards the feeding program. This made me very happy! And so many families were able to have food - over one hundred! I may never get to meet all of them, but my parents tell me that many people were so thankful and got to see God's love in action. It was quite exciting!

This year, something sad was that my grandfather had a stroke and had to be in the hospital for one month. It was a difficult time because we were so far away. We prayed for him every day and even got to visit him online at the hospital. That was very neat. We met some of the nurses too. We are thankful that he is doing very well. And even that we finally got a chance to go to Canada and visit him and my grandmother! God made a way for us to visit because our airports were closed for so many months, and we weren't allowed to fly out. When we knew we were going to be in Canada in the winter, I was praying for snow. I have never seen snow before! And it snowed! I was so, so, so excited! God answered so many of our prayers this year, and it is teaching me that no matter what, God loves us and that we should trust Him in everything. One song

*And so many families were able to have food - over one hundred! I may never get to meet all of them, but my parents tell me that many people were so thankful and got to see God's love in action.*

I learned for Sunday School this year has words like this: "Life may get crazy, wild and amazing. I'm trusting You, God, You are good!". I hope you, too, have lots of things to be thankful for and that you see how God is working in your life.

**Prayer Requests:**

- That God would help me learn at school and listen to my mom and dad
- That we would stay healthy and safe
- That we would make good decisions

Please join us in praying for the Chiriseri family. We invite you to connect with them by email/mail and social media too. Here's how you can stay connected:

**Email:** [Felix-Cecelia.Chiriseri@paoc.org](mailto:Felix-Cecelia.Chiriseri@paoc.org)

**Donate:** <https://paoc.org/donate/FelixandCecelia>

**Facebook:** <https://www.facebook.com/Felix.Cecelia/>

**Address:** PO Box 1943 Faerie Glen Pretoria, 0043 South Africa



# THE H. FAMILY

## LOCKDOWN: LEARNING HOW TO ADJUST

Jarren, Cindie, Lucas and Abbey in Thailand



Saa waa dee khrap! My name is Lucas, and I am almost eight years old. My sister, Abby, who is 6, my Mom and Dad and I live in Thailand's Deep South (almost in Malaysia). My Dad works with Imagine Thailand and teaches English at the university, and my Mom helps other Global Workers throughout Asia, mostly on her computer. We've lived in Thailand our whole lives and continue to do so because many university students in our city and country have never heard about Jesus. We want them to have the opportunity to hear about the hope we have in Christ.

In 2020, like people all around the world, we had months of lockdown. During that time, Abby and I got to practice a lot of football/soccer inside our gate. It isn't a lot of space but just enough to practice our shooting and passing. I love football a lot. I love playing football, watching football and playing FIFA on Playstation. Each week my football team trains twice, and Abby's team also trains twice. I also get to join in with Abby's practices, so each week, a play A LOT!

I studied online with my International school during lockdown while Abby's Thai school took a three-month break. Learning online wasn't my favourite,

especially Mandarin class. For that class, I just wanted to turn off my video and lay down on the floor. My Dad also had to teach online and also had game nights online with students. After three months, we were able to go back to school again and play football with our teams again. In fact, we were able to do most of the things we used to do. My sister was so funny, after not leaving our neighbourhood for three months, she told us that "it felt like we stayed home for ten days."

One of our favourite things that we were able to do after the lockdown was over was go on a trip with the university students. About 15 students went on this trip along with our family and our campus team members. We called it Camp Together 2020, and we wanted to have fun together and build stronger relationships between people in our group.

We drove 2.5 hours to an area that is very remote and very natural. The closest 7-11 store was 25 minutes away, and in Thailand, there are 7-11s everywhere! The place we stayed had rooms for us all, a big eating area and a room for us to do our activities. It was very beautiful but also a lot of bugs! While we would eat our meals, these giant black flying bugs would come and land on the flowers on the table. At

first, they scared us, but then we got smart and just moved the flowers away from us before we sat down.

All of us were on different teams for a competition. I was on the "Minion" team, and my Mom and sister were on the "See the Jungle" team. Most of the games we played were just for fun, but it was very important to work together as a team. My favourite activity that we did was white water kayaking. I sat at the front of the kayak and wasn't scared at all. I also had a great paddler who kept us safe the

*Thank you  
so much for  
praying for us.  
We have seen  
time and time  
again how God  
answers our  
prayers!*



whole time. Most of the other kayaks weren't so lucky, and they tipped into the fast-moving water. My Mom and sister fell out of the kayak, and I don't think they ever want to go again!

In the evenings, the students would have more serious times where they did activities and discussed things like how they all are a piece of the puzzle of life

and have an important role to play and how we need to rely on each other and how we aren't made to go through life alone. These were very meaningful and significant times for the students as this trip wasn't just about having fun together. We pray that God would continue to speak to these students and that they would be open to following Him.

We are thankful that we were able to go on this trip and participate in so many activities with the students. We always love having people around, even if it does make it hard for us to fall asleep on Friday nights because they are too loud playing games. We are thankful for the opportunity to be a part of these students' lives. We are happy that students can talk to my Mom and Dad about their problems and that they can be a support to them.

Every Sunday night, my Dad helps lead a student church. We have about ten students who attend, even though only two of them are Christians so far. All of the students, whether they are Christians or not, study the Bible together on Sundays and are learning more about Jesus and what he means for their lives. We keep praying that the students will see the joy



that we have by following Jesus and that they would choose that for their own lives.

**Prayer Requests:**

- That students would have open hearts to experience God when they attend student church so that they may decide to follow Him.
- Abby and Lucas as they study. That Abby would be able to continue to grow in her understanding and confidence in the Thai language.
- For our students who are new Christians

Please join us in praying for the H. family. We invite you to connect with them by email/mail and social media too. Here's how you can stay connected:

**Donate:** <https://paoc.org/donate/cdwst>  
**Email:** [im@paoc.org](mailto:im@paoc.org)  
**Address:** 2450 Milltower Court  
 Mississauga, ON L5N 5Z6

*\*The H. family live and minister in a sensitive region. Their last name has been withheld for this reason.*

# THE DEWEERD FAMILY

## COVID-19 HAS CHANGED HOW WE DO THINGS

*Ryan, Heather, Liberty and Eddison in the Dominican Republic*



Loving and obeying Jesus sometimes means we need to leave behind or be far away from friends, family, and other things that we have enjoyed. However, it also means that we gain incredible blessings and experiences that we would never have otherwise. Following Jesus in missions is the most incredible, awesome adventure! When God asked us to move to the Dominican Republic's Spanish-speaking nation many years ago to teach others about Jesus, we have discovered that God blesses obedience.

Our family, the DeWeerds, is made up of Ryan and Heather and their two kids Liberty (6 years old) and Eddison (4 years old). Ryan and Heather left their different jobs in Canada over eight years ago. They came to the Dominican Republic to help teach and train church pastors and leaders and supply them with the resources they need to preach the Good News of Jesus effectively in their country. Liberty and Eddison joined this mission's journey and have discovered both the tough moments and the amazing blessings of being on God's mission in another culture and country. Both Liberty and Eddison were born in Brampton, Ontario, but now, along with Heather and Ryan, call the small coastal city of Nagua, DR, their home.

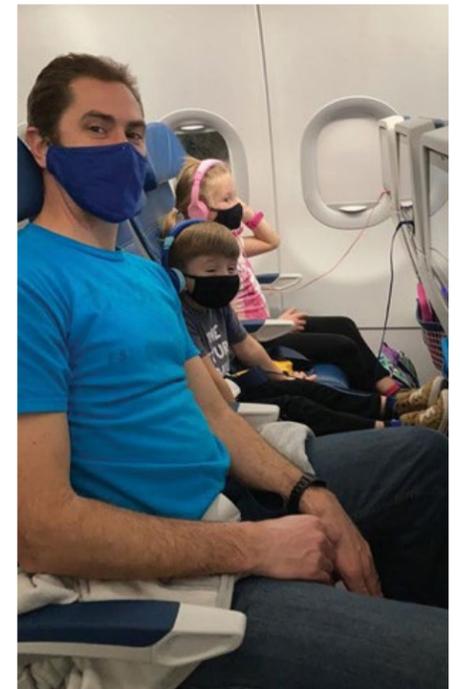
Amid the current COVID-19 pandemic, Liberty and Eddison joined in reaching out to the Dominicans and Haitians in our area. They were involved in helping pack the emergency supplementary food bags that were delivered to over 1000 households. Our ministry has continued to provide food packets to communities and needy pastors' families through to the end of 2020 and continues to help needy families to have sufficient food for their households.

COVID-19 has changed how we do things, and this includes schooling! Liberty finished her Senior Kindergarten last spring online through her Spanish school. In the late summer of 2020, we travelled to Canada for our home assignment.

Liberty and Eddison attended school in Canada (and loved it) while Heather and Ryan worked, speaking in churches, giving ministry reports, and raising funds for their ministry. The kids got to experience some wonderful Canadian snow and even some skating.

Saying good-byes are some of the most difficult things we must do. During the trip to Canada, the kids enjoyed being with family, especially their grandparents and cousins, and tears were shed as they are now old enough to verbalize and understand how much they miss people when they have to leave and return to the DR. However, they absolutely love airplanes! They simply can't get enough of the airport experience, the packing, the lineups, the plane ride, and the baggage experience - they are amazing travellers, in spite of the 12 hours of non-stop travelling to get to our home in the DR. The kids are also quickly becoming "techsperts" and not only are they regularly connecting with family on video calls, but they are becoming used to virtual school classes. We thank God for this blessing of technology that has helped them still feel connected to family and friends all around the world.

One of the things we are most excited about coming into this new year is a chance to help other families in our city and region become healthy, strong, and Christ-centered. We have a vision to start a Family and Community Resource Center in Nagua, a place where we can put tools, training, and resources into the hands of women, men and children: teaching and classes for basic skills, parenting resources, pregnancy information, counselling training, and so much more. This kind of resource center is not available in our area of the country! We know that when the family is healthy and strong, society is healthy and strong, and God is glorified! We have been blessed by so many resources and people that have helped us and our kids become better followers of Jesus and a stronger family, and we want all families to have



all the resources and help possible to ensure that they can form godly, healthy households. This past fall we were able to run a fundraiser for the Family Center, and over 4000 pounds of clothing were collected, which was then sold to an organization, and the proceeds went towards the Center. Praise God! Please pray for us as we look for a location to start the Center and continue to raise funds for this exciting new endeavour in our city.

We look forward to seeing how God will transform lives, ours included, and how He will use our family to serve the pastors, leaders, and families of our area. We continue to train pastors and leaders in our Spanish-speaking Bible Seminary, our local carpentry trade school project is being built, and our Ministry Development Center project is gaining some amazing momentum. We thank God for the many areas and ways that our ministry is reaching out and empowering people to be all that God has called them to be! In addition to praying for the vision, wisdom and provision for the starting of our Family Center, please keep Liberty and Eddison in your prayers as they learn online and start to reconnect with their Dominican

friends after a time away in Canada. Pray for wisdom for Ryan and Heather as they seek to engage and impact the people around them in a way that is truly lasting and God-pleasing. We thank you for your prayers - they truly make an eternal difference in our lives and those we are called to minister to!

Please join us in praying for the DeWeerd family. We invite you to connect with them by email/mail. Here's how you can stay connected:

**Email:** [rdeweerd@paoc.org](mailto:rdeweerd@paoc.org)  
**Donate:** <https://paoc.org/donate/ryandeweerd>  
**Address:** 34 Dundalk Cres.  
Brampton, ON L6Z 2V1

*We look forward to seeing how God will transform lives, ours included, and how He will use our family to serve the pastors, leaders, and families of our area. We thank God for the ways our ministry is reaching out and empowering people.*



# THE PRICE FAMILY

## LIFE AS WE KNOW IN A PANDEMIC

*Matthew, Amber, Daxon, Zala, Wren and Izelle in Thailand*



Think about all of the people you know. Family, friends, neighbours, teachers, and classmates. Now number them 1 to 3 and take all of the number 3's and put them into one room in your home. What would it be like in that room? It might be like the city we live in. Bangkok, Thailand's capital city, is about 1/3 of Canada's entire population, and we are some of the millions that call The Big Mango our home.

When we moved to Bangkok in 2016, there were only four people in our family. Our mom and dad, Daxon (age 9) and Zala (age 7). Since then, we've added two new additions - Wren (age 2) and Izelle (1-year-old). Sometimes it feels busy with six people in our family, but we love that we are a party wherever we go!

Wren and Izelle don't go to school yet, but Daxon and Zala go to a British school not far from our apartment. We probably learn many of the same things you do (even English and French class), but we also take some subjects you probably don't (like Thai language and Thai history). This past year our schooling has been a mix of in the classroom and online, and like you, we're trying our best even as everything keeps changing.

Being born during the COVID-19 pandemic has been a very different start to life for Izelle; we love her, and she loves us, but she is very suspicious of other people. We think it is because she spent so much time at home with only our family. Our mom has taken time off this past year to make sure that Izelle has everything she needs. With a baby, a toddler, and an online school for us, and everyone being home more, we know it has been a full year for our parents.

Our dad works with ChildCARE Plus (CCP) here in Thailand. He works with a team of people to help make sure children can finish going to school. We do not always love going to school, but our dad tells us (a lot) that learning changes everything. The CCP team also shares about why they help and how much Jesus loves each child and their family. All of the changes that COVID brought made it a challenging year for thousands of children in Thailand. For lots of kids, going to school means getting a school lunch, having a safe place to be, and gives more opportunities for jobs in the future. Many of our Thai friends are so happy to keep learning, and dad tells us it's because they understand that learning changes everything.

Two years ago, if you asked us about the word "refugee," we would not have been

able to tell you much, but our parents have been working more and more with people in this community. The word refugee talks about people who had to leave their homes because it was dangerous or there was not enough food or water to stay alive. We cannot imagine having to leave our home, friends, family, and favourite things to make a better life somewhere else. How would you feel if you had to do this? In Bangkok, there are many refugee families, and we've made friends with some wonderful people who have come here trying to build something more for themselves. We've tried new foods, learned about henna art, and discovered that people in this community are just like us. We're happy that our parents work with these friends - who are already working hard to make a beautiful way forward.

We have a great church that we are part of here in Bangkok. On Sundays, we rent a small theatre room and our mom and dad run the kid's program for the church. While all of the grown-ups are in the big room, the kids are in a storage room. It sounds weird, but we decorate it every week, it has lots of space to move around, and it has air conditioning (which is super important in a hot country like Thailand).

At the start of last year, Thailand spent a lot of time all locked down because of

the pandemic. It wasn't always fun being inside our apartment. Then Thailand closed the borders, and people could not travel in or out. It was like living in a bubble where COVID-19 was outside Thailand, and we could live a lot like before all of the COVID-19 problems. We were able to do some fun things like surfing lessons, going to parks, and seeing our friends. This changed again at the end of the year when COVID-19 snuck back into Thailand. School is online again, and our usual activities, like gymnastics, soccer, and swimming lessons, have all been cancelled. It's hard not doing the things we love, and we bet you've felt some of this too!

We prayed a lot through 2020, and we're still praying about most of those things in this new year.

**Prayer Requests:**

- That COVID-19 no longer spreads in our country so that people can resume life as they knew it before the pandemic.
- That God would help us care for those in need around us.
- That God would give us strength and peace as we feel the sadness of missing our friends and family in Canada.

Please join us in praying for the Price family. We invite you to connect with them by email/mail and social media too. Here's how you can stay connected:

**Email:** [Matthew.Price@paoc.org](mailto:Matthew.Price@paoc.org)  
**Donate:** <https://paoc.org/donate/matthewprice>  
**Mail:** 3326 236th St RR 2  
 Langley, BC V2Z 2H9

*The CCP team also shares about why they help and how much Jesus loves each child and their family ...the changes that COVID brought made it a challenging year for thousands of children in Thailand.*



# THE KANDANGAMA FAMILY

## 2020 - THE GREAT CHALLENGE

*Nishanthe, Kristin, Aneisha, Mikaela, Jayden, and Kyla in Sri Lanka*



Hello from the Kandangama family in Sri Lanka. This is the nation in which we live and serve. Nishanthe is native to Sri Lanka, and Kristin is Canadian and has now lived here for seven years. Except for our eldest daughter, all our kids were born in Sri Lanka. So, we feel very deeply rooted here.

Our new year started on a very exciting note. On January 3rd, we welcomed another baby to our family. We now have four kids Aneisha (9), Mikaela (6), Jayden (4), and Kyla (3 months). We are thankful to God for growing our family, and we are excited about how much fun our new baby girl will add to our lives.

As a family, we lead and serve at a place we built next to our home called the Bud Centre. It's a Centre that is open for kids and their families in the village where we live. We offer after-school and weekend programs and classes for them. Also, we do things like cooking classes for moms and have local staff from our community who help us teach and conduct our programs. Our heart and hope are that it will add quality of life, life skill opportunities and be a witness of the love of Jesus to the dominantly Buddhist believing community. In November, we rejoiced with two of our Centre kids as

they made a big decision for Jesus and were baptized. Nishanthe and his brother (who is a pastor) were honoured to baptize them and a parent of one of the kids and a few other individuals. This is a testimony that God is at work in the lives of those we love and serve.

This past 2020 year was a great challenge, as many of you would have also faced. We have not been able to work with our community as we usually would. COVID-19 forced us to close our doors due to intense restrictions and even complete lockdown and curfew in our country. We saw restrictions lift for a couple of months, and we reopened, but then we again saw a second COVID wave happen, and again we closed. For most of the year, kids have not returned to school. They have either had schoolwork given to them at home, or some do online classes. And since they could not return to school, they also could not return to our Bud Centre. It makes our family very sad. We miss our staff, the kids and their families, and all the fun we have at the Bud Centre.

I imagine Christmas was quiet for many of you as it was for us. We usually put on a big outreach at our Centre with carols, Christmas plays, dances, and much more. We typically have hundreds in the village

come to our outreach, and many of them will hear about Jesus for the first time. We share the reason he came to this world as God but in the form of a humble baby in a manger. It truly is the most wonderful time of the year for us. However, again we were restricted from such a program. However, we were able to do our annual food hamper distribution with Christmas gifts for every boy and girl who usually is attending our Centre. We had to do it with social distancing restrictions. But wow, was it ever fun to go shopping to buy much-needed food basics for more than 80 families and gifts for more than 100 kids. Our three kids loved packing the kids' gifts and helping fill the big bags full of food for families. With masks and limited contact, we had all the families come to the Bud Centre and receive the hampers and gifts. We also blessed another village as well with the same hampers and gifts. We have been taking the activities that we conduct at the Bud Centre to them and extending what we do for others.

We can't tell you how much joy it brought us to give and see the smiling faces of all the people we have missed for most of this year. It was the highlight of the year, I'd say. It was all made possible because of the amazing network of friends, family, and church supporters we have around





the world that desire to extend their love from afar. It is beautiful how people can extend their love from the other side of the world and profoundly impact it. In closing, we ask that you pray for us and what lies ahead. We don't know yet if the Bud Centre will be able to reopen. The COVID-19 situation continues to keep us in restriction. Pray for our nation that our leaders will know how to manage the pandemic situation effectively. Pray for our family that we remain in good health. May the Lord, in return, bless you and keep you safe wherever you are during this challenging time the world is facing. We have hope in Jesus, and so it keeps us looking forward to better days to come.

Blessings from the Kandangama family.

Please join us in praying for the Kandangama family. We invite you to connect with them by email/mail and social media too. Here's how you can stay connected:

**Email:** [Nishanthe.Kandangama@paoc.org](mailto:Nishanthe.Kandangama@paoc.org)

[Kandangama@paoc.org](mailto:Nishanthe.Kandangama@paoc.org)

**Donate:** <https://paoc.org/donate/NishantheKandangama>

[NishantheKandangama](https://paoc.org/donate/NishantheKandangama)

**Address:** 6606 Tri City Way  
Cold Lake, AB T9M 0J2

*Nishanthe and his brother were honoured to baptize them and a parent of one of the kids and a few other individuals. This is a testimony that God is at work in the lives of those we love and serve.*

# THE MCCREA FAMILY

## A DIFFERENT KIND OF YEAR

*Darren, Patty, James and Darien in Colombia*



It is no surprise to anyone when we say that this has been a different kind of year. More than just dealing with COVID-19, both our family and ministry have been turned upside down, sideways and shaken!

Patty and I work in ministries that involve a lot of moving around and involving hundreds of volunteers. Patty teaches in two children's pre/after-school programs. These programs help kids with their homework and identify where they need extra help or intervention. Patty works with these kids, but she also teaches the volunteers how to work with these high-risk children.



In Colombia, it is very typical to have 45 to 50 children in each class, with no Teacher Aids, so if a kid falls behind in school, they can be lost academically forever. That is why programs like Patty's are so important to help children advance in their studies and meet the Great Educator, Jesus!

For me (Darren), I do a lot of work with outreach teams. These teams are groups of people from Canadian churches who work with us and help us do all kinds of outreaches. Sometimes they are young

adult teams that help us do evangelistic presentations in schools; other groups come to help us build churches, children's homes and community centres. There are all kinds of outreach teams that come to work with us.

We reach thousands of people each year, but then in March 2020, that all stopped quickly because of COVID-19!

And our family? Well, we knew change was coming for a long time, but we never expected it to arrive early. Our oldest son James turned 18 last year and graduated High School. For a long time, he has been dreaming about becoming a Commercial Pilot, and we had planned to leave for Canada in June so that he could start his first summer job and then later his studies at the University of Waterloo.

Then we became trapped! In Colombia! In the middle of COVID-19 and we had no idea when we would even be able to leave the house, let alone return to Canada! We went into quarantine for several months. We could not even go out for a drive. Only I could leave and only for groceries, so we were not sure if we would even be able to return to Canada to send James off to school.

BUT! Even in the middle of chaos, God is God, and He started to change everything for us. We found ourselves doing a new kind of ministry and reaching people that we never thought possible. Then, we found ourselves working from that last place we would have expected, my home, my original home, back in Canada.

At the start of the pandemic, Colombia went into total quarantine. That meant that most people were not allowed to work. Suddenly, many families had no money coming in and no savings. They had no way even to buy food. In Colombia, there is no social assistance like in Canada, and so people were going hungry. That was when God spoke to us.



For I was hungry, and you gave me something to eat, I was thirsty, and you gave me something to drink, I was a stranger and you invited me in. Mat 25:35 (NIV)

Jesus called us to feed the hungry so, we did. We began helping dozens of families with food packages every week by working with our pastor friends in several cities. We had a little bit of money in our Evangelism fund, but we also wrote to our friends and let them know about the need. We thought that we might help a few families for a month or so, but with the help of our friends and the PAOC's relief wing, ERDO, we ended up giving out some 2000 food packages by Christmas.

The testimonies that have reached us are endless, but as an immediate result of the outreach, at least 80 people made a decision for Jesus. Local officials are commenting on what the church is doing. Pastors have called me in tears to thank us (AND YOU!) for the privilege of being able to help families in crisis.

In the middle of all this, God opened a door, and we were able to fly back to Canada on April 28th, on a flight organized by the Canadian government. We only had one week's notice that we would leave, but God provided a house for us in my hometown of London, Ontario, to live in until we returned to Colombia in October.

That meant that even while we worked electronically in Colombia, from the comfort of our temporary Canadian home, we were able to have James make it to his summer job working in a factory and be in Canada in time to start his university studies. He was thrilled to have us close by as he adjusted to his new home in Waterloo, Ontario.

Patty started working virtually with the teachers in Colombia that she is training, and we also restarted our construction projects.

And Darien? Well, he has been enjoying have his own room for the first time, even though he misses his brother. They do video calls 2 or 3 times a week, but it is not the same as having your sparring (boxing) partner in the same room!

Looking back, 2020 was a most challenging but also a most blessed year. We were even able to run our Celebrate Christmas program and

bless over 2000 children with a present from Jesus. For a lot of kids, it was the only gift they received in a challenging year. We are also looking ahead. Over the next year, we believe that God will continue to be faithful, that He will continue to challenge us to grow in our faith and do bigger and new things. And we believe that He will bring an end to the present crisis. Please join us in prayer. He will answer!

Please join us in praying for the McCrea family. We invite you to connect with them by email/mail and social media too. Here's how you can stay connected: e's how you can stay connected:

**Email:** [dmccrea@paoc.org](mailto:dmccrea@paoc.org)  
**Website:** [www.ourlovingfather.com](http://www.ourlovingfather.com)  
**Donate:** <https://paoc.org/donate/DarrenMcCrea>  
**Facebook:** <https://www.facebook.com/ourlovingfather>

*The testimonies that have reached us are endless, but as an immediate result of the outreach, at least 80 people made a decision for Jesus.*



# ERDO CORNER



LET'S HELP KIDS IN NEED!



Where does the greatest soccer player of all time come from? Here's a hint, it's the same place where you can find pumas, jaguars, foxes, sloths and piranhas! It is the fifth-largest country and has the widest variety of animals in the whole world. If you guessed Brazil, you are right!

Brazil is one of the most beautiful places in the world – it is home to the rainforest, and where much of the world's coffee is grown.

Even though Brazil is a country with a lot of wealth, there is also massive inequality. Sixteen million people still live below the poverty line, which means it is difficult for them to afford their homes, food or other necessities. There are also 3.2 million orphaned children in Brazil, and other children come from poor families who have daily problems finding enough food to eat and water to drink. Some kids have to work to earn their own money and help feed their families.

One way to help children living in poverty is through child sponsorship. When someone sponsors a child from Brazil, they help a student who lives in the Home of the Good Shepherd. Up to 70 kids live in the Good Shepherd Home at one time, brought in by the local judicial, social services department. Sometimes as young as two, these children have been orphaned, abandoned, treated poorly, and neglected. But once they arrive at the Home of the Good Shepherd, they are cared for and protected. They are given food, shelter, medical care, the chance to go to school, and most importantly, are taught about the love of Jesus!

Right now, there are 65 children living at the Home of the Good Shepherd. Each of these kids is unique and has their own set of skills and talents. The Home of the Good Shepherd offers lots of classes to help children nurture these talents. Students can learn all about computers, agriculture, how to take care of farm animals and bookkeeping.

Since schools are closed down in Brazil due to the Coronavirus pandemic, students have to stay inside the Good Shepherd Home. They wear masks and wash their hands to keep one another safe. Fortunately, the Good Shepherd Home has a teacher on-site, and students can attend school online in their computer lab.

During lockdowns, they have even started a brand-new baking class at the Home of the Good Shepherd! Equipment was donated to the home, and one of their staff members is a former baker and is taking charge of the class. Now, sponsored children can learn a new skill which could lead them to open their own bakeries one day. Coming from poverty, these children can create new lives for themselves.

If you want to learn more about how you can help a child in the Home of the Good Shepherd, visit <https://www.erdo.ca/sponsor-now>, and search for Brazil. Even a kid can help another kid in need!



"Brazil: extreme inequality in numbers," Oxfam International, accessed February 12, 2021, <https://www.oxfam.org/en/brazil-extreme-inequality-numbers>.

**One way to help children living in poverty is through child sponsorship. When someone sponsors a child from Brazil, they help a student who lives in the Home of the Good Shepherd.**



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*Nearly 85% of people who make a decision for Christ, do so between the ages of 4 and 14.*

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[paoc.org/family/annual-initiatives/4-14](http://paoc.org/family/annual-initiatives/4-14)



LEARN MORE



# MISSION CANADA CORNER



## LITTLE IS MUCH

### What's In Your Hands That God Can Use?

"Don't forget your lunch!" Sam's mom said. For the second time that morning, Sam had been reminded to grab his lunch bag before he ran outside for the morning to play with friends. Grumbling to himself, Sam regarded his lunch as nothing special as it likely had the same two items as always. If only his parents would give him a little bit of money so he could buy a special lunch ... something different. "That would be a miracle if that ever happened!" Sam whispered under his breath. Sam knew that money was tight for their family, so a bagged lunch was much more affordable.

Sam and his friends had agreed to get together to play ball that morning. As he ran over the crest of a hill, he could see his friends already kicking a ball in an open area. Quickly, he hid his lunch bag in a shady spot under a tree and joined in the game. Before long, the boys began to hear noise off in the distance. The noise grew louder and louder, sounding almost crowd-like. Their curiosity got the best of them, and quickly they picked up their stuff and ventured over the next hill. As they wandered through the groups of people, trying to figure out what was going on, they saw a man standing on a large rock and speaking loudly, yet with a gentle demeanour. They paused to watch and listen with the others.

The games, long abandoned by Sam and his friends, were replaced with a great mid-afternoon crowd. Sam realized he'd not had his lunch yet! He quickly retrieved

his satchel from the cool spot at the base of a tree where he had hidden it. Before he had time to fully unpack the same two food groups his mother faithfully prepared for him yet again, a few men took notice. Perhaps the aroma was enough to grab their attention! "Here... this young boy has some food!" one quickly exclaimed. Outnumbered and outsized by the men, Sam was led through the crowds. Before long, he found himself in front of the teacher. "Hello friend," the man said as he looked Sam in the eyes. "I see you have some lunch with you. Would you like to share?"

Somewhat taken back, Samuel handed the bag to the man, and he watched as the man took Sam's simple offering of bread and fish and began to break it up into smaller pieces. As Sam's eyes were glued to the man's actions, it appeared that his meagre "little boy" lunch was growing and multiplying into "a feast for a crowd" before his very eyes! In that moment, Sam saw life from a whole new perspective. He learned something that day as he realized that even the simple things he held in his hand could be used for God's purposes to make an incredible difference to people around him. All he needed to do was share.

This story found in the Bible in John 6, and another scripture in Zechariah 4:10 reminds us to "not despise" small things or little beginnings.

A few years ago, a dream was drawn out on a paper placemat in a restaurant for a teaching resource that could be used to reach kids for Jesus. Those seemingly insignificant sketches quickly grew to become 40 Bible character cards produced and printed in English and French. This was the birth of "Making The Bible Come Alive" and "La Bible Vivante," now a growing online resource for parents and pastors, teachers and children as together they unpack the character qualities of those in Scripture who chose to put God first and follow the ways of Jesus. This project's recent development includes a printed bilingual activity book for young children, original video footage with a talking character named Skyler, and new parent resources. Check out more at [makingthebiblecomealive.com](http://makingthebiblecomealive.com) and [labiblevivante.com](http://labiblevivante.com).

#### A recent praise report...

In Dieppe, a small church was given 11 packs of "Making the Bible Come Alive" character cards and five Activity Books. Esther, a woman in charge of their Sunday School, has been using La Bible Vivante for teaching. Esther called back home to her mother in Cameroon (Africa) and showed her the Bible character cards she was most excited about. Esther





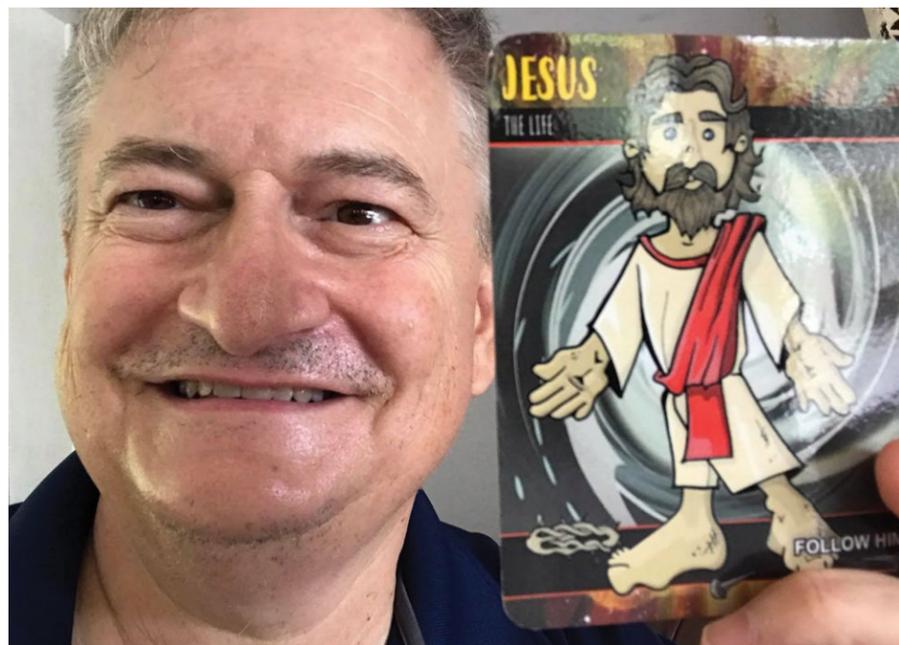
also shared the cards with her younger sister. When sharing about Isaiah, she talked about God's calling on a person's life. When she got to the Roman's Road card, Esther shared with her sister the importance of knowing that our sins can be forgiven and how we can ask Jesus to come into our hearts so we can live for Him, now and for eternity. In that very

conversation, Esther had the privilege of praying with her sister to receive Christ! It's beautiful to see how God can use a little card to open a life-transforming conversation!

**And the most recent developments...**

The 'Making the Bible Come Alive' character cards have just been translated into Mandarin! It's been the desire of PAOC global workers, David and Julie Wood, to use this tool to reach English, French, and Mandarin-speaking children and families in Vanuatu's South Pacific island nation, off the coast of Australia. Mandarin is spoken by about one-fifth of the world's population. That's over 1 billion people! Who would have thought that those initial 'lofty' thoughts sketched out on a white placemat at a Mission Canada Children's Guiding Group meeting would now be reaching kids and families on a far-off island ... and wherever else those Mandarin cards may get to?! Little is much when God is in it!

In 2021, conversations are unfolding to translate the cards into Cree so that Indigenous kids can come together with parents and grandparents to learn from God's Word.



The little boy who gave his lunch to Jesus never imagined it would feed 5,000 people and that there would still be leftovers!

What "little offering" do you hold in your hands that, if shared, could perhaps feed the multitudes, spiritually and otherwise? Maybe it's not fish and bread, but it could be something that perhaps seems insignificant to you at this moment. Is it a talent you possess? Money tucked away for a special treat? Why not give it to God and allow Him to orchestrate the outcome. Let Him surprise you! Little is much when He is in it!

**In 2021, conversations are unfolding to translate the cards into Cree so that Indigenous kids can come together with parents and grandparents to learn from God's Word.**



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 French: [labiblevivante.com](http://labiblevivante.com)

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“

*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.'"*

LUKE 18:16 (NIV)



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