

## Apart, but Never Abandoned: IM's World Mission Offering

At our National Association meeting in Côte d'Ivoire in 1997, they received their government documents recognizing them officially and legally as, Les Eglises Evangéliques Baptistes Libre de Côte d'Ivoire (Evangelical Free Will Baptist Churches of Côte d'Ivoire).

At this meeting, I had several in-depth discussions with pastors and leaders about



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the implications of autonomy. Although we had discussed this many times before, it was more significant because they were now legally an entity apart from the Mission Baptiste Libre (Free Will Baptist Mission).

I mentioned that it was very likely the day would come when there will be no Free Will Baptist missionaries in the country. They sat in stunned silence as they pondered the long-term effects of this newly acquired autonomy. One of the pastors finally verbalized what others were thinking. He asked, *"So, someday in the future, you are going to abandon us?"*

It was my turn to be shocked. I had absolutely no intention of communicating the missionaries would abandon them. I attempted to make it clear that no matter what, even if we were not physically present, we would never abandon them. We went on to discuss what the relationship would be long after we were gone.

There are at least six fields where IM had missionaries, but at the present time, there are either no missionaries present or just one or two remaining. Obviously, in these cases, the national churches had to deal with the departure of the missionaries. I can tell you that in no case were any of the national churches abandoned.

There are three main ways we have maintained our relationships with national churches:

- 1) Returning from time to time to teach and train.
- 2) Sending short-term teams to assist the national church in important building, medical, or educational projects.
- 3) Sending funds to ensure ongoing ministries such as evangelism, leadership training, and church planting.

This last one is almost exclusively made possible by IM's annual World Mission Offering. Once a year, generally on the last Sunday of April, we ask all FWB churches and individuals to give a special offering to help meet our budgetary demands. Over \$400,000 of this offering goes to help meet partnership budgets with six national churches and 15 other FWB-connected entities.

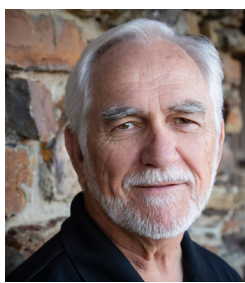
Join us in helping our national churches know that we have not abandoned them! The WMO is your opportunity to be a part of what God is doing in, with, and through these partnerships. Without our assistance, they would continue ministering with the available funds, materials, and other resources they have. But, they can do so much more if we work together and share what God has entrusted to us.

Please take time to pray and ask God what special offering He wants you to give on **WMO Sunday, April 25th, 2021.**

*by Clint Morgan, IM General Director*



## FAMILY HAPPENINGS



**Clint Morgan** has passed the 10-year mark as General Director of IM, Inc. We are thankful for his leadership and faithfulness serving in his role.



**Steve and Becky Riggs** are waiting for final approval from the security commission to begin holding services in the new building in Châteaubriant, France.



**Annabelle Ellis** completed her six-week training at CIT in North Carolina and is preparing to move to Japan.



We celebrate with **Caroline Pierce**, IM's Financial Operations Manager, who announced she is expecting a baby boy due in July of 2021!



**Eddy & Amanda Simmons' son, Seth**, has accepted the position of Site Reliability Engineer with Samaritan's Purse, beginning in March. He and his family are moving to Charlotte, NC.



**The Morgans** recently returned to the States from Spain. They will be traveling to raise funds and support.



**The Reeves** recently traveled to Louisville, KY for an immigration meeting to get Mimi's green card and she was approved.



**Sam and Lauren Riggs** applied for Emilia's passport. Pray for them as they await other documents for citizenship and passports so they can get to their field in Spain. They left on March 6th for their six-

week training at CIT (Center for Intercultural Training) along with Josh and Bethany (The Hanna Project) in North Carolina.



**Tim and Lydia Awtrey** recently returned to the States from Bulgaria. They will be traveling to raise funds and support.



Pray for **the Edgmons' son, Marc**, who was injured at basketball practice on January 26. He needed surgery to reattach his patellar tendon. He has several months

of physical therapy and recovery ahead of him. We are thankful Marc is currently doing well with his recovery.



We celebrate with **Doug and Miriam Bishop** as they welcomed their baby boy, **Linus Henry Isamu Bishop**, into the world on March 8!



## IM BOARD TO MEET IN APRIL

IM is thankful for the Lord's provisions in 2020. The IM board will meet April 19 and 20. Board members will focus on the strategies for 2021 and begin looking at framework budgets for 2022. There will also be an ongoing discussion about the strategic objectives for 2025.

## HANNA PROJECT OPPORTUNITIES

**April 8-16:** THP Jamaica will build a covered dining/meeting area for the students at the Blackwater Primary School.



**May 28 - June 5:** THP Ecuador will partner with Jungle Kids for Christ to help with construction and provide medical assistance with the Center of Health in Misahuali.

Other opportunities for later in the year are being planned. You can find more information by visiting [www.hannaproject.com](http://www.hannaproject.com).

## IM NOW ON YOUTUBE

Subscribe to IM's new YouTube channel, [@iminc](https://www.youtube.com/@iminc), to stay current with stories about changed lives, meet IM missionaries, hear about IM ministries, and other IM news. Share these videos with your church, family, and friends!



YouTube

## CHERI HAM TO RETIRE

Cheri Ham has officially announced her retirement effective March 31. Cheri has filled different roles over her 24+ years with IM. Going forward, Caroline Pierce will assume the role of Financial Operations Manager. Clint Morgan, IM General Director, remarked, "We will greatly miss Cheri, yet she will be remembered honorably at IM for many more years."

## WMO APRIL 25TH

Giving to the WMO is more crucial than ever. Your gift supports Christian teachers, preachers, church planters, and leaders around the world who are depending on us to financially support the great commission. The WMO also supports the IM general fund, which is the cornerstone of IM missionary support services. Give today and help spread the Gospel of Christ.



World Missions Offering

## PRAYER FOCUS

- Please pray for the teams and students who are raising support and preparing for trips with ETEAM, CMP, and THP in 2021. Pray the Lord will provide their funds and the ability to travel and serve in missions around the world.
- Continue to pray for IM missionaries traveling around the States raising funds and prayer support to return to their mission fields.





# STATESIDE MISSIONARIES

Several IM missionaries are currently on Stateside Assignment raising funds and prayer support. Opportunities to meet and speak with churches and organizations are greatly appreciated. These services inform church members of each missionary's ministry so they will know how to specifically pray and partner with them.

Please contact any of the following missionaries by using the information below:

**Annabelle Ellis**

615-674-5440 • [aellis@iminc.org](mailto:aellis@iminc.org)

**Tim and Lydia Awtrey**

916-273-3711 • [tawtre@iminc.org](mailto:tawtre@iminc.org)

**Heath & Joni Hubbard**

501-289-9255 • [hhubbard@iminc.org](mailto:hhubbard@iminc.org)

**Abby Walker**

615-588-8348 • [awalker@iminc.org](mailto:awalker@iminc.org)

**Emily Petty**

217-994-6274 • [epetty@iminc.org](mailto:epetty@iminc.org)

**Adam & Carol Duncan**

573-289-3560 • [aduncan@iminc.org](mailto:aduncan@iminc.org)

**Doug & Miriam Bishop**

615-454-1772 • [dbishop@iminc.org](mailto:dbishop@iminc.org)

**Sam & Lauren Riggs**

205-495-0997 • [samriggs@iminc.org](mailto:samriggs@iminc.org)

**Ken & Jayne Cash**

252-947-0829 • [kcash@iminc.org](mailto:kcash@iminc.org)

**Eddy & Amanda Simmons**

984-377-0019 • [esimmons@iminc.org](mailto:esimmons@iminc.org)

**Josh & Bethany (THP)**

629-215-9264 • [josh@hannaproject.com](mailto:josh@hannaproject.com)

**David & Mimi Reeves**

270-929-7432 • [dreeves@iminc.org](mailto:dreeves@iminc.org)

**Ken & Judy Bailey**

405-759-0396 • [kbailey@iminc.org](mailto:kbailey@iminc.org)

**Neil & Mandi Morgan**

843-373-3612 • [nmorgan@iminc.org](mailto:nmorgan@iminc.org)

# GETTING TO KNOW YOUR MISSIONARIES

## Emily Petty, Japan

Emily Petty is one of our most recent interns approved for service to Japan. Originally from Illinois, Emily is a graduate of Welch College and is currently earning a Masters degree at Columbia International University. She has participated in several short-term trips including serving on ETEAM and CMP (College Missions Program). She is currently seeking to raise funds and support and will be joining the Hope Alive Team in Tokyo, Japan once her fundraising is complete.



## Abby Walker, Japan

Abby Walker is one of our most recent interns approved for service to Japan. Abby, originally from North Carolina, graduated from Welch College and Cumberland University with a bachelors degree of science in nursing through a dual enrollment program. She is currently a registered nurse at Sumner Regional Medical Center. Abby has participated in several short-term trips including serving on ETEAM and CMP (College Missions Program). Once her fundraising is complete, she will join the Hope Alive Team in Tokyo, Japan.



Your partnership in the gospel yields dividends around the world in lives changed and churches planted. If you'd like to discuss ways to see that impact continue long-term, call 1-877-767-7736 for information on Planned Gifts or Estate Planning.



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