



IM NewsBeat

JANUARY / FEBRUARY 2023

THE NEIL GILLILAND STORY: *A Challenge to Let God's Call Lead You Where He Can Use You*

After nine months of rigorous language study, the day finally came when we stepped out of the airplane and took our first deep breath of the hot muggy African air. I can still feel the emotions as I walked across the searing tarmac into the airport terminal with the cacophony of new sounds and smells. My



Neil and Sheila Gilliland

heart raced with excitement and, to be honest, fear. I still wasn't sure what this adventure held for my relatively new bride and me. However, I was sure of our calling and that God had orchestrated the events of our lives to bring us to this place. Perhaps that is the first major lesson I learned about dorm parenting. It is a calling.

Sheila's health did not hold up in the tropics and much to my chagrin, we returned to the US. I was hired by FWBBC to serve as their first Director of Recruitment. I connected well with students at that time and often found myself in the role of a counselor. I returned to school and completed a Masters and Ph.D. with the intent of serving MKs and their families with no idea of what that would look like. As I was completing my clinicals in 2001, I was approached by then General Director, James Forlines, about joining the IM staff as the Director of Member Care. In August of 2001, I joined the home team. I have done my best to serve our missionaries, staff and denomination the best I knew how. Since the initial role of Member Care, I have added the roles of Mobilization and Candidate Shepherd. It has been a humbling honor to serve.

So, 57 years ago as young boy in Slocum Station, Ohio, to Columbus, Ohio, to Nashville, Tennessee, to France, to Cote d'Ivoire and back to Nashville, my life has focused on the Great Commission and those who tirelessly labor to fulfill it. Regardless of where the rest of my life takes me, that great command has always been and will always be my focus.

Read the full story on the IM website:

www.iminc.org/news.

Neil Gilliland retired from IM in December 2022. We are so grateful for his and Sheila's ministry and legacy that will continue through IM for many years to come.



FAMILY HAPPENINGS:

The Chereaus shared, “We are thankful for Olivia’s first Christmas with us!”



The Penns share their excitement about 2023 beginning the count-down for their son, **Mason**, in his final few months of high school before graduation!



The Torrisons enjoyed a quick meet-up with former coworkers and forever friends, **Steve and Judy Lytle**.

Linda Snow took a quick trip to Vancouver, Canada, to meet their new granddaughter, **Sumire**, and spend time with **Andrew and Esther**. Andrew is working on his doctorate at UBC.



Matt Price and two men from their church, Fadoumi and Aymeric, traveled to Togo January 6-14 to look into the possibility of holding a pastor training conference there later this year.



PRAYER FOCUS

- Join us in prayer for how God will use you and us, together, in the year 2023 as we minister, share the Gospel, disciple, plant churches, train leaders, and partner with national churches around the world.
- To keep up with the latest prayer requests from IM missionaries and Global Partners of IM, sign up for our weekly newsletter, Hotline Prayer and Praises. Sent out every Wednesday, Hotline is filled with specific requests from the field. Sign up at <https://bit.ly/IMsignupform>.



MISSIONARY UPDATES

At the December IM board meeting, five new missionaries (**Tristen and Sierra White, Cal-
lie Stox, Jace Dixon,**
and **Bradley Mercer**)



were approved to serve around the world! Sev-

eral missionary interns (**Jonathan and Michelle Chereau, Brenton and Debbie Driscoll, Keren Delgado,** and **Jacob**) moved to career-status missionaries. Other missionaries (**Donnie and Ruth McDonald** and **Jaimie and Tammy Lancaster**) made lateral changes from the field to the States to serve in other forms of ministry with IM or partner organizations. Read the full news release on our website at iminc.org/news.

WMO REPORT & 2023 PREVIEW

We are thankful for our faithful supporters who were ALL IN for the World Missions Offering in 2022!



Churches, individuals, VBS offerings, college students, and believers on our mission fields raised a **grand total of \$613,750 for the WMO**. EVERY-ONE TOGETHER makes an IMpact!

Did you know you can support the WMO as a monthly donation? Contact our office to find out how you can easily set up a recurring gift to support the WMO.

Our 2023 theme is AWAKEN. We can't wait to share more details soon about how we can all be awakened to take the Gospel to the difficult places around the world where the Gospel is most needed. Join us on this journey in 2023!

GO GLOBAL & PERSPECTIVES SESSIONS



We are excited about the Go Global and Perspectives opportunities taking place this year to see how every believer has a role and place in God's story to the nations. Go Global IM workshops are taking place nationwide. Contact Jerry Gibbs for more information (jgibbs@iminc.org) or visit www.iminc.org/go/go-global.

Perspectives is offering an intensive six-day missions course for Free Will Baptist pastors, ministry leaders, and believers. The intensive, scheduled for April 23-28, 2023, will take place in southwest Missouri. Learn more and register at www.perspectives.org/SWMOIntensive.

SERVICE OPPORTUNITIES

One of IM's partner organizations has two exciting short-term trip opportunities taking place in March! The first opportunity is in **El Salvador on March 4-11, 2023**. A non-profit organization on the outskirts of San Salvador operates an excellent elementary school, providing its students with a quality education and giving them hope for a future. Trip participants will help expand their facilities to accommodate more students and assist them in preparing a community event.

The second opportunity is in **Japan, March 13-24, 2023**. Our partner organization and its local friends plan to remodel the facilities a local church uses to serve their community. Trip participants will assist with the interior renovations. For more details about these opportunities, contact social@iminc.org.



MEET YOUR MISSIONARIES

Tristen & Sierra White (Japan)–

Tristen was born and raised in Gastonia, North Carolina, and is currently pursuing a degree in Ministry and Intercultural Studies from Randall University. Sierra grew up in Owasso, Oklahoma, and received a degree in Elementary Education from Southern Nazarene University. Tristen and Sierra met while serving at her home church and have been married for two years. Both having a heart for missions, they answered God's call to serve with Hope Alive in Tokorozawa, Japan. Tristen and Sierra look forward to working with the Hope Alive team in any way they are needed in order to reach the people of Japan with the Gospel. They are currently raising funds and support to get to the field.



Callie Stox (Japan)–

Callie is from Greenville, North Carolina. She will graduate from Liberty University in 2023 with a Religion and Global Studies degree. She went to Panama in 2017 and Cuba with ETEAM in 2018. In the summer of 2022, she completed a 5-week internship with IM's College Missions Program at Hope Alive Church in Tokyo, Japan, with the Hubbard family. There, God stirred her heart for the people of Japan and deepened her passion to spread the Gospel there. She is currently raising funds and support to get to Japan.



STATESIDE MISSIONARIES

Many Stateside missionaries have begun the new year working to schedule services at churches across the country to raise awareness and financial support for their ministries. Contact a missionary to share how God is using Free Will Baptists across the globe to fulfill His Great Commission. Visit [iminc.org/our-impact/im-missionaries/stateside-missionaries](https://www.iminc.org/our-impact/im-missionaries/stateside-missionaries) to view the full list of Stateside missionaries and their contact information.

Visit www.iminc.org
for the most up-to-date news.



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