

WINTER  
2017

# on location

## A Threefold Cord, Woven by the Spirit







BY Daniel D. Chetti, PhD



### There's still time to order Global Gifts for Christmas!

You can spread Christmas joy around the world with meaningful gifts for people in need. International Ministries is featuring 11 Global Gifts, plus the very special Christmas Angel gift named after Gabriel, the archangel from the biblical Christmas story. Your thoughtfulness will bring great joy to the hearts of those who are impacted by the work of IM's global servants. To select your gifts, go to <https://portal.internationalministries.org/global-gifts>.

To request that a Global Gifts catalog be mailed to you, contact Daniela at [daniela.glomb@internationalministries.org](mailto:daniela.glomb@internationalministries.org) or 1-800-222-3872, ext. 2208.

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|---|---|---|--|
|  | \$100<br>Christmas angel gift                 |  | \$500<br>ministry van for Bolivia            |
|   | \$30<br>rice for children in Thailand         |  | \$100<br>safe birthing in Bangladesh         |
|  | \$200<br>classrooms for midwives in the Congo |  | \$120<br>fruit and nut trees in South Africa |

global gifts  
2017

December 31, 2017,  
IS THE LAST DAY  
TO SEND A  
GLOBAL GIFT!

**IMAGINE THE CHALLENGE OF BEING THE FIRST** International Ministries global servants to serve in the Arab world—and doing so at a time of almost unprecedented changes.

This is the role that God has set before my wife, Sarah, and me. We are based in Beirut, Lebanon, and have served through the Israeli-Hezbollah conflicts, the emergence of the Arab Spring and now the Winter of Discontent and the rise of violence in the region. While these are days of great change and uncertainty, they are also filled with immense opportunities!

As a global servant with IM, I have had the freedom to follow the Spirit as I serve our partners. Today, a third of my time goes into teaching History of Christianity and Historical Theology at the Arab Baptist Theological Seminary (ABTS) as the school prepares leaders to serve in nine countries across the Middle East and North Africa. Sarah previously served as the school's librarian, reorganizing it after the long Lebanese civil war and then turning it over to Lebanese leadership.

“As a global servant with IM, I have had the freedom to follow the Spirit as I serve our partners.”

Sarah and I also find ourselves responding to an increasingly urgent need that has led some to call our period in history the “Age of Migration.” Some 232 million people around the world are on the move for a variety of reasons. To raise awareness about this issue, I recently contributed the chapter “Vulnerable and Missional: Congregations of Migrant Domestic Workers in Lebanon” to a book published in the United Kingdom by Palgrave/MacMillan, *Church in an Age of Global Migration: A Moving Body*.

I am also working on a book about migrant churches in Lebanon. The book is growing out of the way I spend the second third of my time: serving alongside more than 30 migrant churches in Lebanon. They are composed of people from many different nations, and I have the privilege of mentoring their pastors. Similarly, Sarah

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A MESSAGE FROM SHARON KOH

Dear IM Family,

Greetings in the name of the Risen Lord Jesus!

*Yet this I call to mind and therefore I have hope: Because of the LORD's great love we are not consumed, for his compassions never fail. They are new every morning; great is your faithfulness.*

Lamentations 3:21-23 NIV

As the leaves change color here in Valley Forge, I am reminded of God's faithfulness season after season. This season has been one of great transition here at IM.

In the past few months, we have celebrated and bid farewell to a few beloved global servants and staff members. We have also joyfully participated in the commissioning of new missionaries alongside their churches, Mission Partnership Teams and American Baptist region. Praise the Lord for the signs of God's Spirit at work all around us!

As you may have heard, our home office staff will relocate our offices this winter. Pray for us! Downsizing and moving is never easy—just ask any global servant.

In this newsletter you'll find a feature story about another significant change for IM: our new look. While updating our website and logo, our design team worked hard to preserve our rich heritage and create a more effective platform for telling the stories of God's great work. I invite you to take our new website for a spin and read about what's been happening at IM lately, such as our efforts to support and care for our Puerto Rican missionaries in the midst of rebuilding after the recent hurricanes.

Even in the midst of all these changes, our mission and purpose remain the same: responding to God's call to build his kingdom on earth. In the spotlight articles from Dan and Sarah Chetti, read about how God's call is being answered in the Middle East. On page 5, discover how Ingrid Roldán-Román is building up the kingdom in Panama. And on page 6, learn how ministries like these are made possible through the support of generous donors.

Thank you for your sacrificial giving to the World Mission Offering and the ongoing support of our global servants. Your gifts are making great ministry possible.

As the holiday season approaches, please pray about the life-changing opportunities made available in the Global Gifts catalog. Also, as you join me in reflecting on God's faithfulness in our lives this past year, please consider making an additional end-of-year gift to the IM General Fund.

May God bless you with grace and peace this season and may God's faithfulness be on your mind and in your heart.

*Summer and winter, springtime and harvest,  
Sun, moon and stars, in their courses above,  
Join with all nature in manifold witness,  
To thy great faithfulness, mercy and love.*

Gratefully,

Sharon Koh  
Executive Director / CEO

CONTINUED FROM FRONT COVER

developed a pioneer ministry among foreign domestic workers in Lebanon. Some 300,000 foreign "maids" labor in Lebanon, a small country with a population of three million. Together with three other women, Sarah reaches out to migrant women who have been incarcerated, mostly due to a lack of identification papers, and runs an integrated development center for migrant domestic workers called INSAAF: Justice & Compassion of Jesus.



The remaining third of my time goes into a venture of faith that God has created through relationships built with my students over the years. I am working to coordinate Enduring Love, a creative initiative to support Arab followers of Jesus as they reach out to their neighbors.



After 19 years of teaching and mentoring students full time at ABTS, I have reduced my teaching load in order to follow my students from the classroom to the streets. I am still an adjunct professor, but in faith and with a great deal of help, four years ago I launched Enduring Love as a strategic effort to support creative outreach by our well-trained and dedicated alumni who are spread across nine countries.

The journey to Jesus can be very treacherous for one born a Muslim. Despite the risks, many are making this

journey, often without the guidance of other believers. Enduring Love seeks to provide the support and encouragement that these new believers so greatly need.

I recently had the joy of visiting Saiid, a university student who came to faith in Christ through the discipleship of one of my coworkers at Enduring Love. Saiid was first introduced to the life and ministry of Jesus by watching *The Jesus Film*, which is widely distributed in many local dialects in Arab countries.

Deeply touched by what he had seen, Saiid called the phone number given at the end of the movie. As a result of that call, he met a woman from Egypt and later a Moroccan man who serves through Enduring Love. Both were followers of Jesus who had made the same journey Saiid was on. It had been my privilege to serve as professor to both.

Today, Saiid attends a university in North Africa and lives in the home of Arab believers, including another of my former students. Saiid's host leads two house churches and is both translating the Bible and composing worship songs in a language spoken by some eight million people in North Africa.

Saiid wrote to his hosts:

Living with you, I discovered a lot of things about your life that I had never seen. I received from you a great welcome. You received me at your house. You are my friends and are like family to me.

My first worship experience was good. I learned about prayer, studying the Bible and singing hymns. I was excited and liked it. I did not know that you [followers of Christ] live in this atmosphere of worship and singing hymns. I did not expect all of that. I thank God that I met Jesus.

I used to fear God. I believed if I did something wrong, God would punish me immediately. Or if I said something wrong or committed a fault, the ceiling might fall on me as a punishment. I used to live in terror. But now, I am not terrified of God. I know that God is a God of love.

Sarah and I are deeply grateful to God for leading us and to IM for walking with us and our Arab sisters and brothers as together we share the love of God in Christ across the Arab world.

### HOW YOU CAN PARTNER WITH US

We are seeking to continue and expand the work of Enduring Love. One-time gifts and monthly pledges are a great blessing to Enduring Love and greatly impactful for the lives that will be changed in the Arab world. For more information or to give, go to [www.internationalministries.org/middle-east-and-north-africa-enduring-love](http://www.internationalministries.org/middle-east-and-north-africa-enduring-love).

on location

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To subscribe to this free newsletter, send your name and address to:  
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We welcome comments on Facebook at International Ministries—American Baptist.

For more information, contact [catherine.nold@internationalministries.org](mailto:catherine.nold@internationalministries.org) or 800-222-3872, ext. 2182.



# God is at work at International Ministries!

BY Catherine Nold

**INTERNATIONAL MINISTRIES IS BOLDLY** advancing the work of the Lord with faith and innovation. We're moving into the future with fresh energy and continuing commitment to God's plan "on earth as it is in heaven" (Matthew 6:10), while faithfully honoring our rich heritage as the American Baptist Foreign Mission Society.

In the IM Communications and Marketing team, our greatest desire is to honor God by telling the stories, both large and small, of his great work through IM's dynamic,

relational and incarnational global servants and their transformative ministries. We want to bring these stories to life for you in new ways—to inspire you and enrich your faith journey, bringing you closer to Jesus.

You've probably noticed some of what's new already. The changes and improvements start right here with our new brand identity represented in the fresh new look of this On Location.



## Ingrid Roldán-Román Tutors and Feeds Children in Panama

BY M Staples

### A Refreshed Brand

In July 2017, at the Luther Rice Society Annual Dinner in Portland, Oregon, IM announced the revitalization of the brand, including a new logo. This new look is the product of many round-table discussions with IM staff and global servants and months of creative work.

In the early discussions, it was quickly agreed that the brand design ought to serve as an effective platform for lifting up the many ministries that are part of IM. We decided on a clean, bright look that would allow these ministries to shine.

The logo's simple design subtly represents several characteristics at the heart of IM's identity. Notice how the IM initials stretch across the entire circle and extend invisibly beyond it. This reminds us that God's work in and through IM is making a difference throughout the entire world and even beyond what the eye can see. The vibrant color reflects IM's passion in responding to God's call to global mission.

If you watch the IM logo animation in any of our new videos or on our website, you will see that the lower-case letter t, repeated three times in "International

Ministries," symbolizes the cross and its fundamental, enduring presence that defines who we are. In the animation, the cross is the last thing that remains on the screen. This shows that we seek to always keep our eyes on the cross, for it is God's great love that compels our call.

### A New Website

On the IM website, we have always sought to provide a wealth of information about the work of IM, from IM news and global servant journals to service opportunities and mission projects. Now, that same content is available in a redesigned, mobile-friendly format.

User accounts have also received a major upgrade. When you create an account, you'll be able to view and manage your contact information, email subscriptions, giving history, recurring gifts and more.

As we continue to develop the website as a resource for you to stay connected with IM, we would love to hear your feedback so that we can better serve you.

We sincerely hope that you enjoy this vibrant new window into God's work around the world!

### A Firm Foundation IM's Strategic Plan: Responding to the Call

All of these changes are products of Responding to the Call, IM's strategic plan for the next five years.

Born in 2016 after 18 months of interviews with mission supporters around the world and prayerful discernment, Responding to the Call is a statement of identity, purpose and priorities that is now guiding IM into its third century of ministry. It builds on what keeps IM true to the gospel, faithfully innovating and sharing God's love through an operational plan for growth and financial stability. To read a summary of Responding to the Call, go to [www.internationalministries.org/vision](http://www.internationalministries.org/vision).



**IT SAYS A LOT** about the difference that Ingrid Roldán-Román is making for the Lord in Panama that eight children born in her village bear the name Ingrid.

As an International Ministries global servant, Ingrid has served families in Changuinola in Bocas del Toro for 16 years, directing a tutoring and feeding program in her home for children who have fallen behind in their studies.

Many of her students come from a community without running water and electricity. The simple homes have mud floors and bamboo walls. Twelve family members may live in a single room.

"One thing that makes me sad is many of them think the poor conditions they live in are 'normal,'" Ingrid says. "And they are not."

"Most of the families I see are banana plantation workers. Their harvest finds its way to U.S. breakfast tables. They work hard."

Ingrid's ministry began as a small tutoring program. "I saw that the children had no breakfast or lunch," she recalls. "When children are hungry, they have no strength to study." So she started providing meals.

From there, the ministry quickly blossomed. Today, 70 children crowd her house and former students, now adults with children of their own, help out.

Each Saturday, Ingrid leaves her modest home, shared with her beloved pets—a parrot, a dog, two toucans and two kinkajous—to buy food. She purchases vegetables, beans, rice, fruits and condiments. "I go to nine places to shop," she says. "I know the prices."

Each tutoring day, she rises at 4 AM to prepare eight pounds of Spanish-style beans for her students. On Sundays, she leads Bible classes for adults.

Ingrid regularly visits the families of tutoring students in their homes. "In order to pray for and serve people, you need to know them intimately," she says. She provides pastoral care and encourages family members to support the tutoring by helping with their children with homework.



While Ingrid's ministry has thrived, she has known and seen considerable pain. Two of her students have been victims of domestic rapes, and she has helped those students raise their children from infancy. She sat by the bedside of Pablo, a 20-year-old man, as he died of AIDS.

When Ingrid was honored for her service 10 years ago, 10 villagers who were part of the celebration died afterward in a truck accident. Ingrid washed and prepared six of their bodies for burial. Out of the tragedy, new energy arose for her mission work.

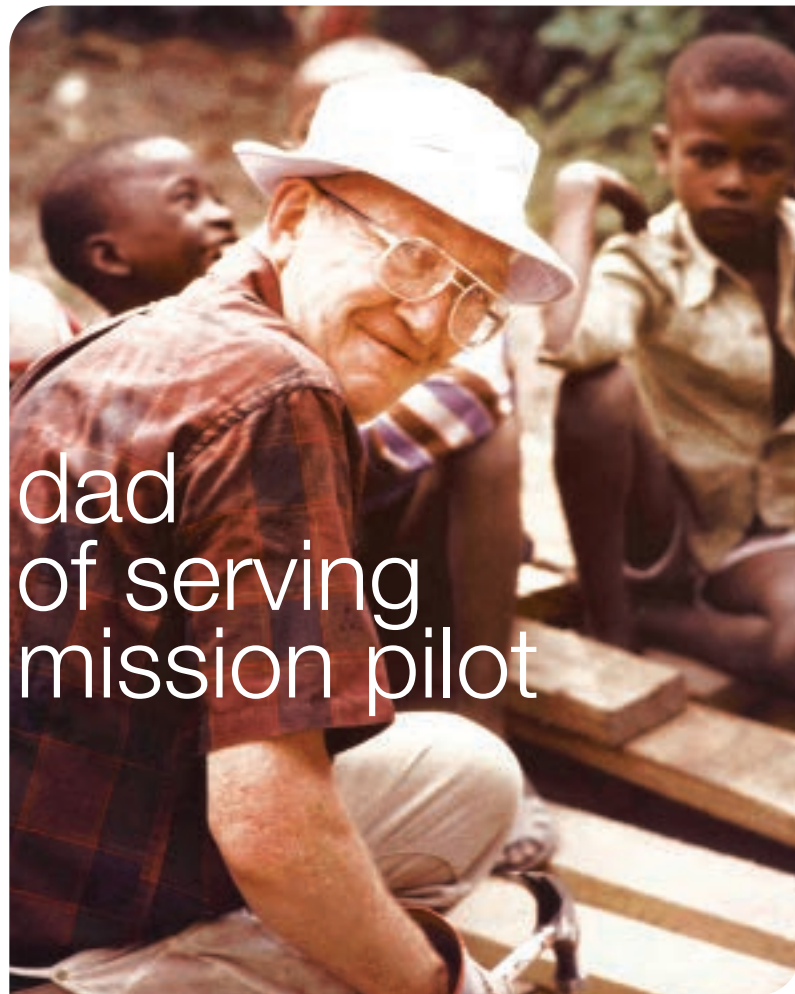
"I pray daily for strength and guidance," she says. "To serve effectively, you must represent God in a good way."



# My dad dreamed of serving as a mission pilot



BY Gregg Sneller



**FOR AS LONG AS I CAN REMEMBER,** my mother and father have been devoted Christians. It was my dad's wish to become a mission pilot serving the healthcare needs of the world through flight. However, that dream did not become a reality. Although he was otherwise fully qualified for the job, his eyesight presented a hurdle he could not overcome. Nevertheless, service to the Lord was in his blood, and he and my mother actively participated in the life of their local Baptist church.

When I was a child, missionaries would often visit our church. They would always be invited to our home for lunch after worship. After my parents retired, they went on an IM sponsored mission trip to Zaire, now the Democratic Republic of the Congo, with retired IM missionaries John and Gloria Marshall. That experience deeply touched their lives. I still have a photo in my office of my father building a church in Zaire.

Since the 1960s, my parents have sacrificially supported the World Mission Offering. Even after my father passed in 2001, my mom continued to support many of IM's global servants and the World Mission Offering. During the years I served as an ABCUSA pastor, she made sure she supported God's work through IM.

Recently, in a Spirit-led moment, my mom talked about how God greatly blessed her in her life and how fortunate she was to participate in God's work in the world. When the attorney working on her trust asked her about her desire to bequeath 10 percent of her estate to God's work, she said, "What if I gave 40 percent, or why not even 50 percent, to the Lord's work?"

I was singing inside with great joy as the Spirit led her in this way! Twenty-five percent of her estate will go to IM, 25 percent to a beloved Christian camp and the remainder to her four children. Her 98-year-old single brother had recently given the majority of his estate to a Baptist university, and I am sure that his act of generosity encouraged her.

When I visit with my mom, we often talk about the eight global servants and couples she regularly supports around the world, as well as her giving to the World Mission Offering. I am so glad that when she lays her head down at night, she can sleep soundly knowing that God has blessed her and is using her to bless the world with the love of Jesus through our global servants and the entire work of International Ministries.

For more information on including International Ministries in your will and estate planning, contact your donor advisor or Donor Services at 1-800-222-3872, ext. 2323, or [IMdonorservices@internationalministries.org](mailto:IMdonorservices@internationalministries.org).

# The Story of Yasmine, a Migrant Domestic Worker in Lebanon

BY Sarah Chetti

**I MET YASMINE AND HER LITTLE DAUGHTER, AYA,** during my visit to the Zahlé prison at the entrance to Beqaa Valley. Originally from Bangladesh, Yasmine had come to work as a migrant domestic worker in a Lebanese home. A young member of the family had declared his love for her, and they had entered a "marriage of convenience" according to Islamic law. Yasmine was an uneducated woman and really believed that the young man loved her. She didn't realize that a marriage of convenience is a purely temporary arrangement.

Once Yasmine became pregnant, her husband rejected her and the family put her in prison on trumped up charges. She delivered her baby, Aya, there in the Zahlé prison.

When I first visited, what drew me to Yasmine was her smile and the little baby she was holding. When she learned that I was from India and we could communicate in Hindi, which she knew reasonably well, she was so happy! She told me her story of how she had come to Lebanon and why she was in prison.

My heart broke as I learned of the injustice that had been done to her. Yasmine had done no wrong, but because she was poor and uneducated and had no one to advocate on her behalf, she had been falsely accused and imprisoned. When I spoke with the prison authorities, they gave me vague answers. It was evident to me the Lebanese family and the young man she had married wanted nothing to do with the "maid" Yasmine or little Aya.

Weeks turned into months, and Yasmine and Aya continued to languish in the prison. I always brought baby food for Aya because she was not getting enough nourishment. On one of my visits, I was told that Yasmine and Aya had been moved to a shelter run by a religious organization.

The following day, I went to see Yasmine at the shelter and she was thrilled to see me. However, the conditions at the shelter were terrible—she and Aya had been better off in the prison.

One day, Yasmine called me to

say that she had run away from the shelter with her daughter. I invited her to come to the INSAAF Center, which I started in 2015 to offer counseling, education and training to migrant domestic workers like her. I prayed with Yasmine and gave her food as well as a track phone so that she could keep in touch with the staff of INSAAF and me. That was the last time I saw Yasmine.

I learned from one of her friends that her husband had been in touch, promising to provide Lebanese identification papers for her and Aya. Once again, she believed the young man and went to see him.

Yasmine never returned from that meeting. She and Aya seem to have disappeared into thin air. We fear for her safety, and I suspect that her husband may have taken the baby and just gotten rid of Yasmine. Such things happen all too frequently in Lebanon.

Please join us as we continue to pray for Yasmine and Aya, as well as the many migrant workers in Lebanon.

