

INTO THE HARVEST

ONE MISSION SOCIETY NEW ZEALAND



In this Autumn issue...
Mar/Apr/May 2026

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From the Office Desk

Learning gratitude far from home, from my room in the Philippines, 2026.

By Karen Moar, OMS NZ Interim Director.

Hello from the Philippines! As I sit in my room writing this, I find myself with a new and deeper appreciation for what we have in New Zealand—an appreciation born not from comparison alone, but from witnessing how gratefully the Filipino people live with what they have.

The contrast between our two lifestyles is striking. In New Zealand, we live in beautiful homes. Our kitchens are filled with coffee makers, pots, stoves, and running water. Here, many families live in what we might call shacks. Their kitchens consist of a wok, a small gas cooker, and a bucket of water carried in by hand. Our toilets flush with the press of a button; here, a bucket and scoop are used instead.

Yes, our wages back home are higher—but so is our cost of living. Despite having far less materially, the people here are content and deeply grateful to God for what they have. Their joy is not dependent on possessions, but on perspective.

One experience in particular has stayed with me. At the motel where we stayed, three men served us throughout our visit. They carried our bags—even if it was only my handbag—opened doors for us, and greeted us constantly with warm smiles. It was clear this was not just a job to them. They genuinely cared and wanted to serve.

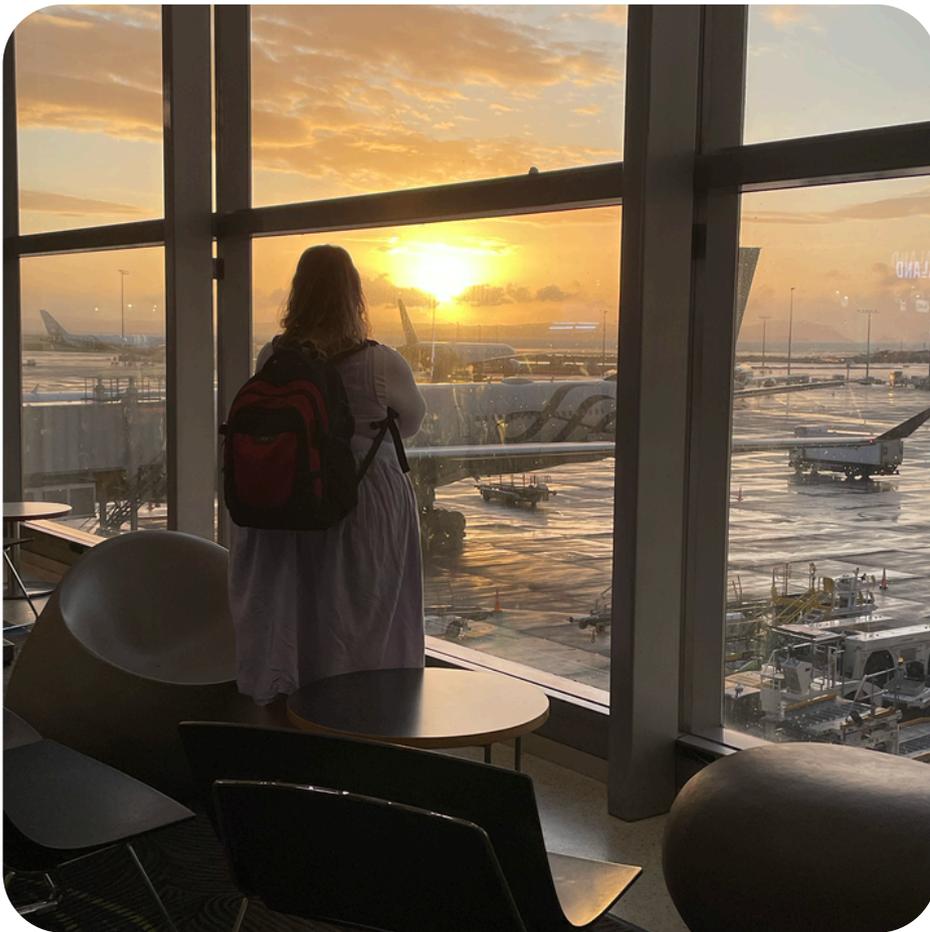
During our stay, both Bryce and I became unwell and found ourselves in urgent need of that very precious commodity: toilet paper. One of the men simply said, “I will bring it, sir. Go back and rest.” No fuss. Just kindness. On Sunday, I left Bryce in our room sick while I travelled to JCM to preach. When I returned later that day, the same men saw me arrive and immediately met me at the door, taking my handbag. “Let me take that for you, Ma’am,” one said. As we walked upstairs, he asked gently, “How is Bryce?” When we reached our room, he asked what medicine Bryce was taking, carefully checked it, and then nodded his approval—with genuine concern.

On the day we left, those same three men carried our bags for the last time and loaded them into the van. Before we climbed in, we hugged them goodbye. As we drove away, they stood waving, and it felt less like leaving hotel staff and more like saying goodbye to family—like children waving farewell to their own parents.

The words of **Matthew 25:35** came alive for me: *“I was a stranger and you took me in.”* We arrived in the Philippines as teachers, but we returned as students.

This experience reminded me of John the Apostle’s message to the seven churches in Asia. He warned the church in Laodicea, which was materially “rich” yet spiritually “poor,” and contrasted it with the church in Smyrna—materially “poor,” yet truly “rich” in God’s eyes.

Sometimes it takes leaving home to truly understand what matters most. Gratitude, humility, and love cannot be bought—but they can be learned, often from those who seem to have the least.



IMOGEN COOK HAS SERVED WITH OMS NZ FOR 10 YEARS, WORKING IN THE OFFICE IN MEDIA AND COMMUNICATIONS, AS WELL AS WORKING AS A HOPE61 TRAINER, TEACHING ABOUT HUMAN TRAFFICKING PREVENTION. READ ABOUT THE NEXT STAGE OF HER JOURNEY!

Pre-Field Training: A Time to Learn and Prepare

Have you ever thought your life was heading in a certain direction, but then a plot twist hits and you find yourself somewhere completely different? I experienced exactly this, thinking I would be a daycare teacher and instead ended up working in missions.

My work with OMS New Zealand started with simply redesigning the brochures for our short term team opportunities. But flash ahead to 10 years and many incredible opportunities later, I now work at OMS part time, covering roles in media and communications, marketing and design, networking and enquiries, and training people in our human trafficking prevention ministry.

What's even more interesting is that I'm now looking to pursue the role of 'long term missionary'. God has taken and brought me through so much, especially the past 10 years, and I'm at a point now where I'm feeling called to go. Exciting!



Praying with my team before a HOPE61 training

In January this year, it was a privilege to join OMS Australia in their pre-field training course that they were putting on for their missionary candidates. As well as being the only Kiwi joining this group, I was also the only one who doesn't have a long term missionary role or country confirmed. While I have some ideas, I'm still at the beginning of this phase, so I look forward to sharing more as things progress!

Despite this, I was so happy that it worked out for me to join this course. It helped me prepare for whatever is to come in my journey, but also it helped me better understand the process of becoming a long term missionary with OMS.

Who were my fellow trainees?

It was such an honour to be training at the same time as this amazing group of people. Firstly, it was a perfect group of mixed ages and different experiences with mission work. But my group also had diverse cultural experiences, all having been born in their home country, moving to Australia, spending 18+ years there, and now working in another country.

What did we do?

This two week course was an intensive one. Monday to Friday we were in class, covering an amazing range of topics and hearing from diverse speakers. We covered topics including cultural values, culture types, spiritual reality, emergency policies & procedures, OMS history, culture shock vs. stress, personal & professional growth, and much more! My mind was stretched a lot but it was such valuable information to take on. Also, with our diverse group of trainees, the discussion was very rich.



*Pre-field trainees from L-R:
Barthez, Vivian, Imogen, Spenser, Karen, Tiana.*

On the weekend, we took part in cultural experiences. Saturday evenings consisted of potluck dinners, where we had to make dishes from the country we're from, and the following week, the country we're going to. On Sundays, we were able to experience a Cambodian church the first week, and a Korean church the second week. It was so wonderful to hear people worship in a different language!

Our second Saturday provided the time for me to take the next set of missionary candidates through the HOPE61 training. I had already taken one couple from our pre-field group, through the training, the last time I was in Melbourne in 2023. So the three others joined me, alongside another couple who are working to be itinerant missionaries to India. This too was a successful day as we discussed many ideas about how they can prevent human trafficking through the ministries they work in.

Over this time of preparing and learning, I am reminded of the power of God's calling. It comes uniquely to us all, and I can confidently say that no one can anticipate what the process would be like. But I am forever grateful He wants me involved in His amazing mission. Bring on 2026!



The message at the Cambodian Church.

Building connections in the Philippines

Welcome to 2026! Wow, wow, and wow—what a way to begin the year with a 2½-week journey through the Philippines.

These weeks were filled with visiting missionaries, the JCM (Jesus Christian Ministry) church and school, attending meetings, two conferences, seeing village life, and experiencing the many contrasts of daily living across the country. We moved between worlds—from comfortable beds to sleeping on floors, from hot running showers to cold bucket showers, from flushing toilets to pouring buckets to flush. And one lesson learned very quickly—always carry toilet paper in your bag.

After 24 hours of travel and very little sleep, we hit the ground running—greeted with radiant smiles and huge, heartfelt hugs from our missionaries, Phil and Ruth Robinson. Their warmth immediately made us feel at home.

The following day we travelled to Tarlac for meetings with Larry and Sharon Freed and their team, and to attend the Juan Project Conference for two nights. Over a shared meal with Larry, Sharon, and Let M, we talked about how OMS NZ could partner with the ECC (Every Community for Christ) ministry. There was a real sense of unity and shared vision.



Bryce and Karen with Rely and Lalaine at the Juan Project Conference.

The Juan Project Conference.

The Juan Project Conference was truly a blessing. Pastors and leaders gathered from across the Philippines, alongside Christian organisations and international leaders from the USA, Mexico, and beyond. These men and women are deeply committed to seeing every village reached for Christ. Now in its ninth year, the 10-year Juan Project carries a bold and faith-filled vision: to *“go and make disciples of all nations.”* (Matthew 28:19).

It was a privilege to stand alongside local believers, dressed in traditional Filipino attire, united in purpose.

On Sunday we visited JCM in Malolos—Phil and Ruth’s church—where we met visiting speaker Reverend Oh and his wife from Korea. He spoke powerfully on paradigm shift and shared the testimony of his fully funded Christian school, free for students and grounded in ten Christian values.

Meeting the kids at the JCM school.



Our visit to the JCM School was especially uplifting. Meeting Ruth's parents, Pastor Rely and Lalaine Samonte, and witnessing the ministry they have built—now into its third generation—was truly inspiring. The worship was vibrant, the faith contagious, and the passion to see lives transformed unmistakable. Walking through each classroom brought so much joy—rooms filled with bright smiles and eager hearts. When asked about their memory verse for the day, the students joyfully quoted not just one, but many. God's Word is clearly being planted deeply. It was a sacred privilege to pray over these young lives.

We also had the opportunity to visit Phil and Ruth's newly built home. While they are still waiting for power to be connected, the house already stands as a testimony of faith and perseverance. Please continue to pray that electricity will be connected soon.

Back in Tarlac, the ECC Conference focused on evaluating ten key projects for future involvement by churches and supporting organisations. The networking was outstanding—HOPE61, Panneaker Puppets, farming and gardening initiatives, finance, welding, roof fabrication, air-conditioning, and more. These collaborations aim to create jobs, spread the gospel, teach safety to children, and multiply ministry impact.

On our second Sunday service at JCM, it was a joy to worship together and share fellowship, where I also had the opportunity to bring the Word.

Lastly, we were able to visit the Mungyan tribe in Mindoro which we found deeply moving. After walking into the village huts, Ruth lovingly prepared a meal for everyone in the tribe. That evening we gathered for a night service, with Ruth interpreting. The hunger for God and joy in worship were evident. The fruit of the groundwork laid by past OMS NZ Directors Owen and Avalon Brown was clearly visible.

To witness firsthand the work our missionaries are involved in was a true privilege. Phil and Ruth serve tirelessly, pouring out love, hospitality, and dedication.

And finally—Phil's fearless driving on the wrong side of the road certainly kept us awake, alert... and very much alive!

Blessings,
Karen Moar
OMS NZ Interim Director.



Ruth and Bryce taking the opportunity to pray for a street vendor down near the Mindoro village.



Mission support and the benefits for the giver.

By Imogen Cook.



Food deliveries in Europe.

First and foremost, we want to extend our most gracious thanks to you who support OMS, our missionaries, our staff, and our ministries. Through prayers; financial giving; sharing with others; or going on a mission yourself, we are in awe of what God has done because people like you have said yes.

Churches have been built in remote villages in the Philippines, young adults have been encouraged and saved through weekly Bible studies in Europe, women have learnt life skills and received much needed love in Fiji, and refugees have been given the care and resources they need to get through fleeing their country. These things and so much more has been possible because of people giving support from right where they are.

We want to be sure that you as supporters know how your investment (in prayer, giving, or other support) benefits not only the people and ministries you're investing in, but how it can benefit you just as much in return.

There are 4 specific goals we want you, as supporters, to achieve.

1. See the greater meaning in your daily work.

It's easy to get lost in everyday life, in our routines, especially in our work. Sometimes we may feel that our daily work is a way to pay the bills, or a thing that will bring us success in our lives. But when we see our work as a way that can benefit others and grow the Kingdom of God, this makes the daily grind a lot more meaningful and purposeful.



2. Play a vital, perhaps surprising, role in Kingdom work.

Usually the best stories we hear in the mission world come from situations we couldn't have planned ourselves if we tried. How God works for the purpose of extending His Kingdom puts the right people in the right places at exactly the right time. You might think you're just giving money, but that money made a way for a missionary to get to a certain place. You might think you're just praying for people to be saved, but you are creating movement in the spiritual realm that will end up bringing hope to someone who feels at the end of their rope. You may never know what some of your prayer and giving support has enabled, but please know that God sees it and you will be blessed.



3. Live more strategically by developing your giving.

As we give, we learn how to use our gifts and resources in the way God intended. When we think about giving finances, prayer support, and even giving our time, we must realise that how we give of these things, determine how we live. When we look at the early church in Acts 2: 42-47, they gladly gave and shared of their gifts and resources with each other, and in return, God allowed many miraculous signs and wonders to take place, and more people were brought into the Kingdom of God every single day. What a beautiful image we can also be a part of today!



4. To grow in prayer, not just giving alone.

We should always be striving to grow our prayer life, no matter how long we've been a Christian. And what's beautiful about praying is perhaps the ultimate surrender of saying, 'I can't, but you can God'. As we grow in prayer, we grow in our dependence on God. The fruit that comes out of this is so much richer than the fruit we could ever come up with on our own. Even though you are the one supporting mission work, we too want you to be growing in so many ways as we partner together in this marvellous work of our Lord Jesus Christ.

Missionaries you can support

If you feel God calling you to start supporting mission work, we have two families who are in need of more givers. Would you prayerfully consider joining their support team?

The Robinsons



Phil and Ruth with their children Jemimah and Zeke.

“We serve full-time in Malolos and among the Mangyan tribes in Mindoro—training village pastors and sharing the Gospel in places with little to no support.

Your giving makes this mission possible. It helps us travel, provide resources, and reach communities that would otherwise be forgotten.

Please partner with us so we can continue bringing hope to both cities and remote villages across the Philippines.

Thank you.”

The Johnstons



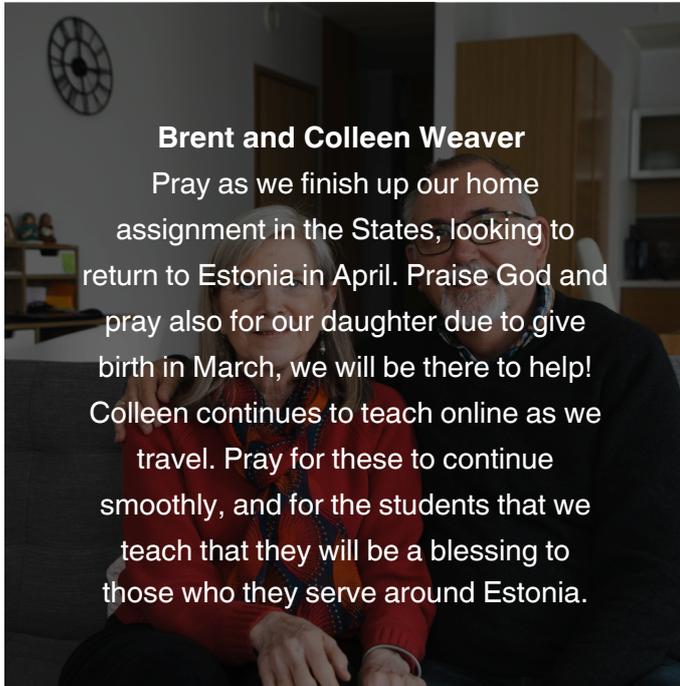
Glyn and Naomi with their daughter Minna.

“We’re missionaries from New Zealand currently serving in Spain and now back in New Zealand fundraising as we prepare for our second term. Our aim is to invest locally in Spain through a hands-on partnership with Peña de Horeb, a Christian camp near Madrid, where Glyn will spend much of his time.

Alongside this, we work to strengthen the local church through small groups and church planting, and continue supporting other OMS mission teams across Europe and the Middle East through photography, video, and design. If you’d like to partner with us through prayer or financial support, we would greatly appreciate it!”

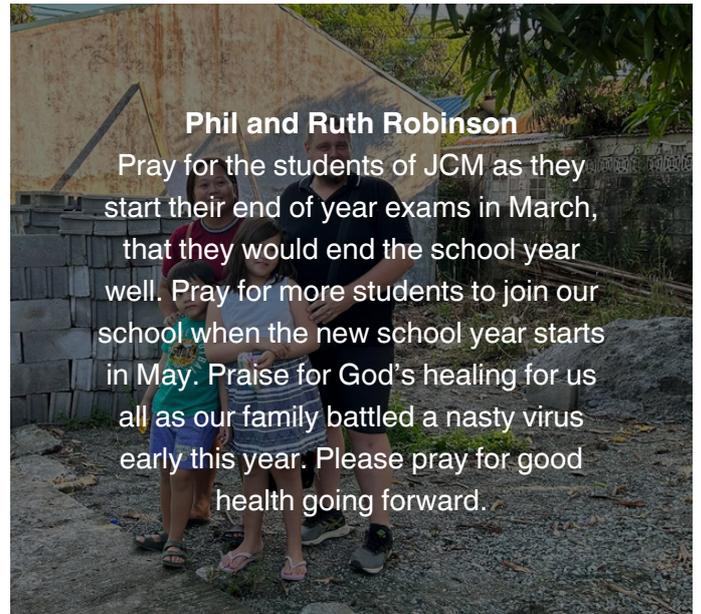
If you’d like to support either of these missionaries, or another missionary or ministry you have in mind, please email Karen at office@oms.org.nz. Thank you for considering us!

“Never stop praying.” 1 Thess 5:17 (NLT)



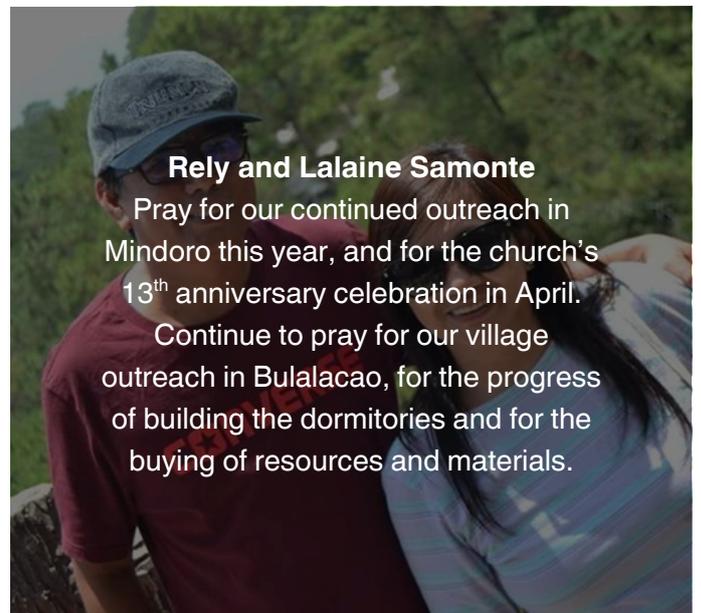
Brent and Colleen Weaver

Pray as we finish up our home assignment in the States, looking to return to Estonia in April. Praise God and pray also for our daughter due to give birth in March, we will be there to help! Colleen continues to teach online as we travel. Pray for these to continue smoothly, and for the students that we teach that they will be a blessing to those who they serve around Estonia.



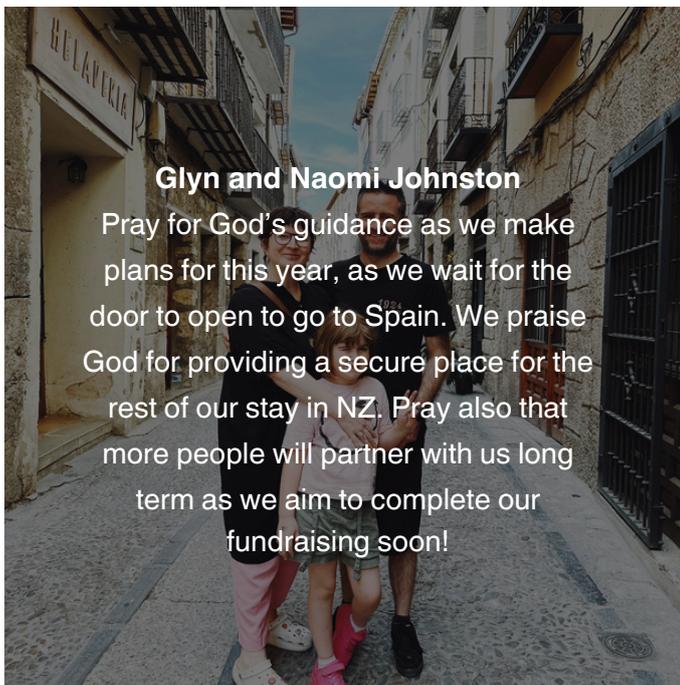
Phil and Ruth Robinson

Pray for the students of JCM as they start their end of year exams in March, that they would end the school year well. Pray for more students to join our school when the new school year starts in May. Praise for God's healing for us all as our family battled a nasty virus early this year. Please pray for good health going forward.



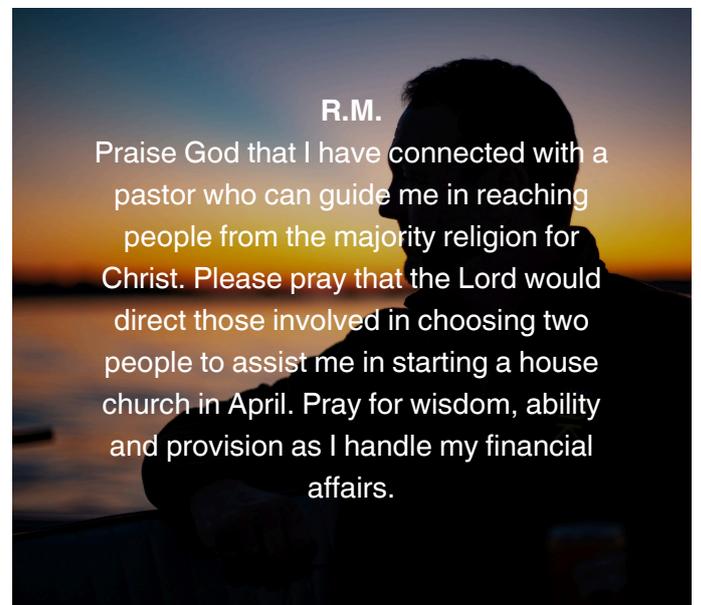
Rely and Lalaine Samonte

Pray for our continued outreach in Mindoro this year, and for the church's 13th anniversary celebration in April. Continue to pray for our village outreach in Bulalacao, for the progress of building the dormitories and for the buying of resources and materials.



Glyn and Naomi Johnston

Pray for God's guidance as we make plans for this year, as we wait for the door to open to go to Spain. We praise God for providing a secure place for the rest of our stay in NZ. Pray also that more people will partner with us long term as we aim to complete our fundraising soon!



R.M.

Praise God that I have connected with a pastor who can guide me in reaching people from the majority religion for Christ. Please pray that the Lord would direct those involved in choosing two people to assist me in starting a house church in April. Pray for wisdom, ability and provision as I handle my financial affairs.

Thank you for partnering with us!

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