

# FBC CONNECTION

CONNECTING THE LIFE AND PEOPLE OF FOOTHILL BIBLE CHURCH



## Short Term Missions: Uganda

BY JASON PINCE

God is doing an amazing work in Uganda! This July, our team (Fonda Wilson, Art & Kim Nakamura, and Jason Pince) had the privilege to serve alongside the Hurley family and their partners at Sufficiency of Scripture (SOS) Ministries. Here are a few glimpses of how God is reaching the people of Uganda through their work!

God is calling sinners to repentance through the outreach ministries at SOS. SOS staff and missionaries lead Bible studies in the local villages throughout the week. We attended one discussing Romans 6, and we were excited to hear the men asking questions about how to turn from repetitive sins and walk in righteousness. Families affected by disabilities are also being reached. The SOS team has been canvassing the villages for several months to prepare for the upcoming Joni & Friends Wheels for the World trip, which includes FBC members Kenny & Rebecca Allison and Mark & Kathleen Hetzel.

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Many Ugandan families have been invited to hear the message of the Gospel, receive the practical help of a wheelchair, and have their homes modified to make them accessible for the new equipment. The SOS staff is looking forward to this opportunity to imitate Christ in both physical and spiritual care. Legacy Christian Academy is training local children how to glorify God in their studies and all aspects of their lives. Our team discussed the life of Joseph with the high school class. Many of them also had difficult relationships with other family members, and Joseph's example of forgiveness and mercy towards his brothers had direct application to their lives. God is drawing the community in to hear and receive Gospel Truth!

Through these outreach ministries, many children and adults have been attending Community Bible Church of Kubamitwe (Koo-bah-me-tway). Many walk a mile or more to get to church! The Sunday morning service was vibrant as we sang songs of praise in English and Luganda. The people were eager to hear the Word, welcome us as guests, and share their stories of how God used SOS to bring them to church, repent of their sins, and follow Christ as Lord. The mid-week chapel service reminded believers of their choice to live man's way, or God's way. It also served to create unity and excitement around the mission of SOS to reach the local community with the message of Christ. God is building His church in Kubamitwe!

As the church at SOS has grown in influence, God has established Shepherds Training Center (STC) to teach men how to interpret the Word, preach effectively, and lovingly shepherd their flocks. After completing their training, they'll return to the far corners of Uganda and South Sudan, to their local tribal language and culture. What an opportunity to send men of many tribes and tongues to evangelize the lost and equip others to do the same! Shannon Hurley partners with and encourages the leaders of the Baptist Union, an affiliation of like-minded churches

who nominate most of the men who come to STC. SOS also opens their campus several times a year to host conferences for the Baptist Union, continuing the work of equipping and encouraging pastors to serve faithfully throughout Uganda! This year, STC will start its 3-year degree program and invite pastors and their families to live on campus during their studies. We were so thankful to be able to witness what God has been building and are excited to see what He will continue to do in and through these men.

Thank you for your prayers during our trip! God certainly answered your prayers in the opportunities He provided for us to proclaim the Gospel and the privilege to see how Christ is building His church in Kubamitwe and throughout Uganda.

*Photo: Lucas Roybal*

## Short Term Missions: Dubai

BY KIM NAKAMURA



Opening my Weather App this morning, I see the temperature in Dubai is 102 degrees Fahrenheit... with a "feels like" temperature of 123 degrees Fahrenheit at nearly 7 PM. It certainly felt that way when we left the airport at nearly 11:30 PM,

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bags in hand and TJ Smith as our guide transporting Jason Pince, Art and me to his nearby family home.

I knew little of the city of Dubai prior to landing. If one were to do an internet search, details would immediately emerge: “Dubai is a city and emirate in the United Arab Emirates (UAE) known for luxury shopping and ultramodern architecture.” This was hardly the world our trio of travelers had come from. Just a day before, we had been on the campus of SOS ministries in Uganda. It is stunning how air travel can quickly thrust one from a rural developing world to the most populous extravagant city in the UAE in under six hours! Though our heads were slightly spinning, we managed to make the necessary adjustments to a new climate and context.

We rose early enough Sunday to share the family’s morning routine, chatting our way through breakfast and afternoon lunch prep before piling into the van for the trip to a hotel ballroom where the members of Redeemer Church of Dubai meet. This location provides the space needed in a dense city for the large congregation to gather week by week. Our worship in song was sweet and familiar, differing only in the number of people and nationalities surrounding us. The pastor preached from a challenging section in the book of Judges but pointed our eyes heavenward to King Jesus, the only king who is perfectly just and righteous. We were reminded that in His presence “every tribe, tongue, and nation” will gather and worship for all eternity.

Afterward, Art, Jason, and I visited with vari-

ous members of the congregation. Jason met Dave and Samuel. In their quest for work, the Lord brought them to Dubai and later to Redeemer to worship and fellowship.

Here their faith deepened and they both made a commitment to stay and faithfully serve on staff at Redeemer. I had the privilege of meeting a young woman from the Philippines whose sister had settled in Japan and urged her to leave the Philippines to make a life for herself in another country. Seeking financial stability, this young woman took her sister’s counsel and settled in Dubai. While there, she not only found work but found a beautiful community of believers at Redeemer Church! Here she came to understand the gospel, and eagerly pursued Christ and the fellowship of His people. She now serves as support staff at Gulf Theological Seminary (GTS) where TJ Smith is both professor and Dean of Students.



The mission of GTS is to “equip pastors, church planters and lay leaders to multiply faithful churches in the Middle East, South Asia, East Asia, and Africa.” Many who attend church at Redeemer also study at GTS. Though several seminary instructors and students were on break at the time of our visit, we were thankful for the few with whom we were able to connect. It is clear that God is at work in many hearts and lives in Dubai.

My personal highlight that Sunday morning was meeting the friends Chaya and Afsana have made since their arrival in Dubai in June 2021.

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We prayed for these friends and now Chaya and Afsana were pointing out answers to those prayers as they eagerly introduced me to each cherished friend. In the same way, I enjoyed meeting several seminary students' wives as well as pastors' and elders' wives who have become dear to Karen's heart. There is a backstory to that blessing:

Art, Jason, and I had missed our original flight from Entebbe to Dubai. That unexpected event meant that I also missed a brunch speaking engagement in Karen's home. She graciously filled in the gap leading the women in a discussion from the book of Colossians. On Sunday morning, I met several of the women who attended that brunch. Without exception, each one I met said with enthusiasm, "We were sorry you could not make it, but we were SO VERY ENCOURAGED by all that Karen shared!!" Their gratitude was deep and my heart was blessed by the goodness of God in an unforeseen providence. I am confident God will use that unique speaking opportunity as Karen builds into the lives of ministry leader wives in days to come!

After worship service and a full morning with the congregation of Redeemer Church, we enjoyed a homemade biryani lunch (slow-cooked spiced rice and chicken) and good ministry conversation with the Smiths before heading for our tour of downtown. The Burj Khalifa dominates the skyline and stands just over half a mile high. Though downtown Dubai is a "glam and glitzy" hub sporting many of the "largest, tallest, and grandest" of buildings, the grandeur of it all is dwarfed by the mighty work of grace

we witnessed in the lives of the Smith family.

We were so encouraged by the faithfulness of TJ and Karen as they have clearly invested in the lives of their four children. We witnessed the fruit of their labor as we shared in a joyful family dynamic and observed each child thriving in their own way. Their four children, each adopted at different times in the country of India, have been shown an abundance of sacrificial and relentless love over the years. Their personal stories have found them embraced and faithfully mentored by this sincere Christ-following couple. It is the quiet, unseen work of discipleship in their own home that is the ground from which TJ and Karen launched their ministry in the local church and seminary. Seeds of faith are being sown that we trust will bear rich fruit in the years to come.

Our goal in traveling to Dubai briefly on our way home from Uganda was to encourage the Smith family and have a glimpse of the world in which they serve. In many ways, it is they who have encouraged and challenged us. First-

hand we were able to see the fruit of a couple who has been "faithful over a little," serving in the quiet spaces of their own home and in India for years, long before being given the opportunity to be "faithful over much" at GTS in Dubai.

Pray for TJ as he begins a new year instructing the students of GTS and for Karen as she continues to faithfully fulfill her roles and responsibilities in the home. Pray for both as they minister

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encouragement to students traveling from all over the globe, often finding a seat around the Smith's dining room table. Pray for the family as a new school year begins and new schooling options are explored for each one. Thank you to each one who prayed for our journey to Uganda and Dubai. Our field interaction with ministry partners in each location was an extension of your own love as you continue to support these families prayerfully and financially.

*Photos: Kim Nakamura*

## New Members: Brian & Stephanie Larson

BY JONATHAN SCHAAP



Brian and Stephanie Larson first started attending FBC about 3 years ago when Luke Rhee was doing a sermon series on social justice. They are a part of the Astadurian Small Group which meets in Upland. Brian serves on the parking team, and you may see him greeting cars as you arrive on campus on Sunday mornings. They both love camping and enjoy time outdoors in God's creation. Brian is employed as a machinist, works hard, and scoffs at needing air conditioning in the warehouse. Just kidding. Stephanie was formerly employed as a contractor,

at CAA Environmental Associate but desired to stay home with their daughter and is now able to do so!

Before coming to FBC, Brian and Stephanie started to realize that the Bible has authority and realized that they had not been living with that in mind. The Holy Spirit was working in their hearts and minds. They realized that the church they were attending was only providing surface-level teaching, and they did not really get too involved. Furthermore, the pandemic only exacerbated frustrations. One thing they did appreciate about their old church, however, was going through a series called "Rooted" with their small group at the time which really convicted them of their sin. In a segment called "Strongholds," they were shown their need for a Savior.

Brian and Stephanie met for the first time at a church youth group event in high school. They eventually eloped in Big Sur and are currently celebrating 6 years of marriage. They have one daughter, Elise, and are expecting Baby number 2 in January! Congrats! Brian grew up in the area and was homeschooled. He actually used to play with Sam Shwetz as a kid. It was Sam Shwetz who later invited him to FBC during the pandemic and, when they ended up coming, it was during the aforementioned sermon series on social justice. Stephanie, on the other hand, attended public school and grew up in a home with a Catholic father and a mother who was nominally Christian.

Ephesians 1:3-10:

"Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who has blessed us in Christ with every spiritual blessing in the heavenly places, even as he chose us in him before the foundation of the world, that we should be holy and blameless before him. In love he predestined us for adoption to himself as sons through Jesus Christ, according to the purpose of his will—to the praise of his glorious grace, with which

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he has blessed us in the Beloved. In him we have redemption through his blood, the forgiveness of our trespasses, according to the riches of his grace, which he lavished upon us, in all wisdom and insight making known to us the mystery of his will, according to his purpose, which he set forth in Christ as a plan for the fullness of time, to unite all things in him, things in heaven and things on earth."

Brian and Stephanie are rejoicing in these words from Scripture and in their gracious Savior, Jesus Christ, as are all who hear His voice. Welcome to FBC, Brian and Stephanie (and growing family)!

*Photo: Lucas Roybal*

## **Marriage: William & Jessica Stuart**



On December 15, 2022, Will Stuart and Jessica Alamilla were united in marriage in Beaumont, California. Gerry Escalante, Will's Pastor and long-time mentor, officiated the ceremony, surrounded by family and friends.

The couple met through a Christian online dating app. Through the dating process, they were very intentional about dating with the goal of marriage. They found that as they got to know each other, their attraction grew through the quality time and deeper conversations they had. Jessica shared, "I was attracted to Will's conviction of living a life that honors God. As I got to know him, I grew in love with the ways he would encourage others and was thoughtful to serve and care for people in very practical ways." For Will, "I married Jessica because I was attracted to her passion for the Gospel. It is rare to find someone who is sold out for the Lord. She understands her life is not her own but one that is gracefully given to her by our Father."

Jessica is a graduate of The Master's University and is employed as a Talent Engagement Specialist at a local health company. As a Technology Support Specialist, Will works for the Corona-Norco school district. The couple attends the Cruz's small group on Tuesday nights, and Will serves with the tech team on Sunday mornings.

*Photo: Leia Caldwell*

"He who finds a wife finds a good thing and obtains favor from the Lord."

- PROVERBS 18:22

**Marriage:  
Anthony & Brittany Williams**



On Saturday, September 9th, 2023, Anthony Williams and Brittany Herndon joined together in marriage at Foothill Bible Church with Micah Lugg officiating the ceremony.

Anthony and Brittany met at the wedding of Ben and Sydnee Costello, and, with the help of a few friends, Anthony was able to contact Brittany and they soon started dating with the desire to be married.

They now attend the Powell's small group and have been encouraged and tested in many ways that have only proved the love they have for God and for one another. They continue to have a desire to serve in the church and now

serve in the children's ministry as teachers. God continues to work and provide in their lives in many ways, providing a home for them with the help of the Herndon family and providing a full-time job for Anthony at Foothill Bible Church.

Anthony works as a maintenance worker at Foothill Bible Church and Brittany works as a 5th-6th grade math teacher at San Jose Charter Academy located in West Covina.

*Photo : Clarissa Williams*

"Love is patient and kind;  
love does not envy or boast;  
it is not arrogant or rude.  
It does not insist on its own way;  
it is not irritable or resentful;  
it does not rejoice at wrongdoing,  
but rejoices with the truth.  
Love bears all things,  
believes all things,  
hopes all things,  
endures all things."

- 1 CORINTHIANS 13:4-7

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2023 Graduates

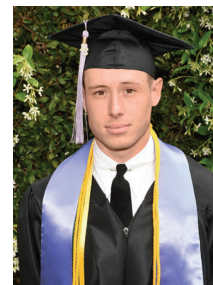


**Emily Bohler**

High School Graduate of Faith Christian Academy

Working at Nectar Clothing

*Photo: Cynthia Garcia*



**Blake Buehl**

BS Urban Planning  
California Polytechnic University

Applying to work in city or county planning

*Photo : CPP Media Vision*

**Lillian Burrow**

Highschool Graduate of Cornerstone Academy

AA English, Chaffey College

*Photo: Vanessa Bugbee*



**Elias Cobb**

High School Graduate of Ontario Christian Highschool

Attending Cal Poly Pomona School of Engineering

*Photo: Emily Baldi*



**Zane Dena**

High School Graduate of Faith Christian Academy

Attending The Fab School for Fabrication and Welding

*Photo: Cynthia Garcia*



**Hayley Lopez**

Highschool Graduate of Sage Oak Charter School

Attending Chaffey College for Nursing pre-requisistes

*Photo: Michelle Romero*

**Jordan Nelson**

Highschool Graduate of Ontario Christian Highschool

Attending Arizona Christian University

*Photo: Lucas Roybal*



**Angelo Plakakis**

High School Graduate of Elite Academy Charter School

Attending Mt. San Antonio College for Business

*Photo: Zara Plakakis*



**Angelina Price**

High School Graduate of Faith Christian Academy

Attending Chaffey College for Phlebotomy

*Photo: Raul Moreno*



**Aiden Williams**

AWS Certification in Structural Welding,  
Welding Certification Center

*Photo: Lucas Roybal*