

on location

SPRING – SUMMER 2023



An Enduring Love servant baptizes a Syrian refugee.

WHAT IS “Enduring Love”?

“In the Middle East and North Africa, for centuries there has been a void in Christian mission,” says IM Global Servant Dan Chetti. Dan and Sarah Chetti are the first IM global servants in the region.

In 2014, as the Arab Spring spread through the region, God gave Dan a vision to equip Arabs to reach Arabs. He formed Enduring Love (EL) to enable these Arab servants of God to engage in evangelism, discipleship, and church planting.

Despite many challenges, including safety concerns and persecution, EL is flourishing. During the pandemic years,

these EL servants baptized more than 200 new believers, formed nearly a dozen congregations across the region, and shared the good news of God’s love.

How does Enduring Love work?

“Experience has shown that the most fruitful work in the Arab world is being done by the Arab people themselves,” Dan explains. Enduring Love empowers 27 Arab servants of God, who minister in their home countries of Morocco, Tunisia, Egypt, Sudan, Lebanon, Syria, and Iraq.

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In these pages, I hope you'll enjoy just a few of the many stories made possible as you equip us to extend the invitation to the table of God's kingdom. Thank you for your love and support!

International Ministries has been in a season of discovering the new things that God is making beautiful in God's time all around us. And, as we prepare to celebrate our **210th anniversary next year in 2024**, we find our eyes and ears tuned to our Lord's open, missional invitation to all. Please join us in praying for the upcoming celebrations.

Together with you in God's mission,

Rev. Sharon Koh
Executive Director / CEO



Do you know that incredible feeling of being invited to the table to partake in a homemade meal?

Hospitality is one of the great mission experiences that the IM family enjoys time after time. I cherish the memories of local, homemade food in Lebanon, Malaysia, North East India, the Democratic Republic of the Congo, Bolivia and many other countries where our global servants and international partners reside and serve.

Similarly, it is such a joy and delight for me, IM staff, and my global servant colleagues to travel all over the United States and Puerto Rico and be invited to stay in the homes of our friends, supporters and mission partnership networks. Thank you for the ways you open your homes, your churches, and your hearts to receive us generously. We have enjoyed many a good mission potluck!

Our Lord Jesus Christ was known for radical hospitality. His critics regularly accused him of "eating with the wrong crowd" or being found in sinners' homes. Perhaps the most vivid memory we have of Christ's hospitality is the moment when he took the bread, gave thanks and broke it, and told his disciples that this was his body, broken for them.

Friends, we are so grateful to be invited to the table of God's kingdom. It is a richly diverse table with seats saved for each one of us. At the same time, we are invited to extend this invitation to all who would come to the table. This continued act of invitation across cross-cultural and other divides is the work of God's coming kingdom, a mission that God has asked all of us to participate in together.

Inspired by what you read in this issue? If you would like to equip IM global servants to share the gospel, please use the enclosed reply envelope to send your gift of support or donate online: www.internationalministries.org. You can help us reduce costs when you receive an electronic instead of print version of this newsletter. To do that, create (or log into) your account at **portal.internationalministries.org** or email us at **imdonservices@internationalministries.org** with your name and address.

For more information, contact zdripps@internationalministries.org

WHAT IS “Enduring Love”?

Continued from cover

Meet Soraya and Ibrahim*

Twenty years ago, during a violent civil war in Darfur, Sudan, Soraya fought as the only woman alongside soldiers who called her the “mother of the army.” Later, she fled to Egypt as one of 2 million Sudanese refugees. In the midst of all the upheaval and trauma she’d experienced, Soraya sensed God calling her to become a Christian. She prayed, telling God that if that was the case, God would have to send a teacher to her house.

Not long after Soraya prayed, God sent Ibrahim, a fellow Sudanese refugee and EL servant. He shared the gospel and began to disciple her as a follower of Jesus.

“I became convinced, there is no peace without Christ,” says Soraya. “Peace doesn’t come from the rifle. No. There are people I used to accuse—they killed my husband, they raped my daughters. Today we pray for them... Egypt has become a blessing to us. We were refugees, but God had a plan to bring us here to open our eyes so that we would know him.”

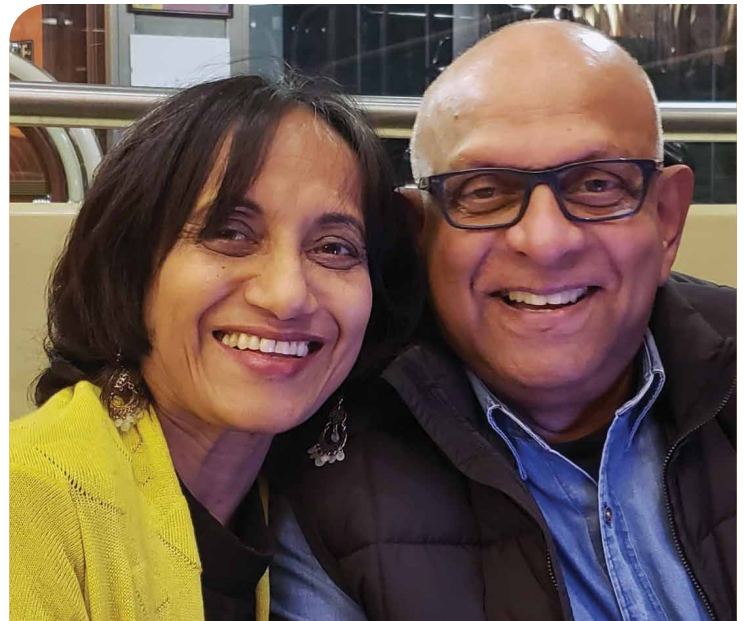
As he walks alongside her, Ibrahim has given Soraya a new name. “I said to her: You are the mother of the believers.”

Business-as-mission projects

Several EL servants receive support, while a few receive grants for business-as-mission startups. This is an effective way to navigate faith and ministry in a “closed” country—leading to self-support.



Enduring Love servant Ibrahim, his wife, and Soraya (right)



Global Servants to Lebanon Dan and Sarah Chetti

In Lebanon, Salim and Aaliah* are two EL servants who have thrived in business-as-mission. Recently, they met a Syrian refugee family living in an unsafe refugee camp. Through a grant from an Oregon church, Salim and Aaliah purchased an abandoned farmhouse and hired the refugee family to care for the land. The farm provides the family with housing and food, with additional food for other church members in need.

“Jesus gave him a new lease on life,” Salim says. “He was so grateful that Jesus has a plan for him and his family! What an amazing testimony to the provision of God.”

Partnership

Dan launched EL thanks to generous donations from across the U.S., including churches in Ohio, Colorado, Idaho, and American Baptist Churches of the Rocky Mountain Region and Great Rivers Region.

In 2017, Todd McClure, Minister of Missions and Finance for the American Baptist Churches’ West Virginia Baptist Convention, joined EL’s leadership, serving alongside Dan as the associate director. Todd is also an IM Special Assistant for the Middle East and North Africa.

“When we made our most recent trip in 2022, we saw how this ministry has expanded,” Todd says. “While we certainly credit Dan’s vision nearly a decade ago, it’s clear that this is not Dan’s ministry but God’s. We are grateful for those whom God has called to serve alongside and to support Enduring Love.”

**Names have been changed.*

Adventurous Faith

What would you do if God called you to take a step of faith and serve through short-term mission? Season Mussey tells the story of God's unexpected call to teach online English classes in Cambodia.

One night, as Dr. Season Mussey sat holding her newborn son, watching his breath rise and fall, she realized she needed to learn to trust God in new ways. "Sitting there, I was thinking, what would you have me do, Lord? What's next? I think this was the first time in my life I was finally maybe still and quiet enough to really hear his still small voice."

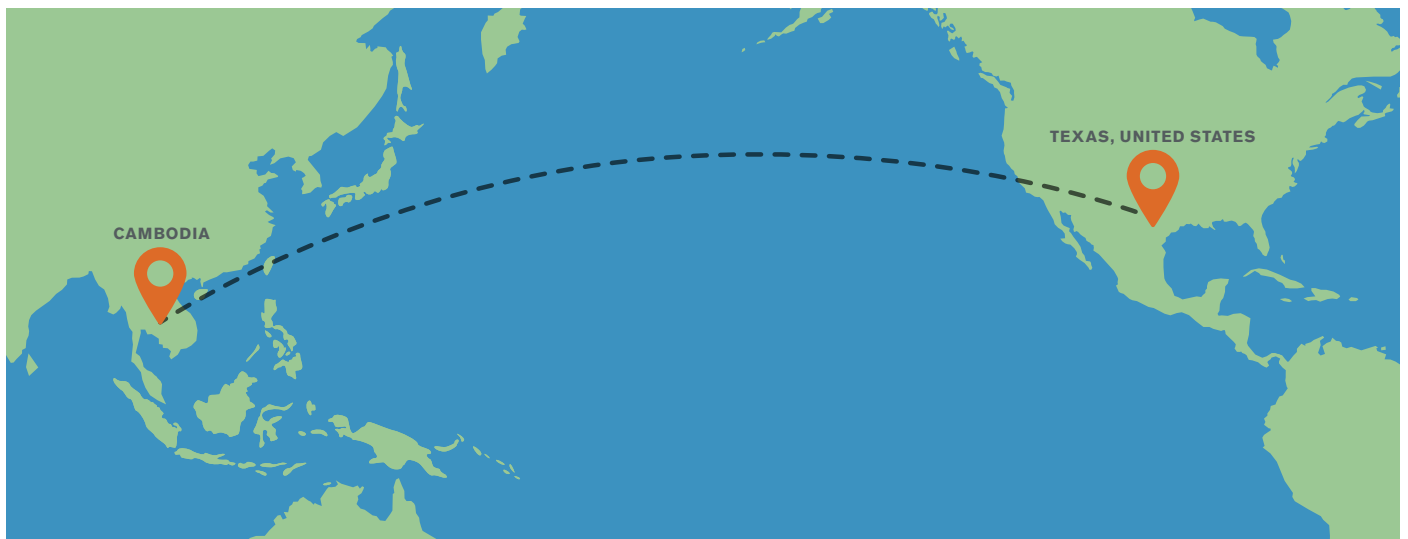
A teacher and education consultant, Season traveled with her husband and son to Spain, where they saw the difference English as a second language classes could make within the larger ministries of a church. But just as Season was beginning to apply what she'd learned in her local context, the pandemic unexpectedly closed the ministry's doors.

Around the same time, a friend emailed Season about a short-term mission opportunity through International Ministries. One of IM's partners in Cambodia needed someone to serve virtually in an English teaching

experience. "It seemed like a direct answer to my prayers," Season says.

Season connected with IM's Short-Term Mission Director, Rev. Sandra Dorsainvil, to learn more about IM and the opportunity. **"IM's commitment to go only where invited really struck me as critical," Season says. "And this was no different in a digital platform. IM is really in tune with preparing any short-term missionary to know their role and support the partner and their goals."**

In Cambodia, which is primarily a Buddhist country, IM partner Bless Cambodia Network ministers to college students through a housing ministry with a missionary house parent. Ten students from various local universities live at the house. Because students value learning English to enhance future career opportunities, house parent Ellen Shaoang Phom wanted to provide them with an English class.



“This was a real step of faith for me,” Season explains. “I was comfortable teaching English in person, to primarily Spanish-speakers. This would be a very different experience. The primary language (Khmer) in Cambodia is very different. I had a lot to learn, not just with the online aspect but also with the cultural and linguistic differences.”

Ellen and Season set two goals: to help the students gain confidence and proficiency in English, and to use the Bible during the instruction. Beginning in February 2021, Season focused on basic English and vocabulary. The second term, they practiced conversation and read parts of Psalms. By the third term in August 2022, the students were asking for an English Bible study—reading and talking about the first six chapters in Daniel.

“As the classes progressed, the missionaries in Cambodia began to see increased confidence and willingness to speak English in everyday settings,” Season says. “And they started asking more questions about the Bible. Their curiosity about faith increased.”

Season saw the Holy Spirit at work not only during the classes but also in her own family. Her little son was often present during the virtual meetings, participating when he could. “My son has an awareness now that there are other people on the other side of the world who God loves just like he loves us,” she says. “He’ll ask, ‘Are they sleeping now? Did they already go to church?’ We love those students as family even though we haven’t met them.”

The experience gave Season the opportunity to practice what one friend calls “adventurous obedience,” and she gained a lesson in partnership. “Partnership is something IM does really well, and it’s the way God does it, too. God brings brothers and sisters in Christ all together toward a common goal. That’s the power of God. At the time I was just focused on the difficult decision to shut down my small English group locally, but God had this bigger plan. God is weaving together a masterpiece for people to know him.”



Season Mussey (pictured above) took a step of faith in responding to God's call to teach online English classes as part of a ministry to Cambodian university students (pictured below).

*Want to learn more about short-term mission through IM?
Visit internationalministries.org/short-term-mission-stm*



4 ways you can give smarter

AND INCREASE YOUR IMPACT

by Zofia Dripps, Associate Executive Director for Mission Advancement

As I talk with IM supporters, many people just like you have said they wish they could do more. Some are interested in hearing about how they can honor a loved one through their giving. Some want to give in a more permanent, lasting way, to ensure the ministries they love can continue for many years to come. Have you thought about this lately?

To help you learn how you can have a positive impact on future generations, we've developed new pages on our website about easy giving options: internationalministries.org/why-give-to-im/ or simply use the QR code to our website below.

- 1. Gifts that make an impact now:** Many of these gift options—like donor advised funds, stock, and IRA gifts—also provide financial and personal benefits to you.
- 2. Gifts that reduce your taxes:** You can give gifts that will provide you with tax benefits now, or you can establish a future gift with tax benefits for your loved ones. Find out how on our website!
- 3. Gifts that pay you income:** Did you know that you can further God's global mission while earning income for life with your gift?
- 4. Gifts that cost nothing now:** A gift in a will or a beneficiary designation is an easy way to share God's love for years to come!



Added tip: Have you created an IM donor portal?

When you create a login through our website (which you can do by clicking “login” at the top of our website), you can directly access your IM account. This means you can easily and privately change your credit card information, your giving frequency, or your giving amount. During tax time, this makes it especially easy to access your annual tax receipts. IM Donor Services (610-768-2323) can help you set up an account. Remember: your donor portal will only show you your current donations beginning on the date you first set up your portal, but annual tax receipts are available for the year.

Questions?

You can email imdonorservices@internationalministries.org or call me through Donor Services any time with questions. Our donor advisors and I can also visit your area to provide personalized information with options that will fulfill your wishes.

Thank you for your continued partnership in God's mission! We couldn't do this without you.



project

SPOTLIGHTS



DR CONGO: BAPTIST UNIVERSITY OF CONGO (UNIBAC)

Help provide university-level academic training in a remote area of the Democratic Republic of the Congo. Beginning sixty-five years ago, the Pastoral Institute of Kikongo offered a theological training program for pastors in rural communities. In 2015, the institute became a full-fledged university. Many UNIBAC students major in both theology and education, enabling them to become certified teachers at a local school while pastoring a local church.



MYANMAR: MEDICAL CARE AND FOOD PROJECTS

Supply medicine and food for clinics and mobile hospitals in rural Myanmar. This White Cross project seeks to raise \$11,764 annually for the Myanmar Baptist Convention. By providing nutritious foods, they help fight off diarrhea, dehydration, and death. Their mobile hospitals offer care that will improve the quality of life for hundreds of people. Please pray for the leaders of the Myanmar Baptist Convention as they seek to care for those without basic nutritional foods and accessible health care.



HAITI: CLEAN WATER PROJECT

Provide safe, clean water for thousands of families in Haiti through water pumps that will prevent the spread of waterborne illnesses. Since the 2010 earthquake, Haiti has experienced cholera epidemics and outbreaks of dengue fever and chikungunya. People rely on dirty river water they share with cows and other livestock. Digging to reach clean water is expensive—nearly \$2,000 per well, which is far beyond the reach of Haitians who earn \$1 a day. But together we can supply safe water through this project managed by Global Servants Kihomi Ngwemi and Nzunga Mabudiga.



CHINA: EDUCATION FOR ORPHANS

Help orphans in China break free from the cycle of poverty by giving them access to educational opportunities. When Xiao Yang was a baby, her father died from a heart attack. Several years later, her mother left. Thanks to support from this project, Xiao Yang could stay in school and hopes to pass the high school entrance exam. Sponsorship of orphans provides them with clothing, food, school supplies, tuition, and dorm fees. \$500 will support the education of one child for a year.

To give to these or other projects, visit www.internationalministries.org/category/projects

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