

Dear Friends,

May 2024

I hope this letter finds you well wherever you are. It's mid-May here in SE Asia, which means the rains have started again and we find ourselves waterlogged on most days.

I've been thinking a lot lately about milestones, and our family has had its share in recent weeks. First, our oldest daughter and her husband just had a baby girl – making Michelle and me first-time grandparents. She's tiny but healthy and a good baby by all accounts. Michelle was able to be in Grand Rapids when Elisabeth delivered and has immensely enjoyed helping them adapt to baby life. Anna and I will join them on June 11th.

In other milestone news, I turned 50 years old on May 21st. Our church was very good to me, treating me to meals and a special party after services one Sunday. I turned 40 just after we arrived in SE Asia while in Kuala Lumpur at the Things To Come Mission Southeast Asia Grace Conference back in 2014. That means the entirety of my forties have been spent abroad in this ministry, a sobering reality that I am so thankful for!

If your arithmetic skills are well-honed, you may have noticed that the Kilgos just celebrated our 10th anniversary on the field a few weeks ago on May 9th. Here is a brief timeline recap of how the Lord has blessed these past ten years.

May 9th 2014 – We arrived to our new city's airport at 11:30 PM in the midst of a thunderstorm. The next day we moved into a small, rented apartment that barely held all six of us.

September 2014 – Through working with another ministry, I was approached by a lady who asked me to teach an English class. Two days earlier, unbeknownst to her, I had finished an ESL certification course. God's timing! This class would become vital to our ministry here.

October 2014 – In this English class we met a woman who found out that we were Bible teachers and wanted to learn more. We had an initial class with her and another lady. By the end of the month, we had 27 people coming to our small apartment every Friday night for Bible study, plus their kids who Michelle taught! Some of those same people took us under their wing and helped us get acquainted with the area.

October 2014 to October 2016 – We held twice weekly Bible studies and an English class that helped us build our network of friends that would eventually assist us in planting the church. These years were filled with Michelle hosting friends many times every week, forging a trust that would eventually pay off for us.

August 2015 – To address visa concerns, I took a part-time job at a local American Christian international school as a statistics teacher and eventually a Bible teacher. When I first took the afternoon job, I was concerned that it would draw me away from



ministry, but the reality in Asia is that ministry is a night and weekend endeavor. Making this decision was tough, but the Lord blessed it abundantly. Within a year after I took the job, visas began getting much harder to obtain, forcing a lot of missionaries to leave the country. Also, working at the school added to our network. What started as an uncertain two-year commitment has turned into nine years of God's provision for our visas and free education for our children.

November 6th 2016 – Our church had its first ever service on a Sunday morning. We had almost 80 people come out to support us. Though I knew we would have support on the first Sunday, the real question in my mind was the second Sunday, because whoever came that day presumably would be interested in joining our church. That next Sunday, we had 35 people return for services, a great encouragement to us!



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November 2016 to March 2020 – These 3.5 years were spent preaching, counseling, holding Bible studies and English classes, serving the community and reaching out with the gospel. A great many people who attended our English classes became believers and joined our church. Michelle continued to focus on children’s ministries and hospitality. By 2020 we were averaging about 115 people on Sunday mornings to listen to God’s Word.



March 18th, 2020 – The fear of COVID hit SE Asia hard, and on this date our country shut down for many months. We weren’t allowed to meet as a church for close to a year, and these intermittent closures continued off and on for the next three years, forcing us online. In January 2020, we had started another church plant in different part of our city. That assembly was already meeting for Bible studies when the order to stay at home was issued, and the effort sadly had to be abandoned. In Asia, these were very challenging times.

January 14th 2021 – When life deals Michelle lemons, she makes lemonade! Michelle (who used the COVID downtime to earn a master’s degree online) was inspired by some of her coursework to start thinking through a Bible school. Throughout much of the latter half of 2020 we planned the Bible school. On this single day, we 1) had to move houses on four hours notice because of another COVID lockdown, 2) take one of our children to the emergency because of a bike crash, and 3) held the first-ever Bible school class. What a day!

January 2021 to January 2024 – These years were my very busiest. In addition to the church responsibilities and a part-time job, I now had to plan, teach and administer a Bible school. Again, God was faithful giving us a class of seventeen in Year 1, nine of which continued to Year 2, and eight of which stayed through graduation in Year 3. These eight students and I are now all close friends, and they are serving the Lord in our local church and elsewhere.

January 2024 to May 2024 – With four men now fully trained, we have a preaching rotation at our church to help the men get experience. We are hoping that this will strengthen the next generation of leaders to take the church someday.

I have only scratched the surface with the outline above, and I didn’t even mention family milestones like three of our children graduating and moving back to America, two college graduations, two weddings, etc. But I hope it is plain to you that God has moved powerfully in our ministry. All of this is because of our supporters, and I very gladly cede you all the eternal credit for it. From the bottom of our hearts, we thank you for your prayers and support!

In His Service,

Pat Kilgo and Family



Serving in



**Southeast
Asia**



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