

IGRC Missionaries



Debbie Dornon, Nepal – IGRC Fund #1350
Lester Dornon, Nepal – IGRC Fund #1355

Lester Dornon, M.D., is a missionary with the General Board of Global Ministries, assigned as a senior physician at the Tansen Hospital in western Nepal in Asia. He and his wife Deborah returned to Nepal and Tansen as missionaries in mid-2012, having served there from 1990 to 2002.

The hospital in Tansen is related to the United Mission to Nepal, established in 1954 as a partnership between the people of Nepal and a coalition of 20 Christian organizations on four continents. The United Methodist Church has a long association with this medical mission. Nepal is a small country high in the Himalayan Mountains, where poverty is widespread and health facilities are in limited supply.

Tansen and other United Mission facilities treat the sick and train Nepali doctors and other medical staff to eventually assume full responsibility for the hospitals.

Lester Dornon was born in Japan, the son of Methodist missionaries. He received his Bachelor of Science and Doctor of Medicine degrees from Northwestern University, Evanston, Illinois. He felt a call to practice medicine in a place where people have little or no access to healthcare. That desire led him and Deborah to Nepal, arriving with two small children; a third child was born while they served there.

"When we left Nepal in 2002," Lester says, "We felt that when our children were well on their way to independence, we would return to help again. God has opened the door for us to do just that." Back in the U.S. in 2002, Lester went into private medical practice in Waynesville, Ohio, and from 2005 to 2012, was affiliated with AmCare Doctors' Urgent Care in Milford, Ohio. He is a member of the First United Methodist Church of Middletown, Ohio, in the West Ohio Annual Conference.

Of his spiritual journey, Lester says that he "made a personal commitment to serve the Lord when I got to college and saw the lives people around me were living, people with different values, different priorities, and no eternal significance to existence. Once I got out of the driver's seat of my life and let God take control, I was able to leave a lot of anxiety and stress behind—to wait on God to do things in my life that were beyond my control."

Lester and Deborah's adult children, Rachel, Luke, and Luke's wife, Laura, live in the U.S. Their youngest daughter, Hannah and her husband, Nathan, live in England.

Email: lesdebbiedornon@gmail.com

More information at <https://advance.umcmmission.org/p-1483-dornon-lester.aspx>



Priscilla Legay Jaiah, Liberia– IGRC Fund #2420

Rev. Priscilla Legay Jaiah is a missionary with the Board of Global Ministries of The United Methodist Church and the Superintendent of Ganta Mission Station of the United Methodist School in Liberia, West Africa.

As the Superintendent, she oversees the agricultural program, coordinates training, staff development programs and outreach activities, and engages with local and international partners to increase funding for program support. In her former assignment as principal of the Ganta United Methodist School, she oversaw the daily operation of the school as she helped to rebuild its facilities after the 2003 civil unrest in Liberia. She managed teams work teams, building and educational supplies and funds.

Prior to her assignments in Liberia, Rev. Jaiah was on study leave for one year in the United States. She previously served in Ghana, West Africa, for eight years, where she worked with the Refugee Ministry at the Buduburam, Liberia, Refugee Camp, and the Ghana Methodist Church.

"The difficult part of our mission was working with the refugees," Priscilla shares. The Buduburam United Methodist Church is located at the Liberian Refugee Camp at Buduburam, "a community where life is a struggle. There is a high risk of substance abuse, poor sanitation, and no economic means. The people had no hope of returning to [the place] they once knew as home." In the face of this, she says, "our ministry was directed towards women, children and youth as our highest priority – we fought to rebuild a community of trust, hope, love and empowerment.

I have learned over the past eight years and admire the high level of spirituality, the joyous spirit, and the strong hope and trust in God that the refugees have. At the end of every skill graduation program, you see smiles on the faces of women and young men and girls and know that they have been empowered to be in control of their lives. From no skills to a career, from no job to self-employment, and from hopelessness to being hopeful."

A native of Liberia, Priscilla learned to share her faith as a child, working with her mother in villages as a Sunday school teacher, youth worker, and choir member. She shares, "during my seven years of pastoring, I always felt the responsibility of meeting the spiritual, physical, and emotional needs of children, women, and the less fortunate in society." She believes that the global church can "share the Gospel of Jesus Christ with people who are victims of structural sin [and] bring freedom, justice and peace to God's children here on earth."

Ms. Jaiah holds a B.A. from Gbarnga School of Theology in Liberia, a Masters' degree in social work from Clark Atlanta University, and an M.Div. from the Interdenominational Theological Center, in Atlanta, GA.

Priscilla has three daughters, Bendu, Massa and Ziluo (Kiki).

More information at: <https://advance.umcmission.org/p-1502-jaiah-priscilla-legay.aspx>



Jane Kies, Zimbabwe – IGRC Fund #2401

Jane Kies is a United Methodist missionary with the General Board of Global Ministries teaching Intensive English to students from non-English-speaking countries at Africa University in Mutare, Zimbabwe, southern Africa.

Africa University is a United Methodist Church-related institution that is being nurtured and funded by church members from all over the world. It is a consequence of the growth of United Methodism on the African continent and has its foundations in the history and legacy of the church. Africa University opened in March 1992 as the first private, international university in Zimbabwe

Reflecting on her assignment at Africa University, Jane says, "Working with young people who come to Africa University with a passion for learning English is a rewarding experience. Fluency in English equips them to study for a degree that will enable them to carry out their particular ministries and use their gifts. I am thankful for the opportunity my students give me to learn about the diversity of cultures and peoples on the African continent. I also value the opportunities to study and discuss the Bible together and help the students apply its teachings to their lives and experiences at Africa University."

Jane was born in Ndola, Zambia and grew up in southern Africa and England. After graduating, she spent two years in Uganda as a volunteer with the Church Missionary Society, teaching in a rural secondary school. She then returned to England to earn certification in Teaching English as a Second/Foreign Language (TESOL). After finishing, she taught English at Maun Secondary School in Botswana, where she also worked with the Art Club and the Scripture Union student group.

In 1994, Jane went with her family to live and work at Nyadire Mission in Zimbabwe, teaching English at the mission high school and working with women to establish a Sunday school for children at the Nyadire United Methodist Church. In 2002, the Kises transferred to Africa University in Mutare. She is married to Larry Kies, and They have four children: Ben, Andrew Pule, Carly, and Michael.

Email: jkies60@gmail.com

For more information: <https://advance.umcmmission.org/p-1474-kies-jane.aspx>



Alma Navarro, Taiwan – Fund #1123
Richard Navarro, Taiwan – Fund #1124

The Rev. Alma Jumoad-Navarro is a missionary with the General Board of Global Ministries of The United Methodist Church, serving as minister for administration and Christian education of the Overseas Filipino Workers (OFW) ministry in Taipei. She was commissioned in late 2014.

The Rev. Richard B. Navarro is a missionary with the General Board of Global Ministries of The United Methodist Church, serving as minister for congregational development and pastoral care of the Overseas Filipino Workers (OFW) ministry in Taipei. He was commissioned in late 2014.

The OFW ministry is linked to the Methodist Church in the Republic of China and collaborates with the Davao Episcopal Area in the Philippines. There are an estimated 100,000 Filipinos in Taiwan at any given time, a majority of whom are temporary migrant workers. Some 3,000 Filipinos leave their country every day seeking livelihoods abroad. The OFW ministry in Taipei was started by volunteers and enhanced by pastors sent by Davao with space and stipend assistance from the Methodist Church. Global Ministries was invited to become a partner in the outreach.

The ministry plan includes not only worship and social services but also follow through as workers return to the Philippines, providing spiritual care and pastoral counseling and linking them to congregations at home.

Alma and her husband, the **Rev. Richard B. Navarro**, also a missionary, are from the Philippines. She is an elder of the East Mindanao Philippines Annual Conference. She has served as resident minister of the Jesus Lover of Souls United Methodist Church, minister of Christian education at Good Shepherd United Methodist Church, and youth minister of 4th Bulacan United Methodist Church, all in the Bulacan Philippines Annual Conference.

She received a Bachelor of Science degree in medical technology from Southwestern University, Cebu City, and a Master of Divinity degree from Union Theological Seminary in Dasmariñas City, Province of Cavite, south of Manila.

Alma has a special affinity with overseas workers since she was once a factory worker there. An experience cut short of her contract by a vehicle accident that both sent her back home and caused her to reevaluate her life's plan. She had been born into the church, had

given her life to Christ at age 12, and had been a leader in a congregation. Back home, she entered seminary and served in several ministries in the Bulacan Conference.

She was strongly influenced in the direction of missionary work by the passage in John 21 where Jesus tells his fisherfolk disciples to cast their nets on the "right side of the ship." For her, what would be the right side? She would find out by responding to an invitation to return with her husband and family to minister among overseas workers.

Alma found the answer to a question that had come to her when she was first in Taiwan. The question was, "What else Lord?" She explains: "In God's perfect time, He brought me back to Taiwan to reach out to Filipino migrant workers. Somehow I do understand the life of being an OFW. My stay in Taiwan as a factory worker was the chance to know the needs and struggles of OFWs. And so, my husband and I are dealing with these things among the migrant workers with whom we minister."

Alma and Richard have two children, Charis and Chadash.

Richard is an elder of the East Mindanao Philippines Annual Conference and, over 16 years, served a series of small and large pastoral appointments, primarily in the Bulacan Annual Conference. His churches included Bulacan Central, Good Shepherd, and 4th Bulacan United Methodist Churches. He and his wife **Alma Navarro**, also a missionary, shared these ministries. Richard holds a Bachelor of Arts degree in psychology from Philippine Christian University in Manila and a Master of Divinity degree from Union Theological Seminary in Dasmaringas City in Cavite Province.

A strong sense of covenant with God through Jesus Christ sustains him in good times and bad. "I found real joy inside of me," he says, "when God brought my family and me to be missionaries in Taiwan, despite challenges I face in the ministry. I found something valuable that cannot be exchanged for the most expensive treasures in the world. My faith has totally increased and is getting stronger... My faith tells me that Jesus Christ is enough for me."

The ministry is called Ang TANANAN ng NAGDADAMAYANG PINOY SA TAIWAN ("A Home for Filipinos Who Care for One Another in Taiwan.") Richard believes that in time the ministry will spread to all parts of Southeast Asia where Filipino migrants are located.



Sandra Raasch, Belize-Honduras – Fund #1095

Sandra K. Raasch is a missionary with the General Board of Global Ministries of The United Methodist Church, serving as Volunteers Coordinator. She formerly worked in mission finance in Honduras.

Sandra was commissioned as a missionary in 2005. At the time, she said: "God has been grooming me for this call all my life by giving me a heart for people, an ability to receive a finance degree, and to participate in mission trips, and by leading me to a church home, where I found Christ and have been able to deepen my walk-through Bible study, meeting brothers and sisters in Christ, and finding my spiritual gifts of administration and hospitality."

Sandy was born in Cape Girardeau, Missouri and attended the University of Missouri in Columbia, earning her Bachelor of Science in business administration and finance in 1987. Before beginning her mission service, she owned and managed a business, worked for four different companies in Kansas in supervisory positions, and volunteered for numerous charitable organizations through her church.

Sandy is a member of the United Methodist Church of the Resurrection in Leawood, Kansas. Her parents, Harold and Becky Raasch, live in Overland Park, Kansas, and attend the same congregation.



Helen Roberts-Evans, Liberia – Fund #2432

Helen Roberts-Evans is a missionary of the General Board of Global Ministries of The United Methodist Church, serving as director of the Department of General Education and Ministry of the United Methodist Church in Liberia. She was commissioned in October 2009, having initially gone to Liberia as a mission volunteer in July 2008. Helen was born in Liberia, and her return as a missionary was a lifelong dream.

Helen's work includes meeting needs in teacher training, scholarships, resources, new school construction, and school building renovation and repair.

"My father taught at the University of Liberia from 1956 to 1958," Helen says. "During those two years, he traveled throughout the country filming and taking hundreds of photographs. I was only one year old when we came to Chicago, but we often watched my father's slides and movies as my parents told us stories about the history and politics of Liberia. I wanted to return and experience life there for myself."

As a child, she also experienced the joy of interacting with persons of many backgrounds and religions through community and university contracts in Chicago's Hyde Park neighborhood. In high school, she and a twin sister became involved with a Christian student organization, but her firm trust in God would come during a difficult marriage and the need to raise her four sons.

"I am thankful," Helen says, "that my faith in God carried me through the raising of the sons. Now I have the joy of working with hundreds of Liberian children at church and school. I want to share the love of Christ with each child because I know that His love brings peace and gives strength to overcome life's challenges."

After attending high school in Evanston, Illinois, she studied in Bogotá, Colombia, and received a degree in special education from Boston University. Helen worked from 1998 through 2007 as executive director of the Child Care Center of Evanston. She was active in the Sherman United Methodist Church, serving as a Sunday school teacher and member of United Methodist Women

Helen is a member of Sherman United Methodist Church in Evanston, Illinois.

In Liberia, Helen says: "I immediately felt at home. I saw people and met people from my dreams... At my home church in Evanston, I heard we are a connectional church, but I did not fully understand what they meant until I came to Liberia. I am meeting people from all over the world who are my brothers and sisters in Christ and learning about their needs. I am a member of the connectional church and the body of Christ."



Connie Wieck, China – Fund #2226

C. Wieck is a United Methodist Amity Teacher with the General Board of Global Ministries of The United Methodist Church, serving as a teacher under the auspices of the Amity Foundation. As of August 2014, her assignment is at Luzhou Vocational and Technical College in Luzhou, Sichuan Province.

The Amity Foundation was established in 1985 by Chinese Christians to work for community development. Its programs cover education, health, disaster relief, blindness prevention, and church-initiated projects. It is a mission partner of Global Ministries. It also operates the largest Bible-printing operation in the world, publishing Holy Scripture in 90 languages. Wieck is with the education division.

At Luzhou, a three-year college, she teaches first-, second- and third-year English majors in education. Her students—some 350—look to enter the teaching profession and help support their families who live in the country's rural areas. Most are the first college graduates in their families.

Wieck has been with Global Ministries since 1997 as an English-language teacher. She spent three years at Wesley Girl's High School in Taipei, Taiwan. She was at Luzhou College prior to a move to Longzhou in 2009, where she taught at Guangxi Normal University for Nationalities.

One of Wieck's favorite Bible verses is Proverbs 16:3: "Commit to the Lord whatever you do, and your plans will succeed." (NIV)

The U.S. portion of Wieck's mission internship was served in Washington, DC, at the General Board of Church and Society, working on environmental issues. She then returned to China to teach English with Amity from 1991 to 1994 before becoming an Amity Teacher.

A native of Marshall, Illinois, Wieck earned a Bachelor of Arts degree in English with a teaching certificate in secondary education from Eastern Illinois University in Charleston in 1987. She received a Master of Arts degree in TESOL (Teaching English for Speakers of Other Languages) in 1996 from Southern Illinois University in Carbondale

Wieck is a member of First United Methodist Church in Marshall, Illinois, in the Illinois Great Rivers Annual Conference.

She is active in the Chinese Protestant Church wherever she is assigned, including singing in the choir. "The Chinese Christian Church is open to all, and services are held regularly without interference from government," she says. "As [an Amity Teacher], I feel truly blessed to worship with Chinese Christians as a member of the community."

Website: <https://connieinchina.org>

Email: corneliaw2000@hotmail.com

Other information at: <https://advance.umcmmission.org/p-1472-wieck-c.aspx>