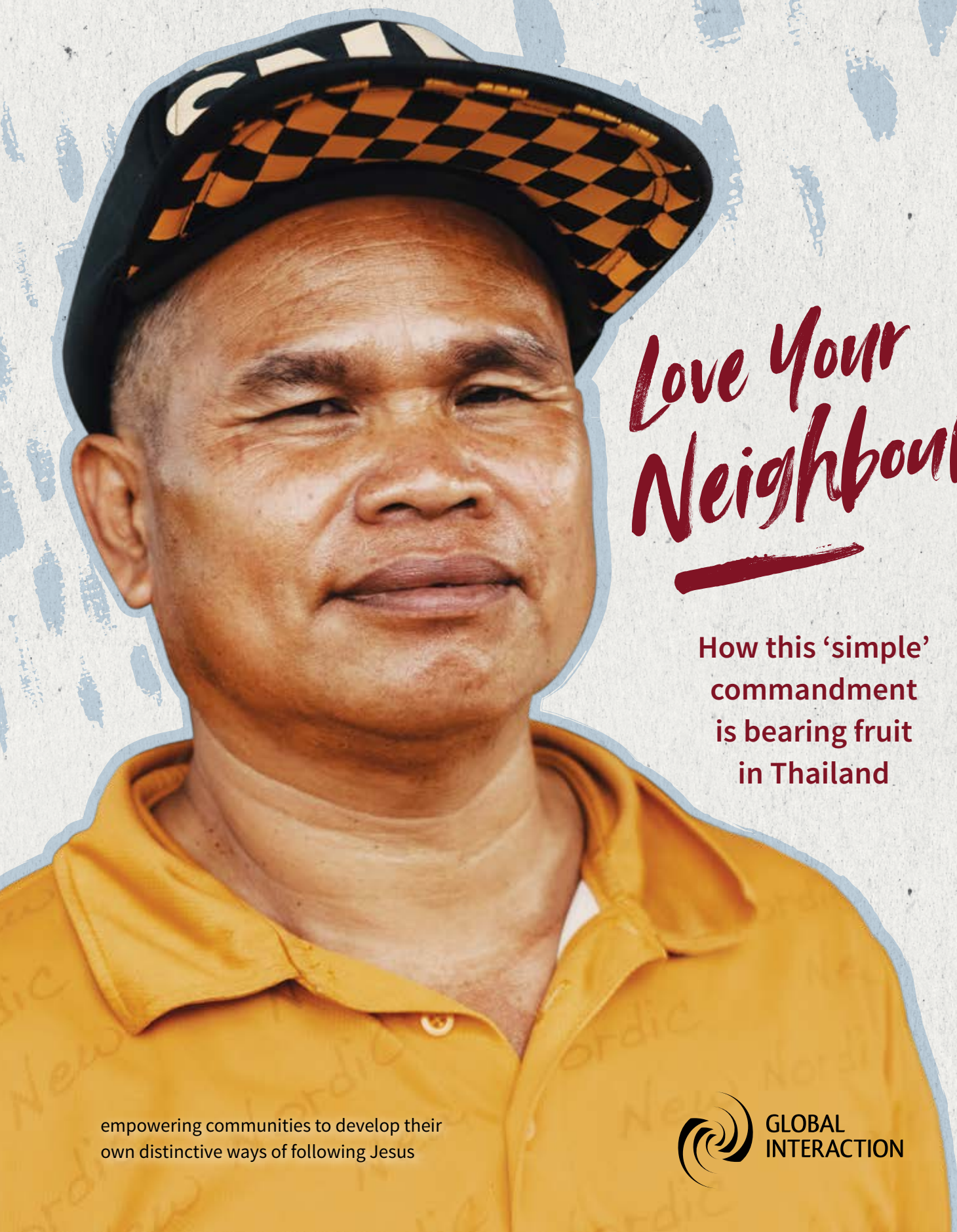


VISION

Autumn/Winter 2020



Love Your Neighbour

How this 'simple'
commandment
is bearing fruit
in Thailand

empowering communities to develop their
own distinctive ways of following Jesus



GLOBAL
INTERACTION



Hello from Scott

(our new Executive Director!)

In 2020, more than 40% of people around the world are still unlikely to know someone they trust who can share the message of Jesus in a way that makes sense to them. This reality highlights injustice, challenge and opportunity and I'm excited to have joined the team at Global Interaction as we seek to innovatively respond, empowering communities to develop their own distinctive ways of following Jesus.

Starting in any new leadership role in the midst of a global pandemic brings unexpected challenges, but it has also quickly reinforced for me that at the heart of our story are our **people** and our **partners**.

Just as we have stuck together and remained passionately committed to the cause of Jesus through World Wars, the Depression, the GFC and many other challenges, I am confident that despite big and unexpected challenges in 2020, we will get through this. We will weather this as our God sticks with us, and as we stick together!

This year hasn't unfolded like any of us expected, but our teams remain on location around the world and we ask you to pray for their health, safety and ongoing engagement with their communities. A small number of cross-cultural workers have needed to return to Australia and other team members' return overseas will be delayed. We are continuing to work with our candidates and potential new candidates as they seek God and follow His leading in their lives.

Please pray for our **people**. They are passionate followers of Jesus with a burden to see least-reached communities hear the Good News in ways they can understand.

As you pray and support our people, let me personally thank you for your ongoing **partnership**. You are partners in the Gospel with us and we couldn't do what we do or celebrate the stories of life transformation without you sticking with us, particularly in these challenging times. More than ever we're so thankful for our faithful partners and we would love others to join us!

While we navigate our way through these unexpected days, we also look to the future and continue work on our 2021-2025 Strategic Plan. We want to remain on the front foot, looking to creatively build on our wonderful mission story.

In this edition of *Vision* we get a glimpse into what loving your neighbour looks like for the team in Thailand and celebrate Keith and Pam Gallagher's almost 50 years of faithful cross-cultural work with Global Interaction! In the pages that follow, we affirm the importance of people and partners.

MAY MISSION MONTH

Yes, May Mission Month looks a little different this year! However, despite all the unexpected changes that Covid-19 has brought to our community, you and your church can still engage with May Mission Month. Our resources have been produced with your digital services in mind!

For the short film *In Step*, filmed sermons, cross-cultural worker update videos, podcasts, children's resources you can do at home and more, head to: www.globalinteraction.org.au/MayMissionMonth

Around the States

Our candidates and cross-cultural workers might not be able to visit your churches at the moment, but they can still share their stories! Catch up with them over Zoom or similar to stay connected and informed. Contact your local State Office to see how your partnership can continue to grow during this time.

NSW & ACT

Who's Around

- **Ally** – Preparing to serve in South East Asia
- **Gary and Shirley** – Preparing to serve in Malawi
- **Jit and Jan** – Home Assignment from Thailand
- **Margaret** – Preparing to serve in Thailand
- **Mel** – Preparing to serve in the Silk Road Area
- **Pete and Nomes** – Home Assignment from Central Asia
- **Pat and Joy** – Home Assignment from South East Asia
- **Vivian** – Outback Australia (based in NSW)

nswact@globalinteraction.org.au | (02) 9868 9250

WA

Who's Around

- **Ben and Sam** – Home Assignment from Mozambique
- **Glenn and Liz** – Home Assignment from Thailand
- **Sally** – Home Assignment from Mozambique
- **Sarah and Gunther** – Preparing to serve in Malawi

Event

Strategic Mission Week

www.globalinteraction.org.au/SMW

13 - 17 July | Online Course

wa@globalinteraction.org.au | (08) 6313 6300

QLD

Who's Around

- **Ben and Petra** – Home Assignment from the Silk Road Area
- **Daz and Bee** – Home Assignment (remaining in South East Asia)
- **Mike** – Preparing to serve in South East Asia
- **Morris** – South Asia (based in QLD)
- **Tristan and Megan** – Home Assignment from Cambodia

qld@globalinteraction.org.au | (07) 3354 5603

VIC & TAS

Who's Around

- **Ando** – Preparing to serve in South East Asia
- **Craig and Kim** – Home Assignment from Cambodia
- **Kate** – Preparing to serve in South East Asia
- **Phil** – Home Assignment from South Asia
- **Ryan and Suzie** – Preparing to serve in South Asia

victas@globalinteraction.org.au | (03) 9880 6161

SA & NT

Who's Around

- **David and Susie** – Preparing to serve in Malawi
- **Rob and Deb** – Home Assignment from Cambodia

sant@globalinteraction.org.au | (08) 8357 1755

Love Your Neighbour

In Mark 12:31, Jesus places loving your neighbour right up there with loving God. Villy, cross-cultural worker of 19 years, shares what this looks like among the Ethnic Thai.

Working among the least-reached, cross-cultural workers become an expression of Jesus' love. In 2001 Global Interaction sent Muana and I to become loving neighbours among the Ethnic Thai. Our team is now serving in numerous communities where the people would otherwise have little chance of having a neighbour, friend or family member who could love them in the name of Jesus.

Drawing on Mark 21:31, I want to share with you some of the stories that have taken place as my family and I have become loving neighbours in the place God has called us to serve Him.

We know that it is by God's grace that people come to know Jesus. As we act in faith, we follow God's commands and as we become loving neighbours, we see lives transformed. As you read through these brief stories, please pray for the nation of Thailand. The population is 69 million and less than 1% of the people identify

as followers of Jesus. So many are yet to hear the Good News in a way that makes sense to them. We need more loving neighbours among the Ethnic Thai, those who will love as Jesus commanded us to.

Loving your neighbour means being compassionate.

As we love our neighbours, God prompts compassion and equips us to respond. We grew to know Ja and Wood and as our friendship developed, we observed the struggles in their lives. They had ongoing health issues and just trying to make ends meet each day was a challenge. We soon realised that by simply collecting our recycling for them, they could generate income. Selling recyclable goods over the past seven years has provided some income for them, but more than that, we have seen God move in their lives.

Loving your neighbour means being hospitable.

Loong G is one of Muana's English students and our community secretary.



Since his wife left him, he has lived alone and is estranged from his children. Sensing his sadness, God placed it on our hearts to invite him to share meals with us. He misses his family and has told us how much he loves eating together. We have joy in knowing God's heart for him, we are thankful for the opportunity to share with him and we give thanks to God that Loong G is now seeking to know Jesus as Lord. As we love our neighbour, God is stirring his heart toward Jesus.

Loving your neighbour means building genuine friendships.

One day my friend came crying to me. She had huge debts and to make matters worse, she had been fired from her job as a house helper. God used me to be the mediator in this situation. Both my friend and I witnessed God's faithfulness that night. The family released her of the debt of 50,000 baht (AUD\$ 2,400) and she was invited to go back to work as usual. Our God is a gracious God who nurtures genuine friendships and equips us to become a genuine friend.

Loving your neighbour means serving them. We serve our community through teaching English and providing a free hair and beauty salon. The beauty ministry opens wonderful opportunity for conversation and bonding with the local women. It's a time of listening to their life journey and looking

out for natural openings to share my faith. Recently one woman shared how her son was depressed and had attempted to take his life. Tearfully she expressed her lost hope. In that space, I was able to share the hope that we have in Jesus.

Loving your neighbour means investing in the community.

Being active in our community often involves attending community events. This is a way of expressing our interest and care for our community and we support local business where we can. Over seven years in this location we have come to know our local taxi driver. We have developed a friendship with him and he has bonded very well with some of the local believers and even comes to worship with us to catch up with them.

Loving your neighbour means having no expectations. At some point you will be hurt for

being kind. There have been times when I felt betrayed, taken advantage of, not cared for but in these times... God reminds me from Colossians 3.23, "Whatever you do, work at it with all your heart, as working for the Lord rather than for people." This verse really helps me to love when loving my neighbour seems hard.

As I reflect on these experiences, I realise that God uses us here to extend His hospitality among our neighbours, that our ministry allows me to give my time, an empathic ear, prayers and words of encouragement. **Loving our neighbour invites people to meet Jesus through His love in us. Our team members Luke and Belle have recently moved to another location. As our team's ministry expands to reach other communities, we pray that God will use us as loving neighbours.**

*Top: Harvest in Thailand. Photo taken by Christoph Ziegenhardt.
Middle: Ethnic Thai believer. Photo taken by Christoph Ziegenhardt.
Bottom: Muana and Villy gathering with Ethnic Thai friends.*



Around the Teams

The Covid-19 pandemic is impacting each of our cross-cultural teams and the communities they serve among. Pray with us for our teams as they remain on the ground and committed to sharing the Gospel through their actions and words. The following updates share a snapshot into the experience of each team during this time.

B.I AND S.I PEOPLE OF SOUTH EAST ASIA

The team is seeing God at work in powerful ways, new small groups are gathering to read the Bible and pray together, eight local people have become believers through the Creation Care project and a leader at the Education Foundation was baptised! Daz and Bee share, *"Our staying is a real witness to our friends, some are expressing a fear of death and we feel a great sense of responsibility to share with them the hope we have."* God is opening doors and they believe that He has placed them in South East Asia for such a time as this.

YAWO OF MALAWI AND MOZAMBIQUE

The Yawo builders who helped build Sally's house are working with Scott and Bek on another project. After many months of spiritual conversations, Scott started reading the Bible with the builders once a week. After the first day they were so keen that they told him they didn't want to wait a week but instead would like to read and discuss the Bible every day. Bek says, *"Encouragingly, they even do it together on the days that Scott has other commitments. We are having many opportunities to pray with people. Chiefs are welcoming our team into their villages, inviting us to spend time and meet with them and their people. But in all that is happening, there is a strong reminder – this is not our work, but God's."*

K PEOPLE OF THE SILK ROAD AREA

Eliza reflects on a recent encounter with their neighbour, *"Happy Flower's husband is in the mountains grazing their sheep. They can't afford to pay the shepherd during the coronavirus lockdown. Should she take the children to join him for the summer? Where would they live? Coupled with this dilemma, her mother is being difficult. "Oh, my head hurts," she moaned. "I can't talk to anyone else about this, Eliza."*

So I told her a story about Jesus, our closest friend who offers us the most wonderful peace during difficult times. "I've also been bleeding for 20 days," Happy Flower replied, not showing much sign that she'd heard me. "Can I tell you another wonderful story, friend?" I asked. She nodded. "There was once a woman who had been bleeding for many years. She thought if she could just touch Jesus' cloak, she might be healed..."

Again, I wasn't convinced my words had penetrated Happy Flower's heart. But that's the work of the Spirit, isn't it? So we prayed over the back fence and I left her to ponder my stories..."

H PEOPLE OF CENTRAL ASIA

Pete and Nomes know that they cannot hold onto their plans around the timing of their return to Central Asia too tightly, however, they are completely committed to returning when they are able to. They are encouraged by news from their H friends that most people in their province are back to work, that parks and tourist locations have opened and schools will reopen soon. They remind us that, *"In the midst of everything that is going on right now, comfort, peace and hope in Jesus are what we all need."*

KHMER OF CAMBODIA

Andy and Cathie are in the early months of living and serving in Cambodia. They are encouraged by how welcoming their Khmer neighbours have been towards them and during their first three months have been invited to many local celebrations. Cathie reflects, *"Even though we are yet to share a common language, we feel that we are building genuine relationships and look forward to sharing the hope of Jesus Christ with them into the future."* They are working with their local language nurturers to find ways to continue their culture and language learning so that they can deepen their relationships with those they meet each day.

Photo taken in Papua by Mark Holt.

ETHNIC THAI OF THAILAND

The team is communicating regularly with the Ethnic Thai faith communities via telephone and are using creative and practical ways to serve their local friends. They pray that the believers will be strengthened in their faith even when they are alone and that they will be witnesses of Jesus' hope and peace to their communities. Petina explains, *"Thailand is by nature a very community-oriented culture. Thai people in general don't do anything on their own. This makes physical distancing quite challenging. We are noticing a heightened sense of stress, fear and anxiety within people."* Dema and Carolyn had the opportunity to share God's love with a grieving father and pray with him after the unexpected death of their neighbour. They share, *"We thank God that even in time of uncertainty surrounding us, we see His faithfulness in every situation."*

B PEOPLE OF SOUTH ASIA

Most businesses and transport are closed as part of the lockdown in South Asia and this has a devastating impact on the working poor who rely on their daily earnings to pay for food. Phil is thankful for the work of our partner NGO over many years which has enabled over 20,000 families to have a financial buffer as a result of the savings groups. Phil prays that these, *"Beneficiaries would encourage others to become involved with our work in the future and that they will share the lessons of good hygiene, health and sanitation with their communities at this critical time."*

Celebrating 50 Years!

1972 was the year Keith and Pam Gallagher first stepped onto Zambian soil to begin their cross-cultural ministry, almost 50 years later and they haven't stopped following God's leading. On field colleague and good friend Roger Kemp, honours 50 years of faithful service.



“Don't you ever stop asking questions?” was my initial reaction to Keith when I arrived in Zambia in 1977. I was trying to adjust to my adopted country, and he was asking question after question... aaahhh!

Not long after, I began to appreciate his inquisitive nature as it made me think through issues I may have overlooked otherwise. And that's Keith; inquisitor, straight-shooter, wheeler-dealer, backyard mechanic, stirrer, evangelist. Oh how God has used his personality to expand His work in southern Africa – particularly Zambia and Zimbabwe but also Malawi and Mozambique!

You see, dig beneath the surface and you'll find a self-deprecating, soft-hearted, hospitable and generous man. He may have got up the noses of some mission administrators but on the field we needed his directness to cut through the bureaucracy. He got things done!

Pam's hospitality and efficiency has been experienced by literally hundreds of people. Her thoughtfulness expressed in practical ways is legendary. Pam is always there for people, providing whatever help she can.

Cross-cultural mission is Keith and Pam's passion. They have given themselves selflessly to God's work in many places.

Ever since they returned from permanent life in Africa they have remained connected, Keith as consultant for Zambia and Zimbabwe and Pam as the Executive Assistant in the Global Interaction State Office in Western Australian.

There are many facets that could be mentioned in such a reflection of this faithful couple, but I'm going to mention just two:

1. Change of approach to mission work

Keith and Pam were around when Global Interaction (ABMS at the time) took over from the South African Baptists in

Zambia. It was the early 1970s and the Australians sought to change the focus of ministry amongst the Lamba people. Up until that time the only way a Lamba believer could have regular Bible teaching was to attend the Fiwale Hill Bible School, and that was beyond the financial reach of most.

Keith, along with his colleagues Les Haydon and George Stubbs, decided to take the Bible to the people rather than make the people come to the Bible. They embarked on a program called Regional Bible School (RBS) whereby one of the cross-cultural workers or Lamba church leaders would regularly

go out into the rural areas and teach the Bible for several days to village churchgoers. The result was amazing! Rural believers had the means to learn about the Bible which helped to develop their own spiritual lives.

In many ways the RBS was the forerunner to what is being done today in training of teachers in rural areas. It paved the way for future ministry where cross-cultural workers went and lived in the rural areas rather than remain at the mission compounds. Keith and Pam themselves led the way later by living in Mkushi, and at one time travelling up and down the Mkushi road living in a converted bus!

2. Relationships

Keith and Pam are very relational. So naturally they developed relationships with everyone... from the local people to fellow cross-cultural workers and everyone in between. Their work with Ba Kabilo along the Mkushi road remains a benchmark for cooperative ministry.

Many times when the Gallagher family went on holidays, they would take with them one or more of the single women in the team or even other missionary families. Those relationships have stayed long after they have left Zambia. If you want to know where a former cross-cultural worker is today, ask the Gallaghers! They have kept those relationships strong. Such is their impact over the years. It is the relationships with national leaders that Keith built while in Zimbabwe and Zambia that has driven his ministry as Country Consultant. Those relationships will remain.

Almost 50 years of ministry for Keith and Pam, what a testimony to God's faithfulness!

Keith is transitioning out of his role as Country Consultant and passing the baton onto David. Pray with us for Keith, Pam and David as well as for the strengthening of the church in Zambia and Zimbabwe.

Top Left: Keith with Chimbwe, Losita Kabilo and Damson Musonda. Middle Left: Keith with Rodger Sibindi, 2015. Top: Keith and Pam with their children 1977. Bottom: Keith and Pam with their children in Zimbabwe.



In the Family

NEW CANDIDATES



Ryan and Suzie, VIC

Ryan and Suzie have a deep conviction that the Good News of Jesus is for all people. Their practical and pastoral experience will be a great asset to the ministry among the B people. Ryan and Suzie will be based in Australia for the next few years.



Simon and Widya, SA/NSW

Both Simon and Widya are from South East Asia and have worked with the team at the Education Foundation. Now as candidates, they are preparing to join the team long-term and be part of the vision to see vibrant, growing faith communities among the B.I and S.I people.

NEW CROSS-CULTURAL TEAM MEMBERS



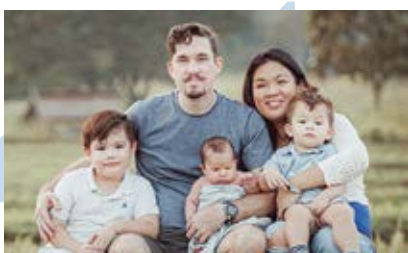
David, VIC

David has been accepted as the new Country Consultant for Zambia and Zimbabwe. He will remain based in Victoria, regularly travelling to Zambia and Zimbabwe to build up local leaders.



Vivian, NSW

Vivian is the Team Leader for the Outback Australia team. He will remain based in NSW and offer leadership, pastoral care and strategic planning to the team through regular visits and video conferences.



CONGRATULATIONS

We celebrate with Belle and Luke the birth of Isaiah James Uy in October 2019. Isaiah is a much loved little brother of Salem and Judah.

NEW STAFF



Scott Pilgrim

Executive Director, National Office
Scott has been welcomed as the new Executive Director of Global Interaction. He brings with him many years experience as a local pastor and leader in the Australian Baptist movement. Scott has a heart to see teams thrive. He is a strong leader who is passionate about people meeting and following Jesus in their own culture and language.



Geoff Maddock

VIC/TAS State Director



Nandi Adams

People Manager



Nithya Mathew

Executive Assistant to the Executive Director, National Office

COMPLETION OF SERVICE

Ian

After nearly 25 years Ian has concluded his work with Global Interaction. From 1996 to 2016, Ian and Wendy served in Malawi sharing the message of Jesus, leading Bible studies and discipling Yawo believers. Upon their return to Australia, Ian continued to lead the Ciyawo English Dictionary project through to completion after more than a decade. We thank God for this incredible couple especially their commitment to wholistic and sustainable mission. Ian is now the Senior Pastor of Moonee Ponds Baptist Church and continues to lecture at Whitley College.

Scott and Janelle

At the end of 2019 we farwelled Scott and Janelle after seven years of service in Cambodia. They established a thriving tennis program, bringing community and new skills to many young people. Janelle worked closely with local women in valuable health and nutrition education. Through this community involvement, Scott and Janelle built authentic relationships where faith and stories of Jesus were shared. Through their service many lives have been transformed and we pray for God's continual leading in their lives.

Andrea Fleming

Andrea worked at the National Office in the role of Partner Engagement and Communications Manager from 2017 to early 2020. She sparked the production of the high quality video resources *GROW where you're planted*, *SOW where He calls* series and *In Step* among other resources. We thank Andrea for her contribution.

Andrew Streets

From 2013 to March 2020, Andrew served as the Director of Corporate services at the National Office. Andrew's strong work ethic, good nature and quick wit will be missed in the organisation and we thank him for his years of faithful work.

Bruce Tudball

Bruce has a big heart for mission and Global Interaction's ministry. We sincerely thank him for stepping into the role of Interim General Director for 2019 preceding Scott Pilgrim's appointment. We pray God's blessing over Bruce and Pauline as they once again enjoy retirement together.

Lisa

Lisa worked as the QLD Young Adults Consultant from 2018 to early 2020. Her passion, energy and enthusiasm for engaging with young adults and journeying with them will be missed, however, we are excited to see her transition into her next position as the CEO of our partner NGO in South Asia. We thank Lisa for her contribution and pray for God's continued hand on her life as she transitions into this new role.

Ryan

As Ryan now prepares to serve as Team Leader of the Global Interaction team in South Asia, he has concluded as the VIC/TAS Global Interaction State Director. While his passion for mission, good nature and heart to build up the local church will be missed in the State Office, we are excited to see Ryan and Suzie follow God's leading and become cross-cultural workers.

Stefanie Pearce

Stefanie served as the Interim Executive Assistant to the Interim Executive Director at the National Office preceding Nithya Mathew's appointment. Stefanie brought a wide range of skills and experience to the role and will continue work with the National Office team casually as the need arises. We thank Stefanie for her contribution to the team and wish her well in all she does.



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Cover image of Ethnic Thai believer by Christoph Ziegenhardt

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