

December 1, 2025

Dear Friends and Loved Ones,

Greetings from Shirley and I, Joel & Megan, and our dear Jacques & Julienne (Ivory Coast, West Africa). I include Jacques because he is as vital a part of this ministry as we are. God brought him into my life almost 25 yrs ago, first as a crew member for well drilling and then as a guide/chauffer as I traveled the roads in West Africa and faced multiple road check points and the Gendarmerie (police). Now he is the Director of Steppin Out Missions in Ivory Coast, leads our Bible School of the Great Commission and Pastors their local Church. So, when you think and pray for Steppin Out please remember to include our dear Jacques and his family. When you send support to Steppin Out, you assist what God is doing in West Africa as well.

Well, As I'm looking out the window this morning (Thanksgiving Day) it's about 19 degrees and the wind is howling! Are you all ready for this? My old bones are cold just thinking about it. But, It's also the time of year when we want to truly and purposefully pause and say **Thank you** for your friendship, love and care for us personally and as a ministry! I'm sure you spent time reflecting on all that you are and have been thankful for this past year as we have, but our hearts could not be **more full** with gratitude for how the Lord has continued to sustain, affirm and confirm the calling He gave us when He began this ministry, for all that have joined us on a trip/project and for all those whom He chose to partner with us! Please stop right now and give Him Praise for His Mighty hand of Provision! Praise Him that He continues to use each one of us in His Kingdom Work!

This letter is not going to be a rehearsal of every events/projects that we have been a part of this past year, but what I'd like to do is just remind you of the platform and purpose of why we do what we do! What motivates and drives us personally and as a ministry. But, I'd like to begin with my personal testimony:

This week I was reminded in my heart that it's been 61 yrs since the LORD gave me HOPE! Yes, I can still remember very vividly the very night that I, as a 12-yr old boy- I was confronted by the clear Gospel message at a YOUTH FOR CHRIST rally. My parents always made sure I was in church on Sunday -- but that particular little country church we were attending was not known for preaching the **true** Gospel of Christ! They as with many churches in the 50s and 60s had fallen into complacency and doing what they had done for yrs of just providing a weekly service to satisfy an ethical itch! Yet, because of routine S.S. sessions and from time to time hearing the Scriptures from the pastor, the WORD of God that never returns void was dangling in my heart-- and that night Feb. 13th 1965 at that Youth rally I was confronted with HOPE! I was told that I could know for sure that if I was to die, I could have assurance of Forgiveness and I would someday step into eternity with HOPE! That HOPE was to Know that JESUS CHRIST had forgiven my sin! And that I now had a LIVING HOPE! Not just a fantasized maybe hope/ but a Living HOPE that I could Hold onto every day- a hope that had purpose and would steer my LIFE if I would follow it!

How I praise God for that promise of HOPE! That truth took root and the Lord in his graciousness set a path for me that has never failed to live up to every single promise that is presented in HIS WORD. A promise that is as alive today as it was those 6 decades ago! A promise that now will take us across the finish line, the same as it did the apostle Paul as he commented about running his race-! As many of you know my prayer for life has been that when the Lords appointed time for me comes/. I will hear Him say --WELL DONE!
I Praise God as well that for Shirley; that same Hope guides and directs her life each day as we serve our Lord together In His Steps!

DO you have that HOPE? Are you living every day with that HOPE? I pray you are, because trying to live without it is a ball and chain tied around our necks! Your days are filled with doubt, worry and anxiety. All rooted in not knowing the God of Hope. The apostle Peter, who we all know was like us; a man full of blunders, failures, and even a time of denial of his Lord, assures us of the fact that we need to lay hold of the truth that we can have a LIVING HOPE! 1 Peter 1:3-4.
So please be encouraged that no matter where you are today in your journey as a believer --or if you're not for sure you are IN CHRIST. He offers and promises HOPE!

It's because of that HOPE that we DO WHAT WE DO!

Some of you that are reading this letter may be new to STEPPIN-OUT MISSIONS (S.O.M.), So, let me move into my reminder of **Who** we are, **What** we do and **Why**. What we were clearly CALLED to do in January of 2003.

TO CHALLENGE, MOBILIZE AND EQUIP BELIEVERS TO THE CALL OF MISSIONS OPPORTUNITIES, TO CONNECT SOLUTIONS TO MINISTRY NEEDS, AND THEREBY CONTINUE THE EXPANSION OF THE GOSPEL & THE STRENGTHENING OF CHRIST'S CHURCH.

Many of you know and have participated in that Call to go and offer HOPE by Praying, Giving funds or Equipment. Many of you have actually Gone with us and served on trip/project. Over the past 23 years that has taken the form of doing Major Disaster clean ups, construction projects in many foreign countries > Africa, Indonesia, South America, Central America, Japan, Haiti, Alaska, and then also helping here in the USA through the many projects at Christian Camps, local churches or assisting in other ministries that further the Gospel message. You might be saying How does this work?

1. CHALLENGE:

My personal challenge for many years has been, how do we get the man/woman out of the pew, and encourage them that they can make a difference in peoples lives with the GOSPEL. I continually hear the statement; How can I make a difference in peoples lives Spiritually? I don't have any talents, I have never been to Bible School, I don't know how to share my faith. In todays world (especially) where people depend on Social media instead of actually being with and touching people- they are losing more and more confidence that the LORD wants to use them! I try to assure them if they have a pulse / they can come with us and we can show them how they can offer HOPE in JESUS CHRIST through helping in a physical way that opens the door to show them their need for CHRIST and that HE alone is the answer and the Eternal HOPE!

2. MOBILIZE:

This is the part when we as SOM can encourage you to come along beside us and we will put you into a safe and structured situation so you can use your hands and feet to be the Hands and feet of JESUS! For example, in the yr 2005 and beyond the Lord allowed us to take over 1600 people to serve in the cleanup efforts after Hurricane KATRINA. This was the very first start of our Disaster cleanup efforts that now encompass over 50 % of our Ministry efforts. The Lord, has (in His Sovereignty) placed us in a partnership with the ministry of Samaritan's Purse. This is where we do major tree clean up as well as help people get back into their homes. We often say that a chainsaw can open up a lot of doors!

The end of 2024 and the first half of 2025 we took multiple teams of volunteers to help clean up the major debris from Hurricane Heleen that devastated GA and then Jumped to North Carolina. As a result of this we assisted hundreds of families and individuals in cleanup efforts offering the desperate need of HOPE! Also, with every one of those contacts the Gospel message was presented and follow-up was provided through the Billy Graham Evangelistic association. And every home received a copy of the BIBLE / the WORD OF GOD!

Also, this last summer we were able to assist many Christian Camps and conference grounds in helping with physical projects that allow them to reach more people with HOPE / the Gospel! That might be to build needed additional structures like cabins, maintenance shops, office, dining hall, etc. Or perhaps grading & building roads, underground utilities, cutting trees to make more usable land. All for one purpose > Share the Hope of Christ.

This ministry plays a huge part with other ministries as we give insight to find a solution to a physical need. At the end of COVID, our local church body (Alpine Bible Church) had grown to the point of needing to expand quickly, But the Lord in His Sovereignty had a plan to take 40 or so of our people and plant a new church that now resides in Beach city Ohio. We SOM offered direction and leadership and restored a 100 yr old (very sound structural building) Church in 5 months. Joel is now one of the Pastors there, so some of his waking hrs are doing double time in efforts! And, again I mention our SOM branch work in Ivory Coast West Africa. The well drilling & water tank installation, the Bible training of Pastors under the leadership of Jacques. They are now in the 5th group of local men being taught the Word of GOD to give leadership as Pastors in these remote parts of the African BUSH.

Many people who have gone with us on these projects have returned to look us in the eye and say Wow, I was able to make a difference!!! Thank YOU!

3. EQUIPPING:

It first starts with God equipping this ministry with the resources needed to equip others. We have been blessed with a large shop building, heavy equipment, dually trucks, tools, etc etc that have been used in each and every request that has come. Then it's the blessing and joy to take people on projects to assist in hands on activity that offer's HOPE, But, we also find ourselves more and more being asked to consult other ministries in helping them to evaluate their needs to do ministry in what the Lord has called them to do. This takes on many forms such as building structure evaluation > How can we use this building for this purpose? Should we buy this structure or look for something else? Or the big one is HOW DO WE DO THIS! How do we get HVAC in this building/ we need more electrical service/ can you help us build a sewer system & water distribution, and as of lately - can you help us remove a couple of acres of trees that are in the way? PLEASE HELP US! More and more this is becoming a regular request, we can now do this better because of the yrs of experience as well as the many different people and talents that have traveled with us. They themselves have become part of a NETWORK of ministry help that offers to do KINGDOM work!

So, as I close this letter; that's Who we are and What we've been called to do. Our hearts could not be more content in where God has placed us and chosen to use us in this time of our lives. We are beyond grateful for all of you that have stayed the course with us and chosen to be a part of what God is doing through this ministry.

As you finish reading this letter, Joel is in JAMACA with Samaritan's Purse leading National teams helping to tarp roofs and evaluate damaged structure for repair, and give Spiritual help to hurting people! Again, offering HOPE that Only CHRIST can offer!

We Thank you for being part of STEPPIN - OUT in whatever way the Lord has directed your heart. That may be to Pray for the work and the many who the Lord touches through it. Maybe it's to actually go with us and be the hands and feet of Christ. And for those of you that do these former things and also partner with us through funding, we thank you! We are totally aware that the LORD HIMSELF has touched your hearts to be part of what He is doing! THANK YOU!

We will and do pray that the LORD of the Harvest will continue to use you and grant you effectiveness in the days to come! We know from Scripture that those days will become darker each day! That's OK, because we know His calling us to Himself is even CLOSER!

IN HIS STEPS,

John & Shirley, Joel & Megan, Jacques & Julienne and all of our laboring team members. May God Be Glorified in All we Do!

Have a Christ filled Christmas and let's be ready to keep going in the coming year!

"So let your Light so shine before men- unto good works so that the FATHER may be GLORIFIED in your name! Matt. 5:16