

Culture Corner *Page 2*

Serve those Who Have Served *Page 12*

In Our Weaknesses We Are Made Strong *Page 20*

A THRIVING CHURCH FOR EVERY PEOPLE

# ETHNOS

MAGAZINE



**THEY WERE THERE**

The Homes of Ethnos360

Page 4



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# ETHNOS magazine

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Each edition of this magazine is put together by the Ethnos360 team in the USA, and then modified for use in Canada by the Ethnos Canada team.

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Cover photo: Tom Palmer was a  
missionary with the Hamtai people  
in Papua New Guinea. He's now a  
resident of The Homes of Ethnos360.



Dear Friends,

This issue of *Ethnos Magazine* features a ministry of Ethnos that has personally touched my own life. After decades of serving in Brazil, my parents moved to The Homes of Ethnos360 where they were enjoyed years of fellowship with others that knew what they had been through, and were cared for with wonderful tenderness. Our family is very grateful for this facility and the staff who served and cared for our mother.

Just a couple blocks from our American home office in Sanford, Florida, is a beautiful and beautifully maintained property with 51 duplexes, 12 staff homes, plus an 18-room assisted living facility (ALF). Between the 51 duplexes and the ALF, there are currently more than 130 retired residents at The Homes of Ethnos360. More than 130 heroes of the faith! More than 130 men and women who have spent the majority of their lives serving the Lord in far-off lands!

Some of these servants pioneered and opened new regions so that others could come along behind them. Many invested years and even decades learning the language of an unreached people group, and they were the first in the entire history of that people group to share the gospel and translate Scriptures. Some served in support roles that made it possible for others to learn languages and translate Scriptures. If we could calculate how many unreached people groups now have the gospel and thriving churches in their language because of the faithful service of these, our retired co-workers, I think we would be blown away. Many of these servants, though "retired," continue to serve in vital support roles at the Ethnos360 Home Office.

Back in the early 1980s, the Executive Committee of New Tribes Mission (Ethnos360) made the decision to build a retirement community for our returning missionaries. This was not motivated by a desire to provide a comfortable retirement for missionaries. It was motivated out of a sense of duty and respect for servants who have earned that respect. From the 1940s to the 1980s, missionaries went to the mission field with no thought of retirement. These servants who went out in that era were coming home from the mission field without the resources they needed to even have a place to live in their final years of life on this earth. Personally, I am honoured to be associated with an organization that cares for those who have gone before us in such a meaningful way.

Please pray with us for the Lord's provision of needed staff to keep this vital ministry alive and well.

Yours in Christ,

*Brian Wardlaw*

Brian Wardlaw  
Missionary in Brazil, Ethnos Canada





# NEWS AROUND THE WORLD



## MAINDO LITERACY GRADUATION

The literacy graduation went very well! Rain was predicted for the morning of the graduation, and here people don't do much at all when it rains. That morning, it rained hard until 8 a.m. and then cleared up, just in time for people to prepare for the ceremony! We had invited the family of the students and all the religious and political leaders of our neighbourhood.

Everyone seemed to enjoy the ceremony, and at the end when we gave the invitees an opportunity to comment, many of them expressed thankfulness and excitement about the literacy program and Maindo Bible translation. The graduation ceremony also generated a lot more interest in the literacy classes!

—*Kent and Jenny Schafer, Southeast Africa*



## ETHNOS360 BIBLE INSTITUTE

A new semester has begun at Ethnos360 Bible Institute (EBI) for on-campus and online students. Enrollment has increased from last year. The Bible school has some exciting plans underway this school year. Andrew Royer, president of EBI, says, "We continue to walk through the accreditation process and look forward to

receiving candidate status. We are more than 10% into our Revitalize EBI capital campaign and have already begun renovation projects that will speed us into this new era at EBI."

[ethnos.ca/revitalize](https://ethnos.ca/revitalize)



## CULTURE CORNER:

### A TRIP TO THE DOCTOR VIA DUGOUT

For many of us, our nearest doctor is a short car ride away. This is not the case for a people group in the jungles of South America. Earlier this year, 21 people, including missionaries and patients requiring immediate medical attention, climbed

aboard a dugout (canoe), bringing with them enough supplies and food for a three- or four-day trip. Ten passengers from another ethnic group were already aboard the dugout, making 31 people total. The three-day trip became five. After hours on the river,

nights spent in hammocks at makeshift campsites on land, hikes through the jungle and a long car ride, the group finally arrived in the city. The patients were then able to visit the hospital and begin the necessary treatments. What a journey!



### FUNDRAISING TO SPREAD THE GOSPEL

My daughter Selah spent the last year making bracelets to sell as a fundraiser. She made dozens of them, averaging five hours of labour on each. After making some side sales, Selah brought 57 bracelets to camp to sell. She went up in front of 350 people and told them that she was making the bracelets to sell in order to support God's work to reach the unreached with the gospel. When the service finished, Selah and I stood outside, hoping to sell some. Through the generosity of many, Selah ended up raising and donating \$767 dollars to Ethnos Canada.

Selah has already started thinking about and preparing for the next fundraising event to support God's mission to reach the unreached around the world. I am humbled by my 12 year old daughter's heart for the Lord and His mission. She is an encouragement to me.

—Morgan Allen  
Faculty  
Nipawin Bible College,  
Saskatchewan



### MALAUMANDA BIBLE DEDICATION

The thriving Malaumanda church has been without missionaries present for ten years but has been faithfully spreading the gospel to other tribes around it. The Malaumanda church has even sent their own missionaries. Five couples from the people group have planted a church in a village which is already bringing the gospel to many people in that area. The Hewa church, in a neighbouring people group, also helped with this outreach and reported that the first phase of teaching went successfully and that many from Minini are now professing faith in Jesus. They shared that this outreach caused so much excitement in surrounding language groups that there are men from a neighbouring people group who are now asking the Hewa believers for help in getting their own Bible translation and teaching! On June 4, nine years after the first version of the Malaumanda Bible was completed, the dedication of the final version took place with believers from several other people groups in attendance. Seventeen hundred copies of the revised translation were made, with the first 200 being distributed among the people at the event.

—Koen and Anne-Laure Verdonck with  
Eric and Judith Hedeem,  
Papua New Guinea



### THE BANWAON BUILDERS

The Banwaon believers have been growing in their faith, and since their current church building is getting too small and is falling apart, they are stepping out by faith to build a larger church building and also have big plans to use it to host Bible conferences with other people groups close by. These men and women are giving of their own time and resources, and the missionaries there are joining in, not leading the charge. As Lynne Castelijin writes, "like in Nehemiah, they have a mind to work." Praise the Lord for this, and please continue to pray for provision for this project.

—Christina Canapp  
with Albert and Lynne  
Castelijin, Philippines



### TRAGEDY TURNS TO PRAISE

One evening a family of eight Chimanes died in a tragic accident in Santa Anna de Yucumo, Bolivia, a town located northeast of the. They had arrived by canoe from their village, Turindi, and had set up camp under the bridge when a heavy truck started over the bridge which collapsed on top of the family, killing a man and his wife and children.

We had two families from Turindi in one of our recent Bible classes. Although the accident was horrific, it opened the doors for conversation about the uncertainty of our days. We are so thankful to have some families coming in from this hard-to-reach area to study God's Word. I talked to one young woman from there who is married and has a one-year-old boy. She said that the man who died, who was the government representative of the town, had been opposed to the gospel and had no interest. His wife and children sometimes came to church gatherings and the teenaged girl who died always came, she said. She told me that she believes that Jesus died on the cross for her sins, which was encouraging to hear!

—Dan and Judy Burke,  
Bolivia





# They Were There

Some of the first Christian missionaries who ventured out to tell the good news of the gospel were the disciples, sent by Jesus Himself. “Freely you have received, freely give,” He told them. Two by two He sent them out, as we read in Matthew 10, with just the clothes on their backs and no food or money.

The implication here is that the disciples were to rely on others to support them, “for a worker is worthy of his food” (Matthew 10:10). To the rest of us, before He was taken up into heaven, Jesus challenged us in what we know as the Great Commission to “go therefore and make disciples of all the nations.” The implication, again, is that the missionaries who carry that burden even into the farthest recesses of the world need to be fully





Left: Staff, residents and interns at The Homes of Ethnos360 in 2023.

supported in their roles as they carry out their mission.

In today's world, the support roles include language experts, schoolteachers, nurses, aircraft pilots and so many other essential positions needed to reach those farthest recesses; each is individually funded by their sending churches and other providers. Yet, upon retirement, affordable housing becomes a concern. That's where The Homes of Ethnos360 comes in. There are many places a retiring Ethnos360 missionary may wind up, whether it is back home with their families or serving at one of several Ethnos360 centers across the USA. But only Sanford, Florida, offers this retirement village for those who have served with the Ethnos360 organization.

No, The Homes is not a luxury resort like those that are so popular in sunny Florida. It is a place created specifically for the housing and care of retired missionaries, and it came about through wise investments, dedicated staff and astute planning for the future.

### **GOING BACK**

The idea of providing a place for returning missionaries to retire had been tossed around for some time, and in 1974, a few retirees had set up some trailers and other housing on a parcel of Missouri land owned by New Tribes Mission (the former name of Ethnos360). But once the home office moved to Florida, the warmer climate was found to be more alluring for the retirees. So in

1979, the organization's leadership decided to repurpose its 26-acre training center in Oviedo, Florida, just south of Sanford, into a retirement community christened the New Tribes Mission Homes, or more simply NTM Homes.

By early 1982, retiring missionaries started taking up residence. Construction continued over the next few years to include a new minimal-care center named the Latham Center, in memory of Lance Latham, one of the early leaders of New Tribes Mission. "What a blessing it was to be able to care for the retired missionaries who had served the Lord for so many years!" exclaimed Dan Thomas, who came to The Homes in 1994 and then served as its director from 2005 to 2020. But unfortunately, an eminent domain claim on the property came along in 1987; the center would have to be razed for a new toll road that would dissect the area. "This was terrible news, yet we felt that if God would take this facility away from us, He would give us something even better," said Dan.

Those thoughts proved to be prophetic, because after a lengthy and frustrating search for a new property, God brought forth a realtor who suggested a 70-acre tract just a mile or so from the Ethnos360 Home Office in Sanford. "It was a celery field," said Dan. "It had a house, a barn and an outbuilding, and there were probably three trees on the property."

God also brought forth an architectural and engineering contractor for the planning and development of the property. "Their thinking and design for a retirement community was really a little ahead of its time," said Dan. "I took landscape design in college, and I thought whoever designed this knew something about curvy roads and [houses] not lined up in squares and rows."

And so, with the help of staff, volunteer workers and contractors, 40 acres were developed to include a new Latham Center. "It was 1990 when we actually occupied the property," said Dan. The remaining 30 undeveloped acres were recently sold off to a community subdivision developer.

Dan, who had served as a missionary in Papua New Guinea with his wife, Nancy, explained that years ago, one of the prevailing thoughts was to provide a place for members so that the second, third and fourth generations could serve overseas. "Well, there aren't that many second and third and fourth generations anymore. I don't really have an explanation for that," he said, adding that the focus has changed. "We're providing a place where our skilled, gifted members can come and continue

ministry. Now, it won't look like what they were doing [on the field] in most cases, but they can continue ministry in this place. It's a place with a family atmosphere [like they experienced on] the mission field, plus they can continue to serve, even if it's leading chapel or reading prayer letters and praying," he added.

Many members had returned from the field for long-term stays due to medical problems or children's needs, thinking that they might have to resign. But then they started asking if there was something they could do. "So, Member Services let them know our needs," recalled Dan. "And that's how we [found] a lot of our full-time staff." But now those resources have started to dry up. "That's been a challenge to try and find people who were not only willing but capable of serving in those roles we have here."

Returning missionaries can serve for only so long due to age and health issues, so the search continues for those who can fill full-time staff positions in a support role for those who have reached retirement age.

## **STAFF**

Not all full-time staff members come from an overseas mission, however, nor is it required. Bill Page and his wife, Lauri, came to The Homes to serve on staff without having had missionary field experience. "I've been at The Homes for approximately 30 years," he said. Originally coming on board as a mechanic, he learned many other trade skills at The Homes out of necessity. Later, he stepped up into supervisory roles and now serves as the Director of Facility Operations.

"I grew up on a farm, repaired machinery all my life, and I figured I was good at it, so I might just as well get paid for it," explained Bill. "And so, I went to school for diesel mechanics, and it was there that I got saved, accepted the Lord. Almost immediately, He impressed upon my heart that I needed to be in full-time service someplace." After a couple of years of gaining a solid foothold on his newfound faith, he heard about New Tribes Mission. "I just knew that that's where I was supposed to be. So, I signed up for Bible school and went through the training."

Bill was originally asked to come on staff as a mechanic and to try it out for two years. The move from Oviedo to Sanford had already happened, and by the time Bill arrived, all the equipment was still new. "But eventually the first air conditioner quit," he said, adding that he could work on



automotive air conditioning but knew nothing about residential air conditioning. “So, I looked it over and really had no clue what was going on.” He called a technician and watched over his shoulder, and that helped him learn how to do the repairs himself.

“Then I was taking care of the air conditioners as well. Then the guy who was taking care of the phones had to retire, so he showed me how to take care of the phones. Then I was the phone guy,” said Bill. When the Internet came around, he became the IT guy. As the houses were being built, he learned all about drywall installation. After a hurricane blew off 14 roofs, he learned about roofing. “And of course, when the concrete truck comes on the property, everybody pours concrete.”

You can say that Bill is a Jack of All Trades, but you cannot say he is Master of None (to refute a popular phrase). He and the people he leads are very adept in the work they do. For example, some of the major projects they have tackled on the property include a 77-foot bridge across a lake for foot traffic and small vehicles; draining the lakes on the property to build retaining walls and reline the drainage pipes; building roads throughout the property; and rebuilding kitchens, bathrooms and other construction projects from the well-equipped carpentry and plumbing shops. And it’s all quality work. “It doesn’t make any sense to do anything other than quality work, simply because we have to maintain it after we build it,” said Bill.

Volunteer work crews that come during the winter have been a big part of completing







those large, manpower-hungry projects. These “snowbirds” come not only to escape the cold, harsh weather but also to relish in serving the Lord in some way with their work skills. “You learn stuff from them,” said Bill. “You pick up different ideas and different ways of doing things.” Once they are gone in the spring, the staff enters maintenance mode due to limited manpower, until the volunteers return the next year.

Getting qualified staff on board has been problematic, partly because missionaries are unaware that the positions exist and partly because churches are reluctant to fund missionaries who are not on the field. “There’s a mindset that you have to go overseas to be a real missionary,” said Bill. “But biblically, where did this start? It started in Jerusalem. That’s over there. We are overseas! We are in the ends of the earth from where this thing started!”

Bill clarified that the need for more full-time staff has increased just in the last four years. “The ministry has grown here. When we moved onto the property, we only had two residents in the Latham Center, and there are now 18 independent rooms and eight Assisted Living Facility rooms, and we’re bordering on being full.”

### **RESIDENTS**

More residents in the Assisted Living Facility (ALF) means more cooking, cleaning, house-keeping and nursing staff are needed. “When we first started, we all took turns doing night duty up at the Latham Center, and we were able to add staff for that,” Bill explained. “But now one of those [staff members] is ready to retire, so we’re looking



for a replacement.” All the nurses are in their 70s, he said, and most of the maintenance crew are in their 60s, so the search is on to line up younger staff members for training “so they can understand how the place works and can handle all the different facets of what we do.”

Unfortunately, The Homes is not licensed to function as a nursing home. As residents reach the stage beyond the needs that the ALF can offer, they must be placed elsewhere. “We are limited in what we can do for them,” said Bill. “We just hate it when they have to leave here. But we can no longer give them the amount of care that they need.” At that point, it would become a necessity to have 24-hour staff, nurses and doctors on call. “We don’t have all that.” But the care that The Homes does provide is a blessing to its residents. Typically, residents will first move into one of the duplex homes and then transfer over to the Latham Center when they can no longer live alone.

Sarah Keckler resides in one of the duplexes. “The next step when you can’t manage your home anymore [is to] go into the Latham Center where you have all your cooking done for you [and] your room is cleaned for you,” she said. “You can do your laundry if you want, but you don’t have to.” As their age progresses, the residents will move into the Assisted Living Facility section of the Latham Center.

Sarah served in Colombia for 31 years and has been a resident at The Homes for 25 years. “I can’t speak enough of what has taken place here,” she said. “When I was in training back in ’65, they were praying about this very type of a situation. Not only were they praying about it, [but] I also have the opportunity and the advantage to reap the benefits of those prayers. And it’s just exciting!”

She is truly ecstatic about having a place at The Homes. “We have a beautiful home,” Sarah said. “It’s not too big, so we don’t have a lot of upkeep, but we have maintenance men that do everything. They will even come in and change a light bulb if you need your light bulb changed.” When nasty weather blows through, they clean up the debris, and if a roof is damaged, they repair it. “And we just had a new driveway poured.”

Indeed, dozens of ready-mix concrete trucks had been on the property to pour a road that had to be replaced along the rear of the property leading to the back gate, and staff members and volunteers were on hand to do the finish work. Sarah also spoke of the time when an exterior wall in her

## **THE HOMES PURPOSE STATEMENT**

The Homes Purpose Statement is part of the overall Ethnos360 Purpose Statement and Ethnos360 Core Values.

The Homes of Ethnos360 exists to provide attractive, affordable, efficient and economical housing for retired, eligible Ethnos360 personnel who apply to live at The Homes, on a space-available basis. The Homes exists to provide a nurturing and caring environment, attempting to meet both the physical and spiritual needs of its residents, within staff, facility and state licensing capabilities.

duplex had to be replaced. “The whole wall was full of termites. They tore the whole thing out,” she explained, adding that they rebuilt it and cleaned it up afterward. A relative asked her how much that cost her, to which Sarah said, “Nothing. All we pay for is maintenance fees.’ And she just can’t get over that. They replace the carpet every eight years. They do all this stuff. And the neat thing is, they’re all missionaries themselves.”

Most of the heavy workload happens when the snowbirds come. These volunteers come to work, typically for the entire season, and park their RVs on site with water, electric and sewer hookups provided. “They keep coming back because they love it here,” said Sarah. “They love it as much as we do. And you have great fellowship.”



## **VOLUNTEERS**

Some 20 RV spots are available for the volunteers, and they are often filled every season. Recurrent volunteers Doug Chandler and his wife, Karen, returned last fall for their 11th year. After a couple of years, Bill turned over the mechanical shop to Doug to be shop manager. “What do I do here?” repeating the question put to him. “They have on their property, I believe, 31 golf carts, two backhoes, one skid steer loader, one Kubota tractor, two Kubota zero-turn mowers, two pickup trucks, three minivans ... and somebody has to keep it all going,” said Doug. “And it’s been fun; it’s been interesting.”

Doug and Karen found out about The Homes of Ethnos360 through a young lady they knew who was an inspirational teacher at their church, and she suggested they start volunteering with the

organization. But what keeps them coming back is the people. “I know this isn’t heaven, but if there were a little piece of heaven on earth, this is it,” said Doug. “If the whole world functioned like it does here at The Homes, you wouldn’t see all the stuff that’s going on in the world today. It just wouldn’t exist. The people here are just incredible. Their hearts are in the right place.”

Doug has seen a lot of changes in the staff and volunteers over the years. “The biggest change is the people that you get really involved with and really get to like, and they’re good mentors,” he said. “And then the next time you come down, they’re not here any longer. That kind of hurts a little.”

For Doug the hardest part is seeing churches stop supporting their missionaries when they take a stateside ministry position. He explained that they are still part of the mission; they are just no



longer on the field. Doug likens the support for missionary field work to the support for combat troops. He described a hypothetical conversation that might have gone like this:

“You were in the Air Force?”

“Yeah.”

“Did you fly planes?”

“No.”

“Why did they pay you?”

“I don’t think people understand that for every person who’s out on the field, there’s an awful lot of people behind him, making sure that he can do the job that he’s doing,” said Doug. “Without them, he’d be sunk.”

In the military, the concept is called the tooth-to-tail ratio, where there are so many combat troops (the tooth) in ratio to support troops (the tail). The ratio has changed over the decades and centuries, depending on the situation, but the idea is the same: They require a lot of support. “If they can’t get the support or if they can’t fill positions, then the guy on the front line is going to suffer,” Doug added. “I’ll do my little part here to make it easier for the rest of them to continue their work.”

### **GOING FORWARD**

Residents have their own funding needs, but the other part of the equation is the funding needs for the missionaries who take on the staff positions. “We all have to raise our own support,” said Brian Shortmeier, director of The Homes of Ethnos360. That includes all positions within the organization, even among the leadership. All funding designated for a missionary goes directly to the missionary, and funds are not taken from the missionaries going overseas to fund other activities. “That’s what I like about Ethnos360,” said Brian. “They don’t take off 10 or 15 or 20 percent from your overseas missionaries to fund the stateside ones.”

Brian and his wife, Susan, served at a school in Papua New Guinea (PNG) from 1984 to 2000 with Brian as the high school principal. “Then from 2000 to 2010, I served as field administrator,” said Brian. They then left PNG and headed for Sanford, where Brian served at the Home Office as Chief Administrative Officer on the Executive Leadership Team. In 2020, he started serving simultaneously as director of The Homes.

“We were on the field for 26 years,” said Brian, “so our team stayed behind us when we left PNG.” Others have had to discontinue mission work prematurely after returning from overseas because they felt they didn’t have enough financial

resources to retire. “But I don’t know ... if they realized what we here at The Homes can offer,” said Brian. He urges them to trust the Lord just as they had trusted Him during their time on the field. “Which is why this place is just utterly fantastic.”

The Homes offers camaraderie and safety at a low cost to missionaries. Plus, as Brian added, it’s “the fellowship they get, the idea of being able to live around people that have been through the same life experiences and so understand what it is you’re going through. In fact, of all the places I’ve been – and I’ve loved every ministry that I’ve had in various places – the camaraderie and the morale here are higher than any place I’ve ever been.”

And then there are the volunteers, especially the snowbirds who come year after year. “They just love being here, not only for the way they fellowship with each other, but the fellowship they have with us, both staff and residents. It encourages them,” Brian said.

“This is caring for the household of the saints,” added Brian. “It is scriptural, and we just take it from beginning to end. So yeah, it takes a lot to do that, and not everyone understands that.”

Many of the people who come to The Homes have no idea how nice it is, continued Brian, and no idea what all is going to be provided. “And then to realize that they’ve moved in next to somebody that maybe they trained with 40 years earlier, hadn’t seen for 40 years, and now they get to renew that friendship and talk about how things were the same and how they were different in their respective fields. You can’t buy those things anywhere else.”

**For more information about staff positions, contact Brian Shortmeier at [brian\\_shortmeier@ntm.org](mailto:brian_shortmeier@ntm.org). And short-term internship and volunteer opportunities are on page 13.**



Contributing Writer

**Ron Hyink** retired from the US Air Force, serving first as a linguist during the Cold War and then as a photojournalist for various Air Force publications. He subsequently was employed in the nonprofit sector as a managing editor until his second retirement. With this experience in language and communication, he is now serving the Lord as a volunteer writer/editor with the Ethnos360 Home Office.

# SERVE THOSE WHO HAVE SERVED



Photo by  
Rawpixel

I began serving as the Director of The Homes of Ethnos360 in 2020. Until you see this place and meet the people, it is hard to comprehend the blessing it is to be here and to serve these saints who themselves have been serving others for years and years.

In the December 1978 issue of *Brown Gold Magazine*, the Executive Committee expressed that it was an urgent need to provide a retirement centre for our elderly missionaries who “will still be able to have an effective ministry through prayer as well as other part-time ministries in this all-important job of world evangelization.” True to form, many of the 132 retirees residing at The Homes serve part-time at The Homes as well as part-time 1.5 miles away at the Home Office, whether in the Finance Office, Reception, Publications, the International Ministries Office, Biblical Resources Team or other places.

Although the need for this retirement centre is very real and the blessing it is for others is still evident, the ability to maintain the facility and keep it fulfilling its mandate has become a struggle.

The Personal Care department inside the Latham Center at The Homes of Ethnos360 is tasked with assisting residents of our Assisted Living Facility (ALF) with things like taking their medications, communication with their medical prescribers, getting to doctor’s appointments and with activities of daily living. Maintaining a ten-bed ALF is one of the most appreciated services offered at The Homes of Ethnos360, but that can only continue for as long as we have adequate staff.

Four of the five staff who share the majority of the daily responsibilities in the Personal Care Office are already retired but continue to volunteer their time. Those four would like either to cut back their hours or to stop working entirely, but there is no one to replace them. Our two full-time staff are on call during the evenings. One of them is also

our primary driver for taking residents to doctors’ appointments, and she is retiring at the end of this year. No one is currently scheduled to join this department. Incidentally, one does not need to have medical training to serve in the Personal Care department.

A related department in the Latham Center, Food Service, is also necessary in order to operate the ALF and to continue to offer 18 apartments in our Independent Living section. That department used to be run by two full-time couples plus part-timers. All we have now are part-timers. The official head of that department would also like to retire, but there is no one to replace her.

Another related department, Housekeeping, is also necessary if we are going to have residents occupy rooms in the ALF or in the Independent Living section. Help is needed there, too.

Finally, in order to keep the water running, the electricity on, the buildings in repair and the grass cut, a robust Buildings, Grounds and Maintenance (BGM) crew is also needed, who also help to maintain the 10 single-family homes and 102 duplex apartments on the property. Unfortunately, the BGM crew is also significantly understaffed.

Please pray with us that the Lord would direct new staff to join the ministry at The Homes where the motto is “Serving Those Who Have Served.”

—*Brian Shortmeier*

*Director, The Homes of Ethnos360*

*CAO, on behalf of the Executive Leadership Team*



# How to get involved!

## SHORT-TERM INTERNSHIPS

Use your skills and abilities to help support The Homes of Ethnos360 and its retired missionaries. Work with staff and volunteers in a multitude of roles. Opportunities are also available at the Home Office and other Ethnos360 locations.

### SUMMER INTERNSHIPS

2025 (May-Aug) 10 Weeks

- May 26 to August 1, 2025
- Arrive in Sanford May 23-25

### FALL SEMESTER INTERNSHIPS

2025 (Aug-Dec) 16 Weeks

- August 25 to December 12, 2025
- Arrive in Sanford August 22-24

### YEAR-LONG INTERNSHIPS

36 Weeks

- August 25, 2025, to May 1, 2026

Based on your interests, giftings and skills, we will partner with you to find a role where you can learn and grow. You will finish your time with a greater understanding and confidence in where you fit in with the Great Commission.

From Brian Shortmeier, director of The Homes: The full school-year internship program at The Homes of Ethnos360 is designed primarily, but not exclusively, for Ethnos360 Bible Institute (EBI) graduates. As they gain ministry experience in a mentoring environment, interns will have the opportunity to interact with missionaries with a lifetime of service experience. They will receive free housing and a weekly stipend and will provide a valuable service for The Homes.



## LEARN MORE

[ethnos360.org/short-term-trips/STATESIDE-INTERNSHIPS](https://ethnos360.org/short-term-trips/STATESIDE-INTERNSHIPS)



[ethnos.ca/volunteer](https://ethnos.ca/volunteer)



## MAKE A DIFFERENCE BY VOLUNTEERING

You can help support worldwide church planting efforts by using your skills in North America.

Volunteering with Ethnos could range from giving a few hours a week to serving full time for several months. Some volunteers, especially snowbirds, serve every winter, but volunteer work is welcome any time of year.

The following list provides some of the many skills/positions available:

- Auto and heavy equipment mechanic
- Heavy equipment operator
- Concrete work
- Construction/renovation: Masonry, Painting, Plumbing, Carpentry
- Electrician
- Welding and fabrication
- Equipment maintenance
- Finance
- Food preparation/food service
- Grounds and landscaping
- Hairdressing
- Handyman repairs
- Housekeeping
- Receptionist/Secretary
- Sewing
- Writing

## Encounter Trip to Southeast Asia Mainland

I stood in the temple yard, looking around me at the ornate gold idols that decorated the mountaintop. Nearby, I noticed a man standing in front of one of the statues. His hands were pressed together, and his eyes were tightly shut to drown out the distractions around him. I could see his mouth moving in silent prayer. I stood watching him for a few moments before he opened his eyes and turned to walk away, mouth still moving in prayer. I couldn't help but notice that he seemed to wear a troubled look.

I wrestled with the reality that his trust was in this empty yard of idols that would certainly never answer him. Without Christ, he was without hope. My heart felt heavy for him.

I felt the same heaviness as I observed locals going about their daily lives, whether it was laboring dawn till dusk in rice paddies or sitting in their shops on cramped, busy streets. I could not help but think, "Every person we pass most likely doesn't know the gospel ... Their villages and jobs are their entire lives, and chances are it will always be that way." No real God. No real hope. And yet, even though we were separated by language, culture and geography, we really weren't that different: We both live in a sin-cursed world and are given the freedom to be redeemed by Christ. ... Only, they don't know it. In my heart I pleaded for God to send even more workers into this field. Without God's Word, they will never know.

Consequently, I was so excited to be able to witness firsthand the work of missionaries already serving the Lord in this region. Our team was moved as we sat clustered around missionaries who excitedly showed us Bible translations that they had spent hundreds of hours on. Never before had I held in my hands a Bible that was translated by someone sitting across the room from me. As I looked down at the book sitting in my lap, I thought, "I can't believe this. God, You're doing a work here. Thank You!"

On Sunday morning we sat barefoot in a simple structure with the windows wide open. Their worship was simple but wholehearted. I felt so blessed to sit in a church building full of believers and to



be able to enjoy the fellowship of the body of Christ even across the language barrier. I was impressed by the fact that these brothers and sisters around me were first generation believers with incredible faith. I was in awe of the missionaries who pioneered the work in this region, even though it meant years of labour that at times seemed fruitless.

I was also really encouraged to see the joy that the new believers were experiencing in the Lord. Some of them were the only believers in their family or

even their entire people group. They didn't have a church family they could be a part of every Sunday, so the times that they did have to interact with other believers were so refreshing. We enjoyed this special fellowship one stormy morning during our stay in the mountains. We had wanted to take a hike, but the pouring rain kept us back under the roof of the home where we were staying. We sat around the table, prayed, shared what God was doing in our lives and sang together. We were so encouraged, and we could see that the believers travelling with our team were too. I wondered if it was the first time these songs had been sung on this mountain.

I've always known of the importance of missions and of being a part of what God is doing in all nations. I was familiar with the need for Bible translation and reaching unreached people groups with the gospel. However, participating in the Encounter trip to Southeast Asia Mainland gave me real-life insight into what these concepts mean. It further convinced me that our call as believers to build the body of Christ should never be seen as a guilt trip or a burden, but as a privilege. God is moving in every nation across the globe, whether it's in a bustling city or a small mountain village. —*Jerusha McCarthy, Social Media Intern (Ethnos360 Bible Institute)*



**ENCOUNTER**  
the work God is doing  
around the world.  
[ethnos.ca/encounter](http://ethnos.ca/encounter)



## Encounter Trip to Asia Pacific

One morning near the beginning of our trip, Deni and Dita, two local believers, shared their testimony. Opening the Bible, Dita began to read in her language from John 3:16-17, her voice choked with emotion. We listened respectfully; we needed no translation for this well-known passage. To us, it was a verse we had memorized a dozen times since we were kids, but to her, it represented a reality that had changed the course of her and her husband's lives for eternity. Both Deni and Dita had grown up knowing who Jesus is from Christians in their family. Each had come to believe in the saving work of Jesus from an early age like many others in their family. But the thing that set them apart from most other Christians in their city was when they saw God's heart for the nations in Scripture and decided to become missionaries. This passage in John was the very one that had inspired them to leave everything for the mission field. In a hushed voice, she told us of a co-worker whose young son had died recently from an unexpected illness. "He was only 24 and had been married just one year," she said through tears. "This is why we share [the gospel] ... so that people can believe in Jesus before they die." The passion and empathy behind her words moved us all. To her, as it should be to every believer, even one soul spending eternity without Jesus was too much for her to bear.

Both she and Deni had sacrificed tremendously to be where they were. In their country's culture, there is a heavy emphasis on family and community, with families often living their whole lives where they grew up in order to stay close to relatives and friends. Deni and Dita knew they needed to reach the unreached with the gospel, however, so they left their families and town behind and went to train and serve with Ethnos. For them, like many others, it hadn't been easy. Deni told us the story of how both of their children had been born. When the time came for their first baby to be born, they were sent away from the hospital, a small clinic staffed by just one nurse that night. They rushed back home and found a missionary woman who had some experience being a midwife. Just hours after returning, their first child was born. The second baby's birth was far more challenging and frightening. Deni and Dita were able to get to the hospital just before the baby arrived, but Dita almost died during delivery. Deni recalled pushing on Dita's



stomach to help the baby out since Dita wasn't moving or breathing. The baby came out completely still and was blue from head to toe. Deni remembered the fear and sadness he felt in that moment: "I felt like I would be alone." Yet despite it all, Deni said, "God is still good." Thankfully, both the baby and Dita survived the ordeal, but that feeling remained with Deni for years after.

Their faith and sacrifice astounded me. These two faithful followers of Christ had obeyed His commands despite great risk and personal loss. With no church or friends supporting them financially, all they have is prayer and faith, and it has carried them this far. "To obey is not always easy," Deni said. But no matter the cost, they will continue to do just that.

When I applied for this Encounter trip late last year, I had many things I hoped to learn, but I never anticipated the deep impact that these two obedient and sacrificial believers would have on my heart. Through their testimony, the profound and powerful work that God is doing in every nation was clearly seen, as well as the very purpose we are on the earth. In the words of Dita, "God created us for a reason, and that reason is to serve Him."  
—Jonathan David McElroy, Staff Writer Intern  
(Ethnos360 Home Office)

### Sending Christmas Gifts to Missionaries

The best way to send a monetary Christmas Gift to your missionaries is to give through Ethnos Canada. To ensure that your gifts arrive before Christmas, mail a cheque payable to Ethnos Canada to arrive by November 22, or give online at [ethnos.ca/give](https://ethnos.ca/give) by November 24, or by sending an e-transfer to [finance@ethnos.ca](mailto:finance@ethnos.ca) by November 24.

Please do not send a package overseas unless you check with the missionary. In some cases, custom charges can exceed the value of the gift. Mailing cash or cheques internationally is not advised.

[ethnos.ca/give](https://ethnos.ca/give)



## A Letter from Romania

In the March 2022 edition of the Ethnos Magazine, I shared with enthusiasm our calling to open a new field with Ethnos in Romania. Perhaps you remember the article, “Not Hanging Up Our Cleats Yet.” Because so many responded to the article, I felt it appropriate to send an update on the progress made. (Please read; it’s encouraging!)

Our goal in Romania is to mobilize the already established church to become missionaries and plant churches among the remaining last least-reached people groups in the world. By their own admission, they are already a mature church, committed to evangelism, and planting churches in their own country, but now they are ready to reach beyond their borders to the least-reached or unreached people in remote places.

The Romanian church is prepared to endure hardship. In 1989, the Romanian Revolution liberated the country from the abusive ideology of Communism. While living under communism, life was hard, and a pastor recently said, “In those days the church welcomed suffering for the cause of Christ, because it resulted in the maturity of the church.”

Another pastor said, “During those hard years, the Romanian church received support from the Church abroad, including Bibles smuggled across closed borders. The generosity of the church hasn’t been forgotten. The Romanian church is grateful. We were receivers, but now we are ready to be givers. We want to reach the hard places for Christ. Suffering is something we embrace. It will result in our maturity.”

And still other pastors have said:

“Regarding missions—we are very open. We want to learn and want to be pushed.”

“We need to look more and see the unreached world. We need people who have done it to share with us. We need to get people out of their comfort zone. We need to have a new understanding of missions, a revival.”

“Your story and approach to missions can be revolutionary for the Romanian church. I believe this can be the next reformation for the church.”

“If 40% of our church is called to the mission field, we will find a way to send them.”

Please pray for the next steps of those who are challenged. The path forward for a Romanian is often much more complex than it is for a Westerner. However, when measured by the accounts of the early Church, hardship must be considered the norm for those taking the gospel to foreign places.

### My Most Encouraging Moment of the Year

When things become complex, it would serve us well to receive perspective from children. After all, Jesus encourages us to do so. For children, the Christian life is simple. With their childlike faith, they hear the Bible, believe the Bible and follow the teachings of the Bible. They don’t focus on the complexities of life.

Recently, after we had spoken to a group of teens, the girls broke out in a spontaneous song, singing, “We are young, and we are girls, but don’t judge us because we are going to be missionaries!”

If you would like to receive periodic updates about the work in Romania, please email me at [ron\\_lindsey@ntm.org](mailto:ron_lindsey@ntm.org), and we will add you to our mailing list. We would be blessed to have you pray.

—Ron and Carrie Lindsey  
Missionaries with Ethnos360  
serving in Romania





## PRAY Dark Are the Lies

“I (Lily) am sitting in front of a village brick house under the mango tree, and our neighbourhood women’s meeting has just adjourned. The women stand up and begin calling the name of the five-year-old girl that lives in the house. Everyone starts going inside laughing and calling her name ... [After she is found,] a couple of the mamas (older women) begin shoving her in a large rice bag as she flails around fighting as hard as she can. Eventually she succeeds and runs away. As I witness this, I have a million questions in my mind. ... They explain to me that this little girl has been faking being sick a lot and is costing her

parents a lot of money to take her to the clinic each time. When this happens, the mamas of the neighbourhood come to ‘heal’ the child. They come and put the little child in a rice bag, tie it tightly and lower them down into the well, calling out to the child asking them whether they are still sick or not, waiting till they hear the response that they are no longer sick, and apparently this heals them of falsely complaining of body ailments. This child escaped the fate of being dipped in the well, but many others don’t.

“The more we learn this language and culture, the deeper and darker it gets. The more our friends share

about life here, the more we see how deep they are caught and how dark are the lies of the enemy [Satan]. It breaks our hearts, AND it is a motivator to keep pushing forward in language and culture study that we may soon teach God’s Word. It is so clear that God is going before us. We continue to trust Him, and at the same time are expectant for all that God will do in the hearts of people here. ... Please pray as we continue plugging away at language and now home in on deeper culture study too.”

—TJ and Lily, West Africa

## PRAISE Sekadau Bible Dedication

“The [Sekadau] Bible dedication is finally in the rear-view mirror. We had guests from Germany, Korea, Indonesia and America. ... Most of our former partners were able to make it. There were three men from my home church, as well as five from a church in Germany.

“There were two ceremonies. One was entirely in the Sekadau language. I shared from the Word about why the Bible is a unique and amazing book. Afterwards we gave out Bibles to the heads of each family in the church. We limited it to those people due to time considerations. Over the next two days we were able to give Bibles to whoever wanted them. Bella and

I bought inexpensive book bags for the first 100 people who got Bibles. That nighttime ceremony was very nice. We believe it was encouraging and honouring to God.

“The next morning, we had the ‘official’ Bible dedication. [Some government officials attended and spoke at this dedication.] ... We had a number of special [musical] numbers as well as some of the children reciting memorized verses. There was also an opportunity for a number of our visitors to give a short word of encouragement to the church. The ceremony took three hours. It sounds long, but there was so much variety that it didn’t seem that long. The man who shared the main message



from the Word did a very good job. ... The dedication went about as well as we could have hoped.

“We just want to thank God that the dedication went well and that He was glorified.”

—Paul and Bella Gervasi,  
Asia Pacific

# CONNECT WITH YOUR MISSIONARIES



## DAN & ASHLEY MCIVOR

### Son: Huck

Church Planting in Mexico

Sent by Hepworth Baptist Church,  
Ontario & Hampstead Baptist  
Church, Maryland

Connect with Dan and Ashley:  
[ethnos.ca/dan-and-ashley](https://ethnos.ca/dan-and-ashley)



**D**an grew up in a Christian home in Sauble Beach, Ontario. As he was finishing high school the Lord convicted him to find direction for his life not from the norms of the culture around him, but from an understanding of God and the truth of His Word. This conviction led him to attend Ethnos360 Bible Institute (EBI) in Jackson, Michigan in 2011 where the Lord directed him into the work of reaching the unreached with the gospel.

Ashley was raised in a missionary family serving in

Venezuela. From a young age, Ashley was convicted by the need she saw around her for the gospel and began pursuing a life of mission work. She moved to Wisconsin from Venezuela in 2010 to attend EBI in Waukesha, Wisconsin.

Dan and Ashley met in Durham, Ontario in 2016 as they completed their missionary training. They got married the year following their graduation and the Lord opened a door for them to be able to serve on staff at the Bible School in Waukesha from 2019-2024. This was a

season of life that they loved as they got to serve on a team mobilizing and training others to go to the unreached with the Gospel.

In 2024 it became possible for them to begin ministry with Ethnos in Mexico. They moved to Chihuahua, Mexico in April and began the process of learning Spanish and Mexican Culture. Their goal is to be a part of the gospel going to the many remaining language groups in Mexico with little to no access to the gospel.



# ROB & HILARY BARTHOLDSON

## Sons: Theo & Jude

Serving the Inuit in Arctic Canada

Sent by Edgewater Alliance Church,  
Edgewater, Florida

Connect with Rob & Hilary  
[ethnos.ca/rob-and-hilary](http://ethnos.ca/rob-and-hilary)



**T**he single greatest purpose of our lives is that we may know the LORD. By God's grace Rob and Hilary have been getting to know Him for most of their lives.

They both grew up in Christian homes in the Sunshine State, Florida. They met as teenagers at their church youth group. Rob served in the U.S. Army and worked in construction. Hilary taught at a public elementary school.

Rob and Hilary were married in 2012 and began to trust the LORD to raise children who also

know Him, Theo and Jude.

They were shocked to hear of the millions of people who have no access to God's Word in their own language, people headed to an eternity apart from Him.

This new knowledge coupled with conviction of God's desire for all people to know Him prompted them to get equipped for taking the gospel to those who have not yet heard. Rob and Hilary attended Ethnos360 Bible Institute in Jackson, Michigan and Ethnos Training in Durham, Ontario.

The Bartholdsons are now

serving in Arctic Canada, living with the Inuit and learning Inuktitut. They are trusting that as God's grace reaches the Inuit, "there will be great thanksgiving and God will receive more and more glory" (2 Corinthians 4:15).

**Discover more about the work of Ethnos in Northern Canada:**  
[ethnos.ca/indigenous-ministries](http://ethnos.ca/indigenous-ministries)

# IN OUR WEAKNESSES WE ARE MADE STRONG

**...You are not your own. For you were bought at a price; therefore, glorify God in your body and in your spirit, which are God's.**

The first director of the mission retirement centre, New Tribes Mission Homes, was Jack Butler. After he and Mary retired, Dan Taube became director. My wife, Nancy, and I had the privilege of working at the retirement centre with the Butlers in Oviedo, Florida. When the retirement centre moved from Oviedo to Sanford, Florida, we then had the privilege of working with the Taubes. Observing their heart to serve the Lord by serving our retired members was atypical and challenging! Eventually, Dan and Donna Taube decided it was time for their own retirement. With both now retired, we wondered who would fill their shoes, never thinking it would be our own feet.

In 1994, we joined the Homes staff in Sanford to start an Assisted Living Facility (ALF). My ministry was ALF Administrator and Nancy, ALF nurse. At that time, the Homes had a maintenance team, a housekeeper, kitchen staff and a driver. Along with them, we were the ALF personal care staff team. As we prayed, the Lord brought the right people along to fill staff needs in the ALF. These were not the typical ministry positions within NTM (Ethnos360). Yet God supplied, and we were grateful.

How does a missionary end up in a place like this? We, like most NTM candidates in training, had intentions to head overseas to “reach the unreached.” During our last phase of language and culture training, we were encouraged to consider a



support ministry role. The Lord had engifted us to serve but not in language and translation. After we finished the training, we spent our first eight years in various [stateside] maintenance support roles. Early on, we found out that I had a serious congenital spine problem. Therefore, after eight years in a support role, this ministry role was no longer feasible.

Our desire was still to serve overseas. We began to consider a school ministry. After taking

night classes for a year, I was certified as a science teacher. We chose to serve in an MK (missionary kid) school in the beautiful highlands of Papua New Guinea (PNG). Nancy was a centre nurse, and we helped in a local village on the weekends. However, back pain and headaches made it hard to concentrate and serve in the school, dorm and village. Yet, we persevered. We thought we could last four to five years and then return on home assignment to get medical help.

The Lord intervened when leadership came to us after we had been in PNG two years and encouraged us to leave to get some relief. Leaving was hard. We thought we were where the Lord wanted us. We had made friends. There were tears and sorrow in saying goodbye. It took 10 years to get here, and now we were heading home. We felt we had failed.

After surgeries and therapy, I experienced some relief. Shortly thereafter, we had a call from the NTM leadership informing us that our medical



furlough time was ending. We would need to head back or resign from ministry. Since I was still in a full-body brace, it seemed the Lord was leading us to resign. This, too, was a hard time. Again, we felt we had failed.

Over the next nine months, we continued seeking the Lord's guidance. I had started serving in a local Christian school. I was out of the brace and improving. Nancy was working in a nursing home, and the kids were in school. Then we had a call from leadership at the Home Office in Sanford. We were asked to consider coming back into ministry at the retirement centre in Sanford, to start up the ALF. We did not know what this was but said we would pray and consider this. Since we had enjoyed the retirement centre ministry earlier, Nancy and the kids were eager to say yes. I, on the other hand, was remembering the pain of resigning, the emotions, the feeling of failure. Could I possibly go through this again?

Yet, it seemed we should proceed. We were still challenged by 1 Corinthians 6:19-20, "... You are not your own. For you were bought at a price; therefore, glorify God in your body and in your spirit, which are God's."

As we prayed and considered the Scripture passages which had originally challenged us into an NTM ministry, we decided to accept the mission invitation. We were reinstated as members, and most of our supporters began supporting us again. We arrived at NTM Homes in Sanford in August 1994. Many of the retirees and some of the staff were still there from the Oviedo location. It was a reunion of sorts. We settled right in and began the State of Florida ALF training. Administrator certification, licensing and staffing were the first matters to set in order.

By this time, my back health had improved. Then in 2000, I was in a car accident that resulted in chronic neck pain and headaches. This added a

new dimension to our lives, which I have struggled with since. But God is faithful, and we were able to press on despite daily headaches.

When Dan Taube retired in 2003, we were asked to consider taking on that role, and we accepted. (Editor's Note: In 2019, NTM Homes was renamed The Homes of Ethnos360, following the mission's name change.) After 26 years in retirement centre leadership, it was my turn to retire in 2020. (Nancy retired in 2023.) Brian Shortmeier, whom we had met back in PNG, saw the need, prayed about it and then was willing to take on this role.

Looking back at all the twists and turns of our ministry experience (even our short trek to PNG), The Homes was a good fit for us! In every previous experience in our lives, we can see that the Lord was preparing us for the next step in our walk of faith and service.

Both Nancy and I continue to live and serve as retired volunteers at The Homes. We are involved in similar ministries here with part-time hours. The headaches continue, but God has blessed us in spite of it.

I marvel at the goodness of God. We saw the Lord encourage our retirees and their families. Each time we needed certain skills at the retirement centre, the Lord brought along the right staff to help. It has been an amazing privilege to serve Him here, and we have been blessed to work with a team of leaders and staff with servant hearts. I find that no one can really fill someone else's shoes. In my experience, I have found that the Lord supplies a team of people committed to serving Him and allows us the opportunity to serve together.

This reminds me of a song written by Sue C. Smith and Belinda Lee Smith titled, "God's Been Good." A chorus phrase states, "Though I've had my share of hard times, I wouldn't change them if I could, 'cause through it all God's been good." Amen!

How about you? Is God leading you down paths you didn't expect? The Lord encourages us with blessings along the way. Yet, it may include unexpected twists or unwanted pain—a thorn in our flesh, as described by the Apostle Paul—all to stretch our faith and conform us to His image.

**"Though I've had my share of hard times,  
I wouldn't change them if I could,  
'cause through it all God's been good."**

—Dan Thomas  
*Former Director of The Homes of Ethnos360  
Retired*

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