



Eric and Sandra Read

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Location: Philippines



What we do: Demonstrating natural farming models alongside equipping churches in holistic mission for real community impact.



Empowering people pushed to the edges of life to release their God-given potential

Dear friends,

It has been really good to see many of you as we have visited your churches. Thank you for your many encouragements. We are also receiving encouraging reports from the farm. Romel and Chantal are taking it in turns to lead the youth and Bible study group, both of which are continuing well. Romel is also managing the farm well and by his own initiative is now taking orders online for some of our vegetables! We plan for him to continue his day to day management of the farm, allowing Eric to spend more time helping and focusing on the children's camps programme and the long term sustainability of the ministry. Please pray for Romel and for Chantal.

Last July, Sandra organised and led a three-day camp (non residential) for the children from our local community. Our youth group helped with the activities. Together with the youth, there were about thirty attendees. The theme was on creation and how "God saw that it was very good". He did it with order and everything had a purpose – the sun was there before the plants and trees, sea was made before the fish, and mankind was created when everything was "ready" for them to ENJOY and CARE for the whole of creation! A positive picture of God's wonderful creation given to us. So how should we care for this gift? And why did God have order and purpose for each creation made and what happens when this balance gets disturbed? This will be the next theme for subsequent day camps we will be doing. We hope to expand this to include the local schools. Please pray we can get volunteers to help.

As Peter and Atiyah are now both starting out in their adult lives, we are eternally grateful to all of you who have been faithfully praying for them. We have asked them both to briefly share how God has been working in their lives. God is truly a gracious and merciful God.

PETER

"The Covid lockdown gave me plenty of time to reflect, and to have more direction. I spent lots of time online learning about investing and business, and decided to try to start something with a few friends. With savings from doing odd jobs in England I went to Siargao, a touristy surfing island, and with friends started a mobile cart selling drinks.



Romel, Jencel and Jerome

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**With Jesus
With each other
To the edges**



I also met Shekinah, who is half Filipino and half Ghanaian, her father having been a missionary. Aside from sharing our faith we had similar experiences: family moving around a lot, looking different from everyone else, and we both speak the local language fluently. She joined us in Siargao and we persevered with our relationship and the struggle of a start-up business. While we couldn't compete with established businesses and had to give up, I gained good friends and the experience learned was invaluable. Working and struggling together gave me a new appreciation for Sheki too.

I could have taken the failure hard, and at times I did. But I persevered. After time spent planning and praying for guidance, I got an online job and started to plan for another business. With the blessings of our parents Sheki and I got married, a lovely occasion with just a few family members and friends. At the moment we are building and preparing a small place for basic camping and paintballing just a few minutes away from Barakah farm. God willing we are aiming for a soft opening by mid November."

ATIYYAH

"It's been such a blessing to know that many of you are not only continually praying for Mum and Dad in their ministry but also for Peter and I. Praise be to God, I graduated with a degree in Law with Honours in July after four years in Reading. I've loved my job, the Bible study and church I've been part of and I've been blessed by beautiful friendships, but I felt God has prepared a path for me that I couldn't necessarily explore if I chose to stay where I felt comfortable. I moved to Manchester a few weeks ago. Although there has been some turbulence along the way, God remains a constant provider. He provided me with a sales job to assist with my application for an apartment that is convenient for commuting.

I continue to pursue a career in law. Recently, I was blessed with free tickets to an event marking "A Year On, In Gaza" and had the incredible opportunity to meet and converse with one of my favourite American civil rights activists and director of the Grassroots Law Project, and to meet some human rights lawyers. I was reminded of Proverbs 16:3: "Commit to the Lord whatever you do, and he will establish your plans". My passion is pursuing justice for those who are unable to, inspired by the dedication of my parents to helping out other people. Moving across the world six years to study law in England was daunting and scary. Yet I continue to see how God provides, protects and establishes my plans even when I am unsure of myself. He remains my strength and my shield (Psalms 28:7) and I am continually thankful for everyone he uses to bless me, including all of you."

One of our concerns when we joined CMS in mission was that our children might miss out on opportunities for development and how their lives would turn out. He gave us Isaiah 58. As we watched God move through the years establishing the steps of Peter and Atiyah and putting a protecting hedge around them as they went through good and bad times, God proved he is always true to his promises.

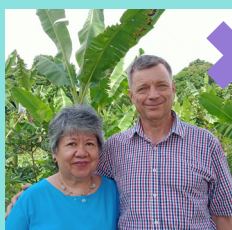
Thank you again for all your prayers.

With love and blessings,

Eric and Sandra with Peter and Atiyah



Photos from top to bottom:
Chantal; Atiyah at her graduation;
Peter and Sheki on their wedding day.



Empowering people pushed to the edges of life

We've been encouraged to hear recent mission stories from around our wider area of work. In South Sudan, communities have taken steps towards peace as pastors from different tribal groups reconciled, and our colleague Joan has shared a growing vision of a new tribe of peacemakers. Read more at churchmissionsociety.org/empower

Please note that opinions expressed in updates are those of mission partners, not necessarily of Church Mission Society.

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