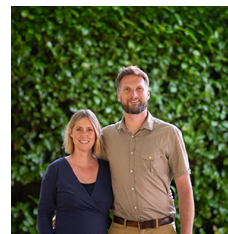


Pippa and Toby Vokuhl

TIMES AND SEASONS

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www.bmsworldmission.org/ptvokuhl

Ecclesiastes 3,1 "*There is a time for everything, and a season for every activity under the heavens*"

We used the above verse as a heading for our talk this summer, as we connected with many individuals and churches in the UK, joined fellow Christians in worship, reflected back on 6 1/2 years of service in Nepal, and also stated our willingness to return to the country to face new challenges. With some of you we looked at Genesis 28, and the account of Jacob, who in all his weakness encountered the living God at 'BethEl' and not being judged by his evident shortcomings, started to trust God's ability to carry our weaknesses on His broad shoulders, and involve feeble humans in salvation history.

I hope that you were as encouraged as we were, both by the feedback from Nepali Christians about impact, the teamwork between yourselves, BMS as an organisation, and the overseas worker, but also by the message that every Christian has a place in God's history, and that He desires mine and your attention at times of decision making and change.

Coming to the end of our service with BMS, and having reflected on what has been done during that time both in our last newsletter and also during our visits to a number of UK Baptist congregations this summer, I don't want to repeat myself, but instead want to share a few insights emerging from the time abroad:

- Given the extent to which Christianity has evolved over centuries for the Western world, and the many ways in which we have erred over the years, it is amazing to see how far the Nepali church has come in just three generations (since the gospel was preached in Nepal). When the Holy Spirit is at work in a country and a population, amazing things

happen. We continue to be encouraged by the faith of our Christian brothers and sisters, such as our landlady's family (see picture).



- I see the need for local ownership, for participatory and emancipatory processes to grow in relation to Global South communities, but also sense that our brothers and sisters in the Global South do seek an interface with Western Christians, and that dedicated Christians who are prepared to work with cultural sensitivity, have a role to play by being placed for a time within the Global South.

- Life is harsh for vast populations in South Asia, and the value of a human life and gender equality for example is not as embedded in other religions, as it is in our faith. This faith based motivation can, and should, find expression in social action and deeds of love by the Christian community in the Global South. It is lovely where we see evidence of this.



I want to take this opportunity to thank you all for walking this particular journey from Oxford to Nepal with us as a family. We have always felt part of a team, and want to thank you for the work that you have done over the years through giving, caring about this overseas context, and intercession for people and situations.

There is a time and a season for everything, and our BMS Nepal placement has lasted a reasonable time. We took primary school children with us to Nepal, and this year witnessed our oldest taking his GCSEs in Kathmandu....., how time passes! It has been a wonderful yet challenging journey (Covid etc.), but we want to testify that we serve a faithful God, and he has not let us down yet.

If you are part of a Baptist congregation, we invite you at this point to prayerfully consider which new BMS mission worker you would like to take on, and form a relationship with. BMS increasingly invests in local Christians overseas, Christians who are already in the country, and know their language and culture well, so do contact your BMS church liaison person about forming a new partnership.



From our perspective a new chapter is already starting, and Pippa and the children have returned to Nepal a few days ago, whilst I am dealing with a few remaining UK related matters. We are joining Interserve GBI to assist Nepali Christians with efforts to bring hope and healing to young Nepalis who have been trafficked into prostitution at a young age, given poverty and other factors, and who need to know the love which our Saviour has for them.

Please contact us via vokuhlfamily@gmail.com if you like to stay connected going forward. We would love to stay in touch.

As I close, I would like to re-connect with the verse from Ecclesiastes: '*There is a time for everything, and a season for every activity under the heavens*'. God, throughout history, commits to the human element. Throughout history He uses feeble and failing humans, who are willing to learn obedience and let Him plug their gaps, to somewhat play their part in His plans within a generation. God's mission, God's calling is not just for the experts, for the professionals, it is for me and for you.

As I conclude our last BMS newsletter, let me affirm that God sees you as an individual, as a person, and that His response is love. Based on that baseline, and on the fact that God carries all of our weaknesses on His broad shoulders, are you prepared for new times and seasons? Are you prepared for new and maybe surprising events which can unfold when you give the Almighty free reign with your life and your future?

As lifelong learners, and with all of our love,

Toby, Pippa, Jakey, Ella, and Millie

If you would like to support Pippa and Toby Vokuhl by prayer and committed regular giving, visit bmsworldmission.org/247 or call 01235 517617 for a 24:7 Partners leaflet.



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