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Monthly News And Updates for Partners of The Drum Family

Community & Belonging



Photo by Bryan Tatum

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New Teammates on their way to Spain!

Meet Ryan and Kat Marcum and their precious little people, Eloise and Luke. They will be joining us to serve in southern Spain.



They will live and work alongside us in Antequera. The big goal for them in the first year is to learn the language, learn culture and how to live in Spain, and to spend some time observing and putting their training in to practice. Year One is a time of transition and finding a new normal as they adjust to life in another culture. We will grow as a multicultural team and work through vision and goals and strategy together. We are so excited to finally be welcoming our new teammates! They are quickly working through the Spanish Consulate to finalize the visa process and pack their bags! Here they come!!!! We are SUPER EXCITED to finally have the Marcums join us! Please add them to your prayer list as they transition their cute family to life in Spain!

Who is your Community?

There has been a theme running through our lives for the past year or so. We are noticing it everywhere. We see it in several of our neighbors. We hear it in lots of our conversations with other cross-cultural workers (CCWs). We see it in immigrants and natural-born locals. It isn't picky… it is prevalent in all socio-economic groups, all ages, and all races. So much so that Billy started doing research on it for his dissertation.

It's a growing sense of loneliness and the need for connection and community.

It's the reason that my neighbor stands on her front stoop every day and talks to whoever walks by. She lives alone. She's in her late 80s. Standing outside every day to talk to the folks walking to the bakery is what is keeping her sane and alive. Because if she stays inside her cozy little living room sitting in her chair and watching TV, she will quickly lapse in to a deep loneliness that eats away at life. So instead, she holds court on her front step every day, waving and greeting the neighbors and having 5 and 10 minute chats with everyone who passes. She's a doll!

Paco walks his little Yorkie dog by our house every day. I'm convinced that the little dog is finished with his business long before Paco is finished with the walk. Actually, the walk isn't very "walk-ish"… it's more about standing in the park and waiting for someone to come along so Paco can talk. And that someone is me on many days. I take our dogs out and while the dogs all run around and check out every smell and every pinecone and every tree in the park, Paco tells me anything and everything. His wife died a couple of years ago. He's alone now, just him and his little dog. He tries to wow me with his ability to say greetings or phrases in several European languages. He gives me the town history, or gossips about folks that walk by, because "I'm a foreigner and I need to know these things". Really nice man.

Billy and I attended a conference on Trauma and Resilience for care workers in early April. The research is quite compelling. The number one factor in resilience is Community – feeling connected to others, having people who you can share with and talk to, people who are there for us, who are available, who laugh with us and who cry with us. People who have connectedness and community are people who have the highest 'survival rate' when the tough stuff happens. Hmmm…

Then I went to a workshop on Team Development, specifically teams of cross-cultural workers. Guess what the number one factor was for team cohesion and success. A sense of belonging and community. Hmmm…

The thing that makes me sad is that the research also shows that the biggest

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factor that is missing for CCWs (and immigrants and refugees and anyone who is living in another culture or in transition) is a sense of belonging, community and security.

Think about it. When you move, you immediately lose those things. There is a sense of feeling a little lost, you don't know where you fit, your normal routine is no longer there, your friend group (and family) is now far away. Your sense of identity might take a pretty big hit due to these losses.

Speaking from experience, I would have to agree. With every move we have made, we have had a sense of loss, a sense of no longer belonging, a sense of feeling insecure in where we are or who we are. Our friends from home are now thousands of miles away. Our families are also far away. Who do you call when you need a hand? Who do you call when you want to celebrate something or when you have had a bad day and you need to vent? Who just shows up at your house for an impromptu cookout on Friday night? That used to happen EVERY Friday night in Texas. But when you move to another country?

The key is community. We are so lucky! We have never been completely without community. Sure, we moved far away. But we have always had our foot in several types of communities, no matter where we are. And, that automatically makes us more likely to be resilient, to be able to bounce back and survive the tough stuff, and to thrive wherever we are.

> *"Everybody has a home team: It's the people you call when you get a flat tire or when something terrible happens. It's the people who, near or far, know everything that's wrong with you and love you anyway. These are the ones who tell you their secrets, who get themselves a glass of water without asking when they're at your house. These are the people who cry when you cry. These are your people, your middle-of-the-night, no-matter-what people."*
>
> ***— Shauna Niequist,***
> ***Bittersweet: Thoughts on Change, Grace, and Learning the Hard Way***

I'm going to make a little observation on the quote in the box. Not everybody has a home team – because everybody doesn't work to cultivate that connection - but I think everybody NEEDS one. We have these people! Yes, most of them are 5000 miles away, but they are there! They are always there. We also have a community of friends and peers who are CCWs. People who we can always call or text and say, "Hey, I need to talk. Do you have some time?" Yes, most of them live in other countries all around the globe, but they are community for us. They are a place where we know that we belong and we feel loved. They are the people who 'get it'.

I was talking to one of those friends just yesterday and I realized that she knows all of my bits and pieces. She knows all of my personality, my quirks and my 'stuff'. She knows what I'm thinking and how I'm going to react under stress and what pushes my buttons, and she knows that it's okay and I'll bounce back after I process and chill. She knows that she's Miss Bubbly and I'm Mrs. Reserved – but I wish I was more like her, and she has the unique power to make me laugh till my sides hurt. She lives 4000 miles away from me! And we talk every week. Folks, that's belonging and community. Thank you, Internet! Messenger and Skype and other programs make connection work for us!

What about local community and belonging? Yes, we have that, too. It's a little tougher. Language and culture sometimes make deep connections harder to come by. It takes a longer time to cultivate. But we have it. We have local friends who do life with us. We have folks who we trust with our stories and our laughter and our tears, and who trust us with theirs. People who are helping us raise our daughter or navigate cultural norms. And there are a few who are on the fringes, who are just now – after 5 years – starting to open up their lives and connect. Trust takes time.

Does it always have to be deep emotional connection to be community? No, not always. McMillan & Chavis define sense of community as "a feeling that members have of belonging, a feeling that members matter to one another and to the group, and a shared faith that members' needs will be met through their commitment to be together." For my friend, Delilah, the ladies in her gym class are a community. They matter to each other. They notice when someone doesn't show up and they call or text to check on that person. They cheer each other on in their goals. Do they all have a deep emotional connection? No. But they are connected. They matter to each other.

For Ana (my neighbor across the street), community looks like all the individuals who pass by and chat with her each day. They aren't part of a formal group. They don't meet at a designated time. But they all stop and chat with Ana. They matter to Ana. And they notice if she isn't on her front step. I have seen people knock and call out her name and check if she's okay, simply because she wasn't out there when they passed.

The need for connection and community is primal, as fundamental as the need for air, water, and food. ~Dean Ornish

I'm going to challenge you. Right now – Who are your people? Who is your community? Who comes to mind when you read this? Right now – call them! Text them. Go see them. Reach out. Because this is deeply important! People need connection and community, and people need to be seen and heard and loved. So do it. Right now. Check in and let them know that you're thinking of them and how important they are to you.

❤ *We love you! ~Laurie & Billy*

Looking for a few Superheroes



We are looking for a few Cross-Cultural Superheroes - people who can personally champion some important aspects of this work. Maybe that hero is YOU! Do you know of a business who might sponsor something on this list? Do you know a doctor or a care professional whose practice might wish to sponsor the important care work we do? Could your class or your group help? Could you put on a superhero cape and sponsor a part of this life-giving ministry? Situations currently in need of a Superhero:

La Posada Care Apartment - lodging, full board, care / coaching / counseling / debrief for cross-cultural workers, humanitarian aid workers, pastors… folks in need of restoration and new life.

Sponsor the cost of ***a one night stay*** for a cross-cultural worker to receive care? $40/night

Could you ***sponsor a week of care*** and restoration for a worker? $280/week

A small sink, a microwave, and mini fridge are on our wish list. The cost for installing the sink and outfitting ***La Posada's kitchenette*** is budgeted for $1000. Are you the Kitchen Hero we are dreaming of?

La Posada desperately needs ***a dedicated bathroom***. Local workers in Spain have estimated the budget to be no more than $3000 for this work project. Could you give the gift of a good hot shower and a dedicated bathroom to the La Posada apartment?

Local Heroes -
Our presence in Antequera, Spain helps to build Kingdom in a variety of ways. We are active in our community and in service to others. Coaching local pastors, teaching in the church, building up and caring for other cross-cultural workers serving Spain, serving with the food bank, helping immigrants connect and find community, and leading discipleship groups are just a few of the things we are involved in locally. And every day, ministry in the local setting looks like doing life with our neighbors, having conversations with the single elderly woman across the street, and sitting in the park with the widower while we watch our dogs play. Our daily presence and ministry needs a few good heroes, too. ***Could you be a Dollar-a-Day Hero?*** Could you commit to $30 per month to help us reach out and help our community in Antequera every day?

Already a Hero? Are you already a member of our Team?
First of all, THANK YOU for being a faithful partner of this ministry! Seriously, YOU are already a HERO! Thanks for donning your cape and super powers and taking up the cause!
Second - we have a few partners who are raising the bar… they are digging in and giving a little more each month. Gotta love a superhero who decides to go even higher! If you find yourself in a position to ***become a Hero at a higher level***, we encourage you to do that! If you decide to add to your giving for us, great. If you decide to begin to support a new CCW, we can give you ideas and suggestions! We just want you to be a blessing to the Kingdom and God's work, wherever that may be!

"A hero can be anyone. Even a man doing something as simple and reassuring as putting a coat around a young boy's shoulders to let him know that the world hasn't ended." ~Bruce Wayne, Batman

Prayers: - prayers for our local team...our teammates (Axel & Delilah) face important decisions and changes in the near future. Prayers for peace for them, for financial provision in the process, and for us to be good teammates and the loving support that they need during this time of grieving and struggle for them. They are amazing people and awesome teammates. They are community for us. What effects them, effects us. Also pray for The Marcums as they transition to Spain to join our team. Pray for Amanda Windham and her son who are in preparation to join our team later this year.

- prayers for the local church that we help serve, and for Kingdom transformation in our community. Help us pray for Centro Cristiano and for our town of Antequera.

- Our first month of 'operation' for the La Posada guest apartment will be May! We have one weekend in May booked and one three-day stay in May. While we still have several wish-list projects that are in our sights for making La Posada a haven for care and restoration, we will be up and running in a couple of weeks! June, July, and August are filling fast. We even have folks on the books already for fall! Pray that funds become available within the coming weeks and months so that we can add the dedicated bathroom ($3000) and the kitchenette ($1000) soon.

Shout out to Hometown Heroes!!!

Every time that someone partners with us in ministry, they become a hero. That's right! Through their gifts and prayers, they step in and give a helping hand to us and to the work we do in Spain. Let's give a special shout out to a couple of our heroes this month:



Jennifer and Alan Shoalmire used their feet and their hearts to be superheroes this month! They challenged their friends and neighbors to raise support for this ministry by donating when they ran in the recent Run Houston! 5K race in Minute Maid park. By setting TMS Global and our ministry up as their Reason2Race http://info.reason2race.com/about-us/how-it-works/ they raised $388! That's enough funds to sponsor 9 full days of care, coaching, counseling and debrief for a cross-cultural worker or humanitarian aid worker— that includes lodging, full board meals, and care services! That's amazing!!! Thank you for helping give care to those who are in desperate need of a break, a little TLC, and restoration!!!

To learn more about Reason2Race and how you can raise funds while you have fun in your local 5K or triathlon or marathon (any race, any time!), go to http://info.reason2race.com/about-us/how-it-works/

Thanks, Heroes!!!!

TMS Global

Laurie & Billy Drum

4717 Shoal Creek Dr
College Station, TX 77845-4410
USA

E-mail: billy@drumsforchrist.org
laurie@drumsforchrist.org

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ORG
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TMS GLOBAL

- Sharing the Love of Christ with the least, the lost, and the left out… immigrants, displaced peoples, the lonely, the abandoned, those who need a friend.
- Nurturing and developing people to be healthy spiritually, physically, emotionally, and relationally - because "care" is not just an emotional feeling word, "care" is a verb - an action. That's who we are… the care-givers!

Become a Partner! We would love to have you on our team!



Mail to The Drums:
Laurie y Billy Drum
Apdo #46 Correos
29200 Antequera, Malaga
España

Contact The Drums:
Skype billy.drum
USA ph# 979-985-5238
(rings through to Spain)

Whatsapp: #34 652 144 783

Dear Billy and Laurie,

☐ I will pray for you.
☐ As God provides, I plan to partner with you by giving $_____Per month / year.
Special note:_____

Name (PLEASE PRINT) _____
Address:_____
City:_____ St ._____Zip_____
Phone:_____ Home Church:_____
Email Address: _____

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