

2020 ANNUAL REPORT

Persistence & Provision



FROM THE US DIRECTOR

In 2020, Merriam-Webster chose “pandemic” as the Word of the Year. It was probably the dictionary’s easiest pick ever, as the pandemic caused by COVID-19 took center stage, becoming the lens through which many people now see the world.

At SEND, the pandemic did influence our decision-making, our communications, our strategies, and definitely our prayers. We assembled a COVID Response Team made up of epidemiologists, medical professionals, and leaders in missionary care so that we could understand COVID’s implications for global ministry. The pandemic added extra layers of stress, loss, and isolation for our global workers in places where life was already hard, so we worked hard to keep serving them well.

But for all the attention that the pandemic received, that word didn’t define us, nor did it take center stage. As SEND reflects on 2020,

two words capture our experience of this historic time: **Persistence and Provision**. As disciples of Jesus, we persisted in serving the God who continues to provide everything we need to move forward in reaching the lost.

In light of the pandemic, our ministry strategies for church planting and disciple making among the unreached expanded to embrace the use of digital tools. Our missionaries persisted in pursuing the lost, finding creative ways to nurture relationships with seekers and new believers.

In the pages that follow, you will read about how our global workers persevered in the face of challenges and uncertainty. You will find stories of how God provided when the circumstances seemed impossible and bleak. Rejoice! Lives were transformed and the gospel went forth because of your persistence in prayer and provision of generous support.



Michelle Atwell

Michelle Atwell

SEND International US Director & CEO



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- A decorative graphic on the left side of the page. It consists of a series of diagonal stripes in shades of grey, teal, and light blue, forming a shape that resembles a mountain range. Below the stripes is a solid grey silhouette of a mountain range with several peaks.
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WORD OF HOPE CHURCH

God provides a building

In an open hall where children used to develop their muscles through running, jumping, and climbing, Macedonian believers now are developing spiritual strength as they meet, for the first time, in their own church building.

World of Hope Church started in 1997 as a Bible study in a fast-growing suburb of Skopje. A decade ago, the church had grown to the point where it needed a building—and so it started a persistent effort to raise funds.

God provided for this church building through everything from matching grants to a sponsored 30-mile run, to a Macedonian-focused campaign called, *"Give Me One More Brick."* At one point, Pastor Pero traveled across the US to share about Word of Hope's vision to transform its community with the gospel of Christ.

As funds from hundreds of generous donors rolled in over the years, church members kept their eyes open for the perfect building.

Last year, they found it! Bambini, an indoor playground near the church's cramped rental, put its building up for sale after COVID made it impossible for children to play together indoors. In addition to weekly worship services, which started in December, the new space gives the church room for outreaches, including language classes, orphan ministry, and fitness groups.

The new church will allow the congregation to easily triple in size—important, as the surrounding neighborhood now is three times as big as it was when that Bible study started way back in 1997.

"God's timing is perfect," said Brian Stout, a SEND missionary who served at Word of Hope. *"He provided! But it took lots of work, waiting, praying, and knocking on many heart doors!"*

Skopje, Macedonia
Word of Hope Church



COVID RESPONSE TEAM

Providing care during the pandemic

What's an international organization to do when a pandemic sweeps the globe? **Praise the Lord that he put an epidemiologist on your staff, for such a time as this.**

That epidemiologist, along with specialists in corporate security, public health, member care, mental health, and children's issues, came together to form SEND International's COVID-19 Response Team.

As the pandemic has dragged on, the team has persistently provided expert, compassionate care to your missionaries. With facts and tact, the team has dealt with sticky issues, including best practices for those who fall ill with COVID-19, global travel restrictions, safety of isolated missionary kids, how to emotionally process the pandemic, recommended re-opening guidelines, protocols for ministry, and vaccine considerations.

The COVID-19 Response Team's videos and interactive, weekly emails have given your missionaries an outlet for expressing needs, questions, concerns, and ideas, and for sharing testimonies of the Lord's faithfulness and provision throughout this year.

Your ongoing support enables us to provide this customized and vital care to your missionaries. As we press on, we continue to trust the Lord for wisdom and guidance in adapting our response efforts as we seek to engage unreached communities with his message of hope during a particularly challenging time.



"The uncertainty of COVID has helped many future missionaries wrestle through how to balance the need to act boldly while also trusting in God's provision."

Stacey Hohbein,
SEND Appointee Coach

BURYAT PRAISE WORKSHOP

Songs of hope in a heart language

Among the Buryat in Siberia, it's the older generation that's coming to Christ.

"In this culture, elders have authority over the young," explains Daniella, who worked among the Buryat for 12 years. "If a young guy is the first one to become a believer, he will be mocked. But if grandma and great aunt and uncle become believers, the younger ones will pay attention."

Some of these elderly folks have drawn closer to Christ through music written and recorded by the Buryat Praise Workshop.

In 2013, Daniella and three others started a music group to help their Russian church feel more welcoming to Buryats. But though they performed on Buryat instruments, the songs were translations from other cultures. The Buryat needed their own praise songs, in their heart language, to connect with the influential older generation. In 2018, the Praise Workshop was born.

"Writing a new song is a very long process," Daniella says. "We have to persevere because there are five dialects in the Buryat language. Also, there is no complete Bible translation. We have a lot of discussions about how to translate terms like 'God, Jesus, sin, blessing, and resurrection.'"

The Praise Workshop and its children's choir have recorded six music videos, releasing them on YouTube and social media, where they've been viewed more than 25,000 times.

We might never know the full impact of this music, but we do know that in one family, three sisters eventually came to trust in Christ after a friend called and said, *"Look on YouTube. Our Buryats are singing there."*

WATCH THEIR VIDEOS HERE:

 [TINYURL.COM/BURYATPRAISE](https://tinyurl.com/buryatpraise)



THE SENDING COLLECTIVE

Providing new pathways

As SEND connects with churches, we often encounter pastors who have a passion for sending missionaries, but who want an expert partner who can help them navigate the complexities involved. Our deep belief that God has chosen to fulfill his global mission through the local church fuels our commitment to finding innovative ways to help these pastors and their churches thrive in this critical role.

To meet this need, we announce the Sending Collective.

The Sending Collective offers customized, collaborative services to help churches send their missionaries well. It doesn't force churches to squeeze into a one-size-fits-all model for sending global workers. Instead, it allows churches to tap into our 75 years of expertise as they fulfill the unique plan God has for them in his Great Commission.

The Sending Collective does not replace our current methods of recruiting and sending missionaries; rather, it extends our ability to support churches ready to reach fields not yet served by SEND. Without a persistent gospel presence, the unreached in those areas will not hear and cannot believe.

Please pray with us that the Lord will provide wisdom as we begin conversations with a growing network of church partners and seek to empower his people to send out missionaries well.

"We are committed to play our part in seeing more of God's people making disciples among all nations. How exciting to know that so many churches desire to send their members to join SEND teams and to serve among people and places we have yet to engage."

Eric King,
Church Relations and
Mobilization Director



CAMPUS RELOCATION

Realigning resources

For the past decade, the leadership of SEND US has wrestled with how to effectively deploy new missionaries from North America into cross-cultural harvest fields. We've prayerfully considered what we should adjust so that our global workers will thrive in this rapidly changing world.

God provided an unexpected answer: **We should change our address.**

About three years ago, we started to explore selling our 11-acre, 10-building campus in Farmington, Michigan. For more than 50 years, this property has been a solid launchpad for thousands of missionaries around the world. Though this place remains dear to us, we began to see that maintaining so much land no longer made sense in a world that relies heavily on digital connections.

As we persisted in prayer, we saw that the Lord wanted us to realign our resources for new opportunities of impact. We committed to collaborate more effectively with other mission agencies and churches, to seek greater diversity in our direction and connections, to recover the energy required to maintain our aging facilities, and to invest more into strategies that directly serve the Church's role in mobilizing global workers.

After more than two years of touring potential buyers around our campus, we anticipate closing the property sale this spring. Meanwhile, we persist in praying that we will grow in our ability to serve the Church as a global service partner, working from the yet-to-be-determined location of the Lord's choosing.

"The SEND offices were always more about the people than the place."

Joel Loewen,
Missionary to Japan



MINNEAPOLIS DIASPORA MINISTRY

God provides direction

Sometimes, when God is on the move, it means you have to move.

Such was the case for Katie and four of her SEND Russia teammates. They were working together to share the gospel with two Muslim people groups, but for various reasons, they all found themselves back in the US.

What to do next? They were spread across the US, from California to Texas to Minnesota, but they remained united in their desire to see Muslim communities transformed by the love of Christ.

That's when God provided the direction they each needed.

"A pastor in Minnesota came to SEND and said, 'We really could use a team here that does things the way SEND does them,'" Katie said. *"The Muslim population we're serving has been here 30 years, and it's still completely unreached. This community needs to know Christians who are relational, rather than program-focused, who are sensitive to their culture, and who can help start a culturally appropriate church."*

And so it was that in the middle of a global pandemic, these SEND Russia teammates became SEND US Diaspora teammates and began creating connections in a new community.

"We've really had the time to nail down what it looks like to build a disciple-making movement in this place," Katie said. *"We have to persist. We can't just dive-bomb in with evangelism and then disappear. We have to walk alongside people, mentoring and discipling. We have to be disciples who make disciples who make disciples."*



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6 outreach groups have been started in US cities among unreached people groups.

MANNA PACKS IN SE ASIA

God's provision for starving families

"What will we do with all this food," our team leader in Southeast Asia wondered, looking around a warehouse stacked with nutrition packs. "Will the rats get to it? Will this blessing become a burden?"

The so-called Manna Packs, which contain nutrient- and protein-enriched rice, were donated before our team's medical clinics in February 2020. Some 1,000 people left their visits to our volunteer doctors with food in hand.

Still, about 30,000 Manna Packs remained. One teammate asked God, *"Is there a famine in the land? Is that why you gave us so much?"*

Then COVID-19 hit.

"Where we are, people were not allowed to go outside the house," our teammate said. "Many people started to panic, especially those who live 'one scratch, one peck,' or hand to mouth."

These folks used to earn just enough to buy their daily bread. Now they had nothing. And while our teammates did have food, they did not have permission to travel within their own cities, much less to rural regions.

Our team quickly pulled together a Manna Pack Task Force, which started persistently contacting government officials, offering to deliver the nourishing food that God had provided months prior.

Eventually, officials allowed our teammates to cross the city to meet a government vehicle that carried boxes to rural communities. Because God provided and our workers persisted, starving families could eat.

"God knew that what I thought could become a burden had a much bigger and unforeseen purpose," said our team leader. "Praise be to God for how he works!"

HELP WITH RELIEF EFFORTS [SEND.ORG/COVID](https://send.org/covid)



LONG JOURNEY TO SPAIN

Persisting in preparation

Andrew and Susana Schaad and their two young sons should have been flying to Spain in April 2020. They'd already worked for two years to raise support and complete all the necessary pre-field training. Their passports contained brand-new Spanish visas. They were ready.

Unfortunately, Spain was one of the first countries in the world to face a severe COVID-19 outbreak. The lockdowns there were extreme and long-lasting. The Schaad family found themselves stuck, willing to go, but waiting for permission.

"The sense of being in-between was hard," they said. "Being fully funded and not able to start serving as missionaries in Spain created a sense of being adrift."

Still, as month after month passed, the Schaad family persisted in their missionary preparation.

"We worked on language with a Spanish-speaking neighbor. We spent as much time as possible connecting and deepening relationships with supporters and church members. Andrew got ordained and we both did professional development as counselors," they said. "We also learned to deal with curveballs and unmet expectations—skills we are certain to need on the mission field!"

In retrospect, they also see how God provided by delaying their move.

"We are thankful for God's timing. When we were first delayed by COVID, we hadn't yet left our old apartment, so we weren't sitting on suitcases for nine months. We also didn't fly to Spain only to get stuck on arrival," they said. "But we are so glad the delay is over and that we've moved into our new Spanish home!"



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future missionaries are preparing to go to the field for the first time.

US Office Financial Report

2019	TOTAL INCOME	TOTAL EXPENSES
	\$17,362,677	\$17,592,956
2020	TOTAL INCOME	TOTAL EXPENSES
	\$16,949,283	\$17,976,018

(Income from previous years was distributed during this fiscal year.)



SEND International of the United States, Inc., financial statements are audited by CapinCrouse LLP
SEND International is a member of the ECFA

SEND US Council



Michelle Atwell

US DIRECTOR & CEO,
SEND INTERNATIONAL



John Baird

RETIRED HUMAN RESOURCES
DIRECTOR, FORD MOTOR COMPANY



Dr. Sabrina Black

CLINICAL DIRECTOR, ABUNDANT
LIFE COUNSELING CENTER

"One of my greatest joys as a board member for SEND during 2020 was knowing that even in the midst of difficult times, financial hardships, and the pandemic, lives were still being transformed by the gospel of Jesus Christ.

It was a blessing to witness people still willing to go and others still willing to give."

"God is good, isn't he? During this past year God has provided incredibly for SEND and the many missionaries who are serving across this globe. Safety, finances, and gospel sharing opportunities. I stand amazed at how our God opened new doors for his gospel message to be shared during a pandemic. I am excited to see what he has in store for us if we just remain faithful to his calling."



David Gregory

VICE PRESIDENT OF STRATEGIC
DEVELOPMENT, NEWPORT ONE



Rev. Warren Janzen

INTERNATIONAL DIRECTOR,
SEND INTERNATIONAL



Isabel Lee

GLOBAL OUTREACH & WOMEN'S
MINISTRIES, CHINESE BIBLE
CHURCH OF MARYLAND



Dr. Eric Moore

PASTOR, TREE OF LIFE
FELLOWSHIP; ASSISTANT
PROFESSOR, MOODY
THEOLOGICAL SEMINARY



R. York Moore

NATIONAL EVANGELIST,
INTERVARSITY CHRISTIAN
FELLOWSHIP USA



Dan Severn

VICE PRESIDENT OF OPERATIONS,
FURMANO FOODS

Good things in a tough year

In 2020, we all faced many changes and challenges. But looking back, we can clearly see God's provision and the persistence of our SEND team in spite of everything. Here are just some of the victories each department in the US office saw.

"We saw missionaries actually raising support and making it to the field amidst so much uncertainty. We helped people pivot to sharing about their ministry virtually or socially distanced. Initially, it was thought people would just need to take a break from raising support and it would be impossible, but we found ways around the challenges and God provided."

Bruce Cannon, PMC Director
PERSONNEL & MEMBER CARE (PMC)

"Moving our team to all remote work required us to become more intentional in connecting with each other. This has built stronger teamwork and relationships in the department, and with other departments."

Amy Walters,
Communications Director
COMMUNICATIONS



"Our annual Global Missions Banquet was transformed into an online Virtual Missions Celebration. Instead of our usual local/Michigan-based attendees, we reached a record-breaking 3500+ people as far as South Korea and other parts of Asia!"

Scott Strauss,
Chief Development Officer
DEVELOPMENT

WATCH THE CELEBRATION HERE:



[TINYURL.COM/SENDVMC](https://tinyurl.com/sendvmc)

Read about **the Sending Collective** on page 6!

"Across SEND, we had in-depth conversations about creative sending pathways that helped lead to the formation of the Sending Collective."



Eric King,
Mobilization Director
CHURCH RELATIONS
AND MOBILIZATION

"The US Office staff transitioned smoothly to the work-from-home requirements of Michigan. The attitude of staff, the availability of necessary laptops, and access to cloud-based software allowed everyone to work safely and effectively from their kitchens, living rooms, bedrooms, or wherever they chose. We became savvy users of Microsoft 365 Teams in a very short time span!"

Bryan Williamson, COO
INFORMATION SYSTEMS



"Even though the 2020 pandemic caused us to pause many of our strategic priorities, it also allowed our team to accelerate the launch of a new initiative designed to be more responsive and flexible to the Church in sending out their missionaries. We witnessed God providing strategic conversations with key church leaders and partners to come alongside and help us shape this initiative and contribute to a successful launch here in 2021."

Michelle Atwell, US Director & CEO
DIRECTOR'S DEPARTMENT

"In spite of the challenges, we were able to push through and disburse life-saving funds to the fields, helping missionaries evacuate, and providing COVID and disaster relief."

Kevin Friesen, CFO
FINANCE



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