

The Cima Family Newsletter Vol. 14, No. 3, March 2020 John.Cima@lcms.org Aimee.Cima@lcms.org













S FROM HOME...

All <u>schools in Cambodia have closed</u> until further notice. Thankfully, the girls' school has moved to online education. Celeste is in live online classes for 4 hours per day, while Bella has a 30-minute live online meeting along with supplemental assignments. There are struggles, of course, but we are proud of the the girls' hard work and thankful for consistent, strong internet!

Though Isaac's nursery has done an admirable job of providing online resources, at this age there is only so much they can do. Aimee ably creates home-school lessons for him, including making pumpkin muffins that we all enjoy! We also play lots of games (like Spot It!) and read plenty of books. He also <u>loves to swim</u> (though many pools are now closing).

Even though we miss interacting with people more regularly, this time of "social distancing" provides our family with plenty of time together at home. We've taken up some new hobbies as a result. As a family we are working on a 1,000piece puzzle. Meanwhile, Bella and Celeste have learned to knit. Bella made the cloth pictured here for J.P.'s birthday on April 1.

OR SUCH A TIME AS THIS...

Thank you for your emails of encouragement and inquiry into our welfare. By God's grace, our family is safe and healthy in Phnom Penh. Like most places, COVID-19 has upended society quickly and forcefully (though <u>the numbers in Cambodia</u> are, so far, mercifully not as alarming as other places). I am reminded of Proverbs 19:21, "Many are the plans in the mind of a man, but it is the purpose of the Lord that will stand." Even as all our plans crumble, it cannot thwart God's purposes. Indeed, this is an opportunity not just to lament, but to consider how God might be working in and through this tragedy for the sake of the Gospel. Even as we practice social distancing, God is never far from us. Even when the church stops meeting, God's mission never takes a break. Even when we can't go anywhere, the Gospel never stays put. We have been called for such a time as this to serve Cambodia. Even as we practice social distancing by staying at home, we are finding small ways to serve. Aimee still provides support to missionaries in Hong Kong and Papua New Guinea. J.P. is keeping up with PhD studies (reading and writing) and Khmer studies (online). He also initiated a weekly online Bible for missionaries serving in Cambodia during a time of isolation. With local pastors, he is also working to develop basic content (examples <u>here</u> and <u>here</u>) for videos to be posted online to encourage God's people while <u>they cannot gather for public worship</u>. He even tried <u>filming a video himself in Khmer</u>! On Sundays we gather as a family for "home church," which includes a basic liturgy, singing, and a time of family discussion in God's Word. Even as we miss gathering with our local church, we thank God that He never stops being present with us through His Word.

Wanna help us impact the people of Cambodia? Give online here, or mail a check to 1) P.O. Box 66861, St. Louis, MO 63166-6861 (payable to The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod), OR 2) 40718 Highway E-16, Mapleton, IA 51034 (payable to Mission Central). For ALL checks, in the memo line write "Cima family-Cambodia." **PRAYERS:** for healing for Cambodians who have the virus; for a quick end to the virus' spread, especially with Khmer New Year coming mid-April; for Cambodians who are and will face economic hardship as a result of COVID-19; for Cambodian church leaders as they struggle to provide pastoral care for those who need it during this time; for the family of Sopha, whose mother-in-law died on April 1; for protection for J.P.'s dad and Aimee's step-mom, who are among the most vulnerable groups.