

With a song in our heart!

August 2019

UPDATE

WITS (Walking In Their Shoes) International

*providing supportive counseling and training to the International
Christian expatriate community*

----- **focusing on the ministry of Lee and Carolyn Baas**

(We want to start with a reminder of how we got here and why we continue in this ministry)

WITS (Walking In Their Shoes) International began twenty years ago. God, through the urging of mission leaders and missionaries, challenged us to take up the task of providing on-site counseling services to missionaries wherever they were working in the world. The challenge was hard to ignore because I was the only missionary pastor in our area who was also a psychologist.

We knew there was a need. We had been world missionaries for 30 years and throughout our time of service we had many opportunities to assist missionaries. We accepted the challenge.

We had no idea how long we would continue this ministry. **Our only time commitment was to God.** If He would lead us and supply the health and energy and wisdom that we needed, we would continue in this ministry. We never imagined that we would still be continuing this ministry 20 years later. God has led us and continues to challenge us with the needs of missionaries.

WALKING IN THEIR SHOES EXISTS TO PROVIDE FREE AND CONFIDENTIAL, CHRISTIAN PSYCHOLOGICAL SUPPORT, TO OVERSEAS CHRISTIAN WORKERS.

Most of those we work with are missionaries sent out by churches or mission agencies. Individual counseling remains our most important service. I am overseas about 1/3rd of the time and I follow up with missionaries via the internet when I am not traveling. We also lead seminars and workshops – generally three or four a year in areas where we are working with missionaries. Missionaries, mission leaders and sometimes national pastors attend these training programs.

My health is OK. The unknown fungus/virus/bug that hit me in Africa remains unknown, but the effects are pretty well gone, and I have been able to travel and do my ministry.

Already this year, I was in Uganda, Kenya, Thailand, Cambodia and the Philippines. Carolyn went with me to the Philippines so she could follow up on her ministry with women and children in the squatter settlements. She worked with them during the 10 years when we lived there.

HOW DO MISSIONARIES HEAR ABOUT US?

We are associated with the Global Member Care network and some people contact us through that Christian agency. However, most of our contacts come through referrals from other missionaries, mission organizations and churches. Those that we have helped over the past years are quick to tell others about us. Others contact us through our website, www.witsinternational.com.

We assist missionaries who have spent many years overseas and we help people who have just begun their work. Some need help in dealing with long term issues and some to deal with the initial trauma of overseas ministry.

What issues can become problem issues? Work issues, interpersonal issues, dealing with people they have not known before and who see life a little differently than themselves. Depression and burnout symptoms, family issue (husband and wife, teenagers and children development). General living issues in a different country and work satisfaction can cause problems.

Has the need changed?

Today there are more retreats and get-a-ways for missionaries. But the problem with retreats is that they generally do not provide the real help that missionaries should have. There is very little opportunity for one on one counseling and there are almost no opportunities for confidential counseling.

For the last 4 years, we have had more requests to help mission leaders and organizations with conflicts. I would rather not work with conflicts – no one likes conflicts – but I am very happy to see conflicts resolved and God has provided us with some tools that have proven successful in dealing with major conflicts.

Our future?

If the need is still there and the door is still open and we have no big health issues, we have no reason to step away from this ministry.

Our need?

Continued prayer support.

We are not naïve. Only God can change people. And God goes before us as people pray for us.

May the Lord daily bless you,

Lee and Carolyn Baas

As most of you know, Carolyn was injured when we went for a boat ride 3 weeks ago. She had a burst fracture of her L2 vertebrae. Six days in the hospital, four days in a rehab center and she is home recovering. She is still on pain meds. She tires quickly but is now able to walk with a walker. She can even stand for a little while. without pain. A real answer to prayer. We pray that she will have full recovery in a few weeks.