

# ADVENTURES IN MIDDLE EARTH

*Have I not commanded you? Be strong and courageous. Do not be afraid; do not be discouraged, for the Lord your God will be with you wherever you go. Joshua 1:9*

June 2019

## Home Ministry Assignment

One of the odd things about missionary life is that someone is always absent. Because part of the job is to return periodically to our passport country for a few months or so, we never have a full crew. Sometimes this traveling is called furlough and other times it's called home ministry assignment or HMA. HMA encompasses the idea that a missionary's ministry goes at least two directions: toward the mission field and toward supporters in our home country.

On the mission field, leaving for HMA can wreak havoc with programs and activities. With a relatively small team, Scott has no one able to cover all his duties. A few things can be delegated, a lot just won't get done for the four months we are gone, and some tasks will require distance work from the U.S.

Besides connecting with supporters, HMA also involves refreshment, restoration, and reevaluating our service. How has the last term gone? What adjustments does God want to make in our plans and vision for the future?

Finding the balance between travel, meeting with people, and being renewed is always challenging. Friends just returned from a five-month HMA which took them (husband, wife, and six-year-old son) across the U.S. in a rental car. When I asked how it went, the wife said, "It was crazy. In the first four months we were never anywhere longer than three days."

We'll have it much easier than that. We plan to spend most of our time in Oregon, with short trips to Washington and Colorado. Eugene friends have offered us a room in their home, so we'll have a home base as we come and go. Almost all of our kids and grandkids are in Eugene. We have no young children to parent while we travel and we have no supporting churches requiring mandatory presentations. And we don't need to raise new support, which is sometimes the most stressful part of HMA. If a missionary's account is in deficit, he or she can't return to the field until adequate support is raised.

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### Our Blog

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Our challenge is to be diligent in connecting with supporters while remaining flexible and sensitive to God's leading for each day. It ought to be an adventure; prayers are appreciated!

## Ministry Focus: Cleft Lip Program

For many years Reach Beyond has helped children with cleft lip or cleft palate deformities have the needed corrective surgeries. The program is based in Shell, which is on the edge of the jungle. Some of the patients come from the jungle and others from Shell and surrounding communities. Financing comes from donations from around the world.

Recently we were twice blessed to host families who came to Quito for surgery. Our apartment is fairly close to Hospital Metropolitano, where the surgeries are performed, so we have a convenient place to stay. In May, a 17-year-old came for her eighth surgery, accompanied by her mother, baby sister, and the Reach Beyond missionary who is coordinating the program. Unfortunately the patient got sick the night before the operation and the surgery was postponed.

In early June, a 16-year-old came with her mother and the missionary (all pictured below) to have two surgeries to correct deformities in her ear canal and her nose. These deformities are in addition to her cleft lip. Her surgeries went well and she is now back in Shell. It has been a privilege to have these "angels unaware" in our home.



## How To Pray For Us

- Praise: **For** our home base in Eugene  
**For** what God has planned  
**For** the chance to be grandparents in person
- Pray: **That** we'll get into a week long Debrief and Renewal session in Colorado; we're waitlisted on four sessions  
**For** diligence, sensitivity to God's leading, and obedience to His direction  
**For** protection for our Quito apartment while we're gone

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