

*"Some trust in chariots and some in horses,
but we trust in the name of the LORD our
God." Psalm 20:7*
Theme verse of Kids' CrossTraining Program

Laura Allen • TCK Care

Dear Friends,

As I sit down to write this update, I'm reminded that whenever I reflect on my journey, I see God's faithfulness woven through every season of ministry and life. He continues to guide and sustain me as I serve our CI missionaries, care for my mom, and enjoy being part of a vibrant, missional church community here in Nashville.

My dear friend and housemate of five years, Deborah Flowers, passed away on June 15. While those of us who loved her are grateful that her suffering has come to an end, we deeply miss her sense of humor, the twinkle in her eyes, and the remarkable way she made every person feel seen, valued, and honored—whether they were a lifelong friend or a cashier at the grocery store. She was quick to share her faith and carried a heartfelt desire for everyone she met to know the love of her Lord and Savior. As I help plan her memorial service, I find myself asking, What part of her legacy can I carry forward? It's a question that has challenged and encouraged me, and one I hope will continue to shape the way I love and serve others.

Perhaps some of you reading this newsletter are walking through seasons of loss as well. **As I continue to read, pray, and process my own grief, I am continually reminded that I grieve with hope because of the redemptive work of Jesus Christ.** Death does not have the final word. That truth has been a steady source of comfort for me, as has the following quote:

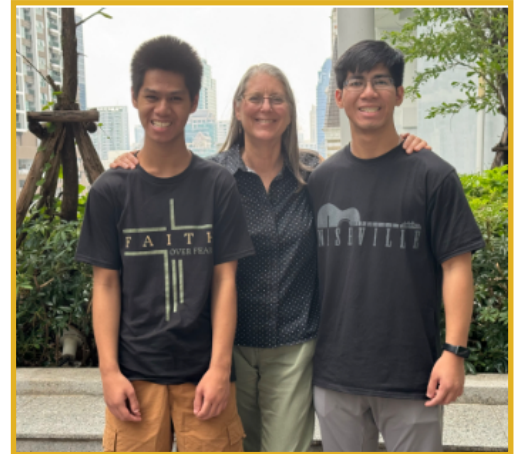
...all of creation will be made new, the children of God resurrected unto eternal life in glorified physical bodies in which we will live and play and take joy, all to the glory of God, in community, in creativity, in worship, in wonder and in celebration. Remembrance of this story, and of how our own deaths find their context in it, is one of the great gifts the church has been given to steward, and a gift that we ought to continually offer to one another. It is the best hope in all of creation.

Every Moment Holy, Volume II: Death, Grief and Hope

I love the way God faithfully journeys with us, meeting us in our grief and giving us beautiful moments of rest, purpose, and connection in the midst of our struggles. Even in this season, He has graciously woven together many reminders of His goodness. I would love to share a few highlights from the first half of this year.

In **February**, I had the opportunity to return to Bangkok, Thailand, for the first time in 19 years to visit Tim and Sherry Walter and their two youngest sons, Jaiden and Jordan, who have been serving there as CI missionaries for the past two years. Years ago, Tim and Sherry served on the same ministry team as my brother's family, and I had the privilege of living next door to them in a Thai neighborhood. At the time, I had moved to Thailand to serve as the team schoolteacher for the missionaries' children and had the joy of teaching their two oldest children for several years.

What a sweet gift from God to have the opportunity, so many years later, to once again encourage and serve this family. I spent a week with the Walters, sharing in their life and ministry while walking alongside the boys as we processed life together.





Some of the highlights of my trip included returning to our old neighborhood, seeing the homes where we once lived, and reconnecting with a dear Thai Christian couple. I also had the joy of having lunch with Brently Pennington, the oldest daughter of one of the families I served alongside years ago. I homeschooled her and her siblings for seven years, and now she is serving as a missionary in Thailand. The entire week was a meaningful reminder of God's faithfulness through the years and of the lasting relationships He has graciously allowed us to build.



In **March**, Mom and I made our annual trip to Texas. While she spent a week with my brother and sister-in-law, I attended the MK Synergy Conference, a gathering for TCK caregivers and educators. It was a joy to reconnect with like-minded caregivers representing a variety of sending organizations, churches, and agencies.

The conference focused on caring for TCKs with special needs while serving cross-culturally. It was encouraging to learn about the growing efforts to develop resources and support systems for families with special needs children, enabling them to remain on the mission field rather than returning home prematurely because of unmet needs.



In **June**, I traveled to Wilmore, Kentucky, for three weeks to lead the children's portion of our pre-field training program, CrossTraining. It was such a joy to build deeper relationships with the six children from our two onboarding families. Our days were filled with Bible lessons, Scripture memorization, horse-themed activities, crafts, games, visits to local horse farms, and even a birthday bowling celebration.

During the second week, we were blessed to welcome Noé and Kathlyn Chan, CI missionaries serving in Guatemala. They led a special art camp for our onboarding children alongside the children of CI community families living in Wilmore. The Chans incorporate art into their ministry in Guatemala, and throughout the week, they guided the children through the life of Joseph using the themes of being loved by God, being connected, being broken, and being redeemed. These themes beautifully complemented my desire to help the children grow in their God-given identity and understand their place within the CI community during CrossTraining.



By the end of the art week, 16 children, ranging in age from 3 to 16, had grown not only in their relationships with God but also with one another. How encouraging to see our new onboarding children leave feeling connected to the children in Wilmore. My hope is that they will come to see our headquarters as a home away from home, and whenever they return to the United States on furlough, know there are friends in Wilmore eager to welcome them with open arms.

To you, my dear friends and ministry partners, thank you for your prayers, encouragement, and financial support. You help keep me afloat, moving forward with the calling God has placed before me in serving our missionary families. I thank God for you and pray that you will be filled with His grace and blessings.

Gratefully Yours, *Laura*



Support

To stand with Laura Allen financially, you can give online at cimissions.org/allen or make your check out to Cornerstone Int'l, memo **Allen • TCK Care**, & mail to PO Box 192 Wilmore, KY 40390

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