



September 2026

A Hope and A Future

The Johnson Family

Greetings Dear Friends

In just a few weeks, we will celebrate our 17th wedding anniversary. We are so grateful for the years together and the family the Lord has blessed us with. Seventeen years ago, Ben was finishing his third year of ministry in Colorado Springs, and I was just returning home from five months of living in Nepal. Not only does this month hold our wedding anniversary, but also our anniversary of vocational ministry. Ben became a youth pastor at Open Bible Fellowship in mid-September, just a few weeks before our wedding.

The Lord has been so gracious to allow us to serve Him in several capacities over the years. It's a privilege to look back and see His faithfulness in each and every season and ministry position. Many of you have been an integral part of our lives, and we are so thankful for you and how you have allowed God to use you in our lives.



“We are human beings, not human doings.” - Wayne Muller

As many of you know, we have recently embarked on a new, unexpected season of transition in Honduras. We are seeking the Lord for specific direction concerning ministry, healing, and growth. As we have sought Him and other ministry opportunities, we have felt a strong leading to enter a season of ceasing. This certainly was not the answer we were anticipating, but we are confident in His leading and timing. **As we sought counsel, encountered several closed doors, and listened to whispers from the Holy Spirit, our sending organization has encouraged us to take a sabbatical.**

This time of ceasing from full-time ministry will be starting mid-September and ending in January. **Our sending organization, along with an advisor and a core group of people, will be walking alongside us during this time of renewal.** I mention that this was not what we were anticipating because we are human and we love being productive. If you know us well, you know we place a high value on running hard for the Lord and serving Him in whatever way He asks of us. It's difficult for us to admit that our spiritual tanks are low and that we aren't always the best at being still before Him. We are challenged by this invitation to rest, grow, and simply be. **Our expectations are for spiritual transformation, clarity in our calling, renewed passion, and fresh revelation on how to move forward. We also desire to learn how to continue serving the Lord while being careful to cultivate an abiding lifestyle.**

Included in your envelope is a sabbatical letter from the president of Cornerstone International.

Sabbatical vs Vacation

As we have been researching and learning, we have found it important to differentiate between a sabbatical and a time of vacation. “A sabbatical is a guided process where we deliberately trust God for the unfinished as we disengage from normal ministry and leadership involvement for intentional, serious evaluation of life and ministry.” (The Navigators) A vacation is a self-directed time of rest, whereas a sabbatical is supervised and led by a team. **Here are the four guided phases we will be embarking on.**

The first phase is Release and Relinquish. This is arguably the hardest season because it means stepping away from roles and the identity attached to them. It's also difficult because of changes in relationships and routines. **We have journeyed through this and are now entering the phase of Rest and Recovery.** Here we are engaging in restorative activities that fill our emotional and spiritual tanks. We will be enjoying visits from family members, attending an annual missionary retreat, participating in a local 10K race, and spending quality time as a family and couple.

“God isn't as concerned with what you DO with your life as He is with what you BECOME while you do it.” -Rick Warren

The next phase will be October to December, and this is the phase of Reflection and Refocus. During this phase, we will be spending time alone with the Lord (personal retreats) and making ample space for Him to speak to us. We have also chosen, as a couple, to attend a counseling retreat in early December. We have a long list of books to read and surveys to take as a means to deeply reflect, but most importantly, we will allow time for Him to speak. **After this, we will reach our final stage, which is centered around Reassignment and Reentry.** Here we will review, with our team, the plans God has revealed through the previous phase and discover how He is realigning and reassigning us.

We cannot thank you enough for standing with us for so many years, and now as we take this intentional time. It is such an honor to serve the Lord in Honduras, and your prayers and financial support have made that possible. The comforting truths of Psalm 23 ring true in our hearts as we obediently allow the Shepherd to lead, guide, protect, pursue, and comfort us through this sabbatical journey. He has always been faithful, and we know He will produce a harvest of fruit through this quiet, intentional season. **We love and appreciate you!**

Specific Ways You Can Pray With Us

- that we would be moldable in His capable and safe hands
- that we would fully engage in this time of refreshing; spiritually, emotionally, mentally, and physically
- for spiritual transformation, new understanding of who He is and who we are in Him
- against the 'strongholds' that could prevent us from hearing, learning, and receiving from the Lord
- clarity and fresh vision for next steps

What We've Been Up To:

In late July, Zander joined other Cornerstone International high school students for a week-long service trip in Guatemala. He had a wonderful time getting to serve, but also growing in his understanding of the Word, God, and building friendships. We are so grateful for the way our sending organization intentionally pours into our children.

While Zander was in Guatemala, the rest of us traveled to southern Honduras to attend and serve at a Missionary Kid camp. This was a week-long event full of solid teaching, lots of fun, and friendship. Ben was one of the speakers and also a camp counselor. Thank you for praying for him during this time of sharing. We all had a wonderful time of worship and growing in fellowship with other missionaries.

Throughout July and August, we have had the privilege to serve at Arabu, a local ministry. Zander and I enjoyed teaching the ladies how to crochet, and I was blessed to lead a devotional time with the women. Ben is always finding ways to use his handyman skills to bless this ministry.

Thank you, Morrison VBS, for partnering with Arabu and raising funds for new playground equipment! We are grateful for the resources from you, to bless this ministry and others when needs arise. Thank you again for partnering with us and the work being done here!



Support

The Johnson Family

Thank you for partnering with **A Hope and a Future** to seek His Kingdom come and His will be done on earth as it is in Heaven! Thank you for your gifts and prayers.

To stand with **A Hope and a Future** financially, you can give online at cimissions.org/johnson or make your check out to Cornerstone Int'l, memo **A Hope and a Future**, mail in enclosed envelope.



po box 192
wilmore, ky 40390
1-800-859-4578
cimissions.org

Dear friends,

I am writing on behalf of my good friends and co-workers, Ben and Kelita Johnson. First, thank you for your friendship, partnership, and prayers for the Johnson family. I am so grateful for them. Their faithfulness, their humility, their integrity, and their beautiful servant hearts are making a difference in Honduras that will last long into the future. Heaven will be a different place because of their investments. I have a front seat to observe their impact. I am privileged to serve with them at Cornerstone International (CI).

At CI, we recognize that ministry health and fruitfulness does not start with strategy. Ministry that makes a difference is not a matter of simply pressing the accelerator harder. Long-term effectiveness in ministry requires an occasional stepping back from ministry intensity to rest, reflect, renew, and refocus. As one who has walked with Ben and Kelita since their first inquiry to CI, as one who has prayed and conferred with them regularly, as one who has been in their home in Honduras and entrusted with their oldest son, Zander, on a mission trip to another country, and as one serving as the President of Cornerstone International, I believe the timing is right for Ben and Kelita to take an extended sabbatical. CI is thrilled to support the Johnsons as they enter this ministry sabbatical from Sept 15 - Jan 30.

One phase of their sabbatical will focus on resting and recovering -- doing what puts energy back in their ministry tank. Another phase will be on reflecting and refocusing -- learning more about God and self. The final phase is realignment -- seeking God's best for life and ministry. During their sabbatical, Ben and Kelita plan to meet regularly with an advisory team to assist them in working through their sabbatical plan.

If you are a current financial partner with the Johnsons, I ask you to continue your regular support as they will continue to serve the Lord as they have for many, many years. You may also desire to bless them with a special gift to offset additional sabbatical needs. Your investment will make a significant difference in their lives personally and in those they serve. Please know that I deeply appreciate your partnership with the Johnson family. I ask that you continue to pray for them as they step into this sabbatical period.

For Christ and the nations,



Hal Hamilton
CI President



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