

Symanzik Missions Update

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Beth's Ministry: Counseling in Missions

Beth is pursuing a masters degree in counseling from Regent University. She is about half way through her degree and she recently had the opportunity to attend the 37th annual Mental Health and Mission Conference held in Angola, Indiana.

From Beth

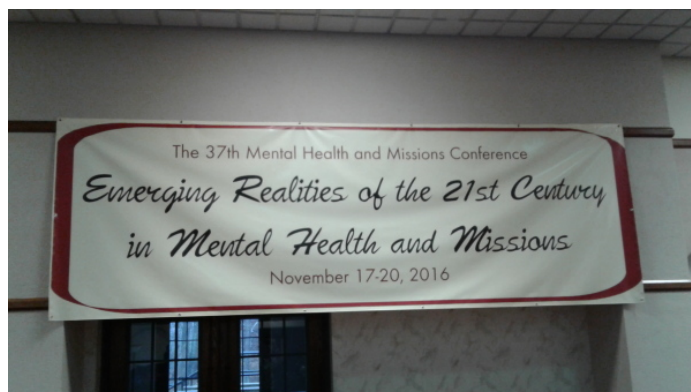
The Mental Health and Mission Conference is a gathering of over 200 professionals from around the world who address mental health issues pertaining to missionaries. This year's theme was "Emerging Realities of the 21st Century in Mental Health and Missions." Sessions were held on common practices of those who flourish, creating healthy mission teams, missionary resilience, TCK issues, trauma, and attachment. Throughout the conference was woven the theme that despite the "connectedness" people have through social media, skype, email, etc., real connection is made through face to face, human interaction. God has wired us for relationship.

It was wonderful to have time to network and interact face to face with colleagues, hear personal stories related to theoretical concepts, and learn practical ways to connect experience and training with opportunities for service.

The degree I'm working on, M.A. in

Human Services Counseling, is designed to equip me with valuable counseling skills for use in ministry, missions or any other type of counseling career where I may practice counseling without a license. This degree provides training and practice in interpersonal skills using a biblical framework and helps me prepare to develop the spiritual and emotional well-being of those with whom I interact. My goal is to use this degree on the mission field or wherever God places me to be a "paraclete" (paráklētos – one who consoles or comforts, one who encourages or uplifts; hence refreshes, and/or one who intercedes on another's behalf as an advocate.)

Mental health ministry on the mission field is desperately needed. I look forward to being used by God to help fellow missionaries on their journey.



Kirsten's Transition Update

Kirsten will be attending Mott Community College in Michigan starting in January. Her plan is to complete her general education requirements and then transfer to another school to finish her degree. Kirsten's major is undecided right now, but many of the degrees in science, engineering and mathematics interest her.



Back in Davao

Back in Davao, Kurt, Mikayla, Ben and James are getting along pretty well considering the fact that Beth and Kirsten are in the States. We look forward to Beth's return to Davao on January 2. Beth will miss Christmas in Davao but she will be there for Christmas with Kirsten, which is pretty important to us.

Kurt is tentatively planning a trip to the States early in 2017 in order to visit Kirsten, family, friends, and our church family.



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