

Dear Friends,

December 2023

“Nations are in uproar, kingdoms fall; He lifts His voice, the earth melts” (Psalms 46:6).

Thank you for your 2023 ministry partnership in prayer and finances, and as we move forward into 2024! As Director of Empowering Leaders Division, Novo, I experience a front row seat to our world events as seen through the eyes of the Novo staff I oversee and visit. With teams ministering in Russia, Ukraine, Afghanistan, Pakistan, China, the Middle East, Uganda, Burundi and other places in an uproar, 2023 has been a far cry from ministry as usual.

Gaza

Novo staff, Hanna and Janet, were commissioned to Gaza just weeks before the Israeli/Hamas conflict. Sensing that they were called to Gaza where Janet’s Palestinian extended family live, Hanna and Janet moved their family to minister alongside Palestinian Christian leaders and churches.

Not knowing what was about to come, Hanna made a trip to Egypt while Janet and their three children stayed in Gaza. The next day, war erupted. Separated and unable to evacuate, Janet and the kids fled to “safety” in a church with Palestinian Christians and other extended family. Tragically, a missile strike hit the church killing 18 people, including four of Janet’s extended family members. Thankfully, Janet and their three children survived unharmed.



Gazan Church Aftermath

I’ve reported in the past on Novo ministry activities in the Middle East. Our staff are accustomed to turmoil and tragedy in these times in which we live. Despite the chaos, our 18-year presence in the Middle East has witnessed the participation of 700,000+ people in discovery bible studies and numerous communities of Christ followers created; many are among the various regional refugee populations.

The Gaza crisis continues but God moves amid mayhem, and Novo staff are there throughout the Middle East to catalyze the Spirit’s movement and capture it for Christ. Thank you for your participation with us!

Minneapolis

Melinda and I have our hands in Minneapolis urban ministries, Lake Street Works and Studio 180, where Melinda serves on the board of directors of these ministries working among the urban poor. Located several blocks from Lake Street Works is Hope Academy, dedicated to providing a Christ-centered education for under-privileged inner-city youth. Years ago, Melinda coached the high school girls’ basketball team.



Hope Academy was originally built as Mt. Sinai Hospital, a shameful part of Minneapolis history when the city was labeled the “antisemite capital” of the U.S. for decades. Jewish doctors and nurses were shut out of other hospitals in the city until Mt. Sinai opened in 1952 for Jews to practice medicine. It was the most modern hospital in the city and it received others who, like the Jews, were also shut out from other hospitals (note of interest: Prince, the musician, was born in Mt. Sinai). Jews were excluded from many other institutions and neighborhoods as well throughout the city, and some of the leading voices fomenting this hatred were Christian pastors. Yet, God brought hope to Minneapolis through Mt. Sinai Hospital and Hope Academy. Our hope is for God to deliver it again, via Lake Street Works and Studio 180.

“Now faith is the confidence of things hoped for, the assurance of things not seen” (Heb 11:1).

Where do you go when everything is falling apart? I go here. Faith dictates that I disbelieve what my eyes see and my experience tells me. Instead, I am to be filled with confidence, hope and assurance, “fixing our eyes on Jesus, the author and perfecter of faith” (Heb 12:2). Racial and religious divisions abound around the world and in America. Everything is separating and drifting further apart, while hope seems to be in short supply. Make no mistake, God is at work and He will right the wrongs through Jesus. It is what we strive for at Novo as “kingdoms fall” and “the earth melts.” May you rise to the clarion call of God in your sphere of influence. May your hope and faith be found in Jesus Christ to do so, boldly!

Ministry Funding

Great is my gratitude for all of you who have financed my 2023 ministry efforts. Truly, I can’t thank you all enough! 25% of my ministry donations each year arrive in December, so I humbly ask that you consider making a year-end donation toward my 2024 ministry efforts with Novo. Thank you, so very much!

For Hope in Christ as Kingdoms Fall,



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Family Update

Danielle is the Lead Clinician, Addictions Unit at Denver Health Hospital, supervising all the clinicians and managing a full patient load. Micah applies his skills at a home remodeling business. Beka, Micah’s wife, nannies while building another side business. We are planning to celebrate their second wedding in Brazil with Beka’s family. Bre works in design and marketing for a bridal company. Ryan, Bre’s husband, manages at a high-end restaurant and handles the accounting for his parents who own a classy wedding venue north of Minneapolis. Kai, their son, is our first grandchild and a granddaughter is due in May.

Tax-deductible Donations

Checks: made out to Novo (memo line: account #4691, Cathey) and sent to:
Novo – 1240 N Lakeview Ave. Suite 120 – Anaheim, CA 92807-1847

Online Donations: www.novo.org/give