August, 2021

THE UPHILL CLimb

Sometimes it seems the going is uphill all the way—slow and difficult. These past few months have been like that for us, and probably you too.

Covid has done a number on all of us. None of us at ETS has become ill. We continue to work full time. Walk in customers, shipping large numbers of orders daily, networking by phone and email fill our days. We often have the joy of sharing a word of counsel or prayer as a special need is revealed.

Our greatest challenge in recent months has been getting the resources we have or know about to the ministries that need them. You probably know about the USPS delivery problems. FedEx and UPS also have issues. International shipping is far worse. We have numerous requests from ministry leaders in several areas of the world. We find the resources for these requests, then are bogged down in getting them where they need to go.

BARRIERS AND BLESSINGS:

CUBA BLESSING: We have the money for the farm!

CUBA BARRIER: No way to get the funds from here to there. Internet, travel and fund transfers shut down. Thousands of protestors attacked by military and thugs urged on by the government. Hundreds jailed (including pastors). Phone contact is possible, but very difficult. (Curious and convenient: During 10 days, 6 top generals died and cremated. No autopsies!)

CLOTHES BARRIER: We didn’t even have “wiggle room” anywhere! Tons of sorted, boxed clothes were looking for a good home. International shipping is now very difficult and very expensive. New regulations, shortage of truckers, availability of sea containers and even the “Ever Given” stuck in the Suez Canal have compounded the problem. Keith spent many hours on the phone and internet trying to get something moving.

BREAKTHROUGH: Part 1—A Spanish Baptist pastor we frequently serve, told Paul about our problem. Paul is a used car dealer from Ukraine with an unquenchable passion to help his people. Part 2—Hands for Christ in Roanoke, VA had a problem. Brother Mlungisi was woefully short on what he needed to load a container for South Sudan. Could we help?

BLESSINGS: Part 1—Paul arrived with two Ukrainian brothers and a 26 ft. box truck loaned by a Christian trucking company. Ten pallets of clothing plus huge bags of winter coats were soon loaded. Part 2—At the same time, Brother Mlungisi arrived with a 20 ft. truck to load for South Sudan! After a very active couple hours, both trucks were loaded. We praised the Lord for the privilege of serving these two ministries — and for space to resume our work.
WORKERS BARRIER: Carrying on the ministry of ETS with a staff of 3 is a challenge. (We do have several volunteers that invest 1/2 day a week.) Just maintaining a building with 106 year old “building pains” is a challenge.

WORKERS BLESSING: 1—Last month Mary came to ETS. She has basic Spanish, some missions experience and 8 years of Navy shipboard “stores” duty. She is employing all her background to improve our growing book and Bible ministry. Mary says, “This is fun!” Keith says, “Thank you, Jesus!”

2—Last week we were blessed with 6 volunteers from the First Community Church in Leavittsburg, OH. The two guys repaired a leaky basement wall, a leaky roof and other projects. The ladies checked out 150 flatscreen monitors and recorded their make, model and serial number, and place of manufacture for a shipment to Kenya. (All details now required for international shipping!) They also repaired sewing machines and took photos of equipment for Ebay listings.

PRAYER REQUEST: Keith has been under treatment for carcinoid tumors for several years. August 17, he is scheduled to begin a much more intensive treatment using a radioactive infusion. He will be radioactive for 3 days and need to be in isolation. A doctor friend regularly says, “Doctors treat, but the Lord heals.” We appreciate your prayer support to that end.

BARRIERS WILL BE OVERCOME:

In spite of the obstacles, we have set our eyes on the finish line. We want to finish well in providing resources for ministries to enable them to reach their world with the Gospel.

WE CLIMB TOGETHER:

Thank you for cheering us on and being a part of what God has called us to do. Thank you for hanging in there with us as we “Climb the Hill” of God’s calling for us. You are such a BLESSING to us!

Love in Christ,
ETS Staff

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