

Editor's Note, Fall 2022

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No one expected a global pandemic. As the Year of Our Lord 2020 began, there were rumors of a new virus spreading in East Asia, but no one thought it would be any more serious than other viruses that have emerged over the years. We were all wrong. COVID-19 turned out to be the most severe global medical crisis since the great influenza epidemic that swept the world at the end of World War 1. In response, country after country closed its borders and restricted the movement of its residents. The impact on international missions was incalculable. Some missionaries were forced to return to their home countries as their visas expired and they could neither obtain visa renewals nor travel to any other countries. Other international workers were forced into isolation in their homes as their host countries enforced "Stay at Home" orders. Both life and ministry were disrupted beyond expectation or experience.

However, God is always faithful to his people and to the task he gave us. Overseas gospel workers and their national partners rose to the challenge. COVID-19 provided a pointed reminder to the world of the brevity of life, forcing people all over the globe to consider their own mortality and to question what lies beyond the grave. Christian workers experimented with the possibilities created by technology, enabling them to share the gospel, disciple believers, and train leaders despite their inability to meet with people in person. In the face of a global pandemic, the gospel continued to advance.

In this issue, we explore a variety of perspectives and experiences that came out of the COVID-19 crisis. It seems only appropriate that we stop, evaluate, and record the lessons learned from this unique time in history. We also include new insights from the world of missionary research, as we constantly strive to hone our understanding of the world God has sent us to reach. Finally, we include reviews of some of the latest books that speak to missionary theology and practice. Our prayer is that this issue will be used by God to advance the missionary task and to sharpen our understanding of it.