



September 2023

Dear Friends,

The fall begins our second decade in Oman. So much has changed in that time. As you can see from the pictures, our boys have grown. I have gone almost completely gray, and Stephanie is more beautiful than ever.



But there have been much more than physical changes. The ministry of Al Amana Centre and our presence in Oman has changed over this last decade as well. When we started ten years ago, we were on the “Do Not Post” list, which meant that we asked you not to publish publicly these newsletters. We were cautious about the word “missionary” as it had a negative connotation in our context. Al Amana Centre did not have an exterior sign marking what the building was used for on a daily basis.



After these ten years, by the grace of God, we have built trust with our neighbors. We have built relationships with members of the Omani government and Omani society. They have come to know our hearts and our motives. They have come to understand our actions and our methodologies. They have adopted us as partners in working for peace in this world.

Would you like to receive these updates digitally? Please email Kelli at kgilmore@rca.org to be added to the email list. You will receive more timely updates from the missionary you support and help us be good stewards of our resources.

We are no longer on the “Do Not Post” list and you are welcome to share this letter on your website and in your pews. We no longer discourage people from using the word “missionary” with us as our neighbors here know what that term means for us in our work among them. We have signs on our gate marking Al Amana Centre for all to see and we can be found clearly on Google Maps. We are inviting our neighbors in and we are being invited out to their houses to exchange knowledge and understanding, and to share life here in Oman.

While there is still much work to be done, I couldn’t have imagined that we would be where we are now when we landed here for the first time in 2013.

This year, we are excited to welcome our first High School group from Grand Rapids Christian High School. We are working on developing programs with Hope College and the University of South Florida on Global Healthcare and Religious Literacy. We are planning and working on ways to host Muslims and Christians from Israel and Palestine here in Oman as they work for peace in their troubled land. This is just the tip of the iceberg, so to speak.

There have also been setbacks and heartaches as two members of our non-Omani personnel team have had to leave the organization. There have been additions of Omani employees that have broadened our integration into Omani society. We’ve welcomed Rev. Joshua Bode, an RCA Minister of Word and Sacrament, to Al Amana Centre as we work more and more with local Christians and grow as an organization and institution.

It has been a wonder to see what doors God is opening for us as we work in the name of Christ for peace between peoples. Thank you for your support and prayers as we start our second decade.

Specifically, we ask you to pray for:

1. Funding of programs for people who can’t afford it on their own. We have a backlog of programs that need funding to provide for transportation and program fees. You can sponsor a participant with a \$2,500 scholarship [here](https://www.rca.org/give/al-amana-centre-scholarships/). (<https://www.rca.org/give/al-amana-centre-scholarships/>)
2. Continued growth in our partnership with the Omani Government and local community.
3. The ability to discover and support the staff needed to live into our mission and our work here in Oman and in the region.

Thank you again for being with us these last ten years. We look forward to seeing where God will lead us in the next ten.

Peace,

Justin, Stephanie, Gavin, Collin, and all of us at Al Amana Centre