

# Fletcher News

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## January 2020: Last Month In The U.S.

It's here! We are on the edge of a great adventure to share the Word of God with unreached peoples halfway around the world. Thank you for holding the ropes through prayer, support, and encouragement. It's beautiful to be a part of the Body.

Days Until Departure:  
26

Lauren and I know God is the way to abundant life. We desperately want people to understand who the Word is and what He offers. We are leaving America to serve in Southeast Asia with a team named Team Hope. There, we will be working in small holder agriculture and translation. God has been evident in His preparation of our field location, working out every detail. Our assignment to Team Hope seems steeped in providence.

We have already spent 4 months with the team already on a vision trip, two winters ago (Oct. 2017- Feb. 2018). We have an incredible amount of respect for the team, and look forward to joining them as we follow God's call to share His Good News.



Family photo following a commissioning service at Joel's home church

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A trip to historic Williamsburg and a local waterfall were part of Christmas celebrations with family this year.

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## God's Providence

-Joel Fletcher

It's been really fun for me to discover all the little ways God works as Lauren and I have walked this path. I just recently learned that my Mom and her college roommate had prayed that her kids would bring God's Word to the lost.

Another evidence of God's providence is that my Dad grew up in the area where Lauren and I will be working. We never intentionally planned to head that direction, but it's been so cool to watch God lead us down that path. My Granddad was a pilot, and he flew into all sorts of places around the region serving local translation teams. His life and stories were what initially drew me towards overseas work.

Items that have hung on our walls or been central to my growing up years are becoming very real in a new way. I recently came across Dad's camping knife that was central to every camping adventure or work day. Dad would always tell me proudly that it was made by a local in Southeast Asia out of a truck spring. Likewise, the stories and slides from Granddad's projector have a special place. The values that Dad instilled in me fit well in Southeast Asian culture.

Ever since Lauren and I got back from our vision trip 2 winters ago, America hasn't really felt the same. We've been longing for the goals, friends, and teammates we knew we were going back to. In patience, and sometimes impatience (read "Joel's impatience"), we prepare to embark in less than a month.

We want to express our deep gratitude and appreciation for your prayers, support, encouragement, and friendship. Lauren and I look forward to what's ahead!

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## Upcoming Schedule:

**Jan. 14 - Feb 6:** Goodbyes with family & friends in Northern VA

**Feb. 8:** David Fletcher's wedding (Indiana)

**Feb. 10: Departure for the field**

**Feb. 13:** Arrival in "Paradise."

**Feb. 14-19:** Time reconnecting with our teammates (Team Hope)

**Feb. 20-Mar. 6:** New worker training conference in the capital city

**March 9:** Language school begins

## Contact Information:

1. We will have internet at our field location, and we will continue to send out regular updates with our latest news, prayer requests, and praises. We treasure your partnership!
2. Starting February 10, our US phone numbers will stop working. But we will continue using our current e-mail address: jandlfletch@gmail - If you are interested in calling or texting us via What's App while we're overseas, just shoot us an email and we can work on setting that up. :)
3. For now, our mailing address will stay in SC. Lauren's parents have agreed to handle any stateside mail.

## Safety Protocol: What Can We Say?

As many of you know, we will be working in a somewhat sensitive location. For the safety of our contacts and fellow teammates, we will follow a few basic guidelines for our future correspondences over the internet (whether by newsletter or e-mail).

We will continue to refer to our field of service as Southeast Asia (SEA) and the location of our team as "Paradise." In general, we will try to avoid referencing anything that would give away our specific country. The nickname "Miga" refers to our target people group and "Ms" refers to followers of the dominant religion among the Miga people. We will refer to ourselves as "workers" or "followers," and the written Word as "the Book." Following these guidelines when corresponding with us via e-mail will help protect our friends. Words such as "God" or "prayer" are perfectly fine.

For similar reasons, we will be reticent to post photos of local friends, except in crowd settings or situations where faces are obscured.

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God gave us one more snow before we move to Asia! This may be our last snow for at least 4 years.

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God is an incredible God. Lauren and I have had a full couple weeks. There have been times of laughter, memories and new experiences, which we are so grateful for!

#### **Praises:**

- A wonderful Christmas celebration with family
- A special commissioning service
- In case you missed our last update, the Lord has provided 100% of our support in verbal and incoming commitments!

#### **Prayer Requests:**

- Final Preparations: Pray with us that God would bring clarity and wisdom as we prepare documents, financial arrangements, and make packing decisions. Pray also for good closure with family and friends over the next couple of weeks.
- Our hearts: Right now, we are taking an online class required for new overseas workers. It addresses cultural and spiritual adjustment as we prepare for life overseas. Pray God would use this time to work in our hearts, prune us, and continue to shape us into vessels He can use for His glory.
- Travel: Please pray for clear roads from IN to VA on Dec. 9 as well as smooth plane flights from Dec. 10-13. (Three days of travel - yikes!). Historically Lauren doesn't sleep well on planes, and we'd love your

prayers for good rest and nutrition over the long travel period.

- Team Medicals: We will be arriving in Paradise just in time to participate in an annual event known as "Medicals." This is a time when local people can come and get medical advice and prescriptions. Several doctors from America are flying in to be a part. Please pray with us that many people would see God's light and love through this event, and that they would long to learn more about the God we serve.

In His Love,