



Do you like this artwork? We do!

Some of you recently saw on our Instagram accounts some unexpected pictures from Dubai, United Arab Emirates. That's because Cody and I recently made an unexpected trip there, and we bought this picture in a souk (marketplace).

Last month we were invited by a Pioneers team leader in Dubai to observe the ministry work he is doing with Indians laborers who live there. Previously unbeknownst to us, the UAE is home to over two million Indians and Pakistanis who have emigrated there for work purposes... Cody will explain more below about all that we've recently learned about the UAE, but it's fascinating and exciting to us. Dubai is one of the fastest growing cities in the world; a shimmering Muslim city of commerce and tourism rising out of the desert, with residents seemingly hailing from every corner of the planet. And in all this busy, beautiful diversity, we sensed that **God is inviting us to join Him in the work He's doing in the UAE. We are eagerly accepting that invitation.**

Like India, the UAE is a closed country for missions work. We cannot legally tell people about Jesus Christ, though to be a Christian is not illegal. We understand the nature and risks of this ministry and we take it seriously.

Unlike India, Dubai's doors are wide open to us in terms of visas. The UAE welcomes tourism and business and has built their economy on it. We are still nailing down the details of exactly how to "get in," but this process is night-and-day different from the visa processes of India. It will be more expensive, but it will be simpler.

Our new Dubai friends, Allen and Kristin, have four sweet kiddos and are excited to have us join their family in ministering to southeast Asians, as well as starting up a house church plant in the near future. We had a great time getting to know them for a few days and believe that it will be a good partnership for us with lots of opportunity to work and grow.

So, friends, another re-direction... and one that fills us with hope and excitement. Thank you all for tagging along for all this time on our journey; it has been a long one. Cody wants to share his thoughts on this venture, so I'll wrap up my part with the nuts and bolts of what we need. Simply put, **we still need approximately \$2000 in regular monthly funding** so that we can be financially viable in Dubai. Lord willing, **our plan is to move this autumn** after completing our final mandatory training in September. **If you have had any thoughts of supporting us, the time is now.** We are definitely willing and able to visit new churches and/or do other fundraising ventures! We need to meet this financial mark and then we can move. As a family we are excited about this move and confident that the Lord is going to do some big things here. If you want to join us in this ministry, I am attaching links to do so below.

To those of you who have supported us for the past five years: you are amazing, wonderful, generous... you name it. You know who you are, and we are so grateful for your faithfulness. Thank you.

Amy

To give via **marketplace ministries (C&MA):**

<https://www.cmalliance.org/give/gift?desc=Quick%20-%2020mm>

(*For C&MA givers, please understand that a donation to the Great Commission Fund does **NOT** reach our family; we are with marketplace ministries, which is a completely separate wing of C&MA missions and not associated with Great Commission workers. Thank you!)



Paul and Diaspora

As I process our recent trip and direction change, I have been contemplating a couple of things: diaspora and the Apostle Paul. What do these words bring to mind for you? Have you ever heard the term "diaspora" or have you ever wondered about the how's and why's of Paul's travels?

First, a little about the United Arab Emirates (U.A.E.) and Dubai for the history nerds. The area that is now the UAE was ruled by various sheikhs and was under British protection until 1971. During that time period, the sheikhs of the seven emirates in the region (think states) joined together to form a nation. Abu Dhabi is the capital of the UAE; Dubai is one of the emirates and a very important port city on the Persian Gulf. The areas we visited were the two emirates of Dubai and Sharjah. One of the interesting facts that the team there pointed out to me was that, at this moment, 20% of the world's cranes are operating in the UAE!

That's an impressive fact by itself, but the backstory is even more interesting. What comes to mind when you think of Dubai? Probably super wealthy sheikhs and European tourists spending lots of euros on vacation. Well, you wouldn't be wrong. Those things are part of Dubai... but remember those cranes? Sheikhs and rich tourists don't operate them; they don't drive the trucks with the iron and concrete to the cranes, they don't scale the buildings assembling them as they go up, and they don't staff the newly-erected hotels, drive the Ubers, serve the food, clean the rooms... you get the point.

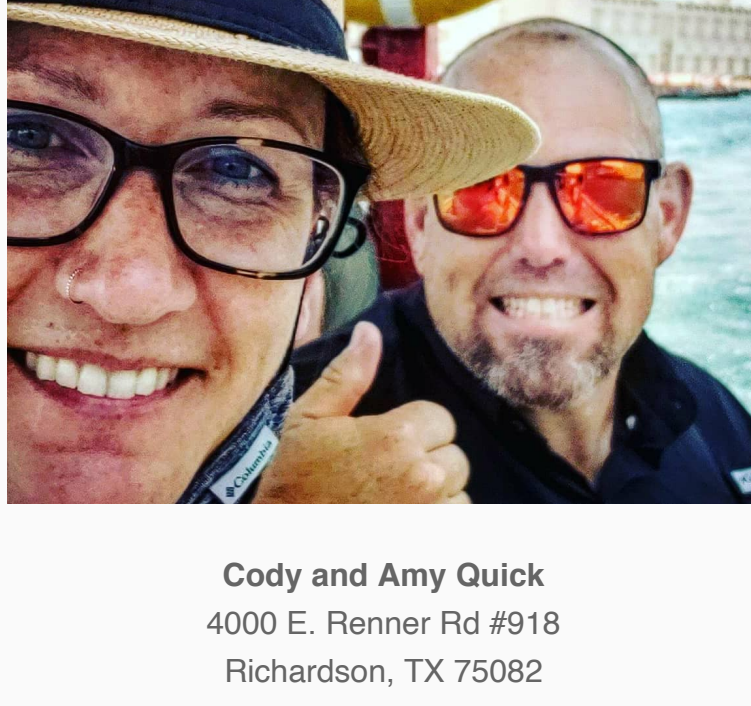
This is where diaspora comes into the picture. Emiratis only make up 10% of their own country; 90% of the people living in UAE come from somewhere else. If you google the word "diaspora" you will see that it refers to people groups who have dispersed from their original homeland. That word describes Dubai better than any other word. For every rich local or tourist, there are scores of supporting individuals, many from India, Pakistan, the Philippines, Bangladesh, and various African countries. I have read that there are around 3 million Indian people living in the UAE. In fact we were recently watching a documentary on the UAE, and a government official in charge of visas stated that Dubai's economy depends on expats coming and working in Dubai for a few years and then leaving and going home... all part of the design to fund and operate their city.

What does all this have to do with Paul? Think for a few moments about some of his travels, who he encountered and subsequently shared the gospel with, and where those people took the gospel. I think you would find that his famous 'mission trip' stops were often in ports: trade cities filled with diaspora. Paul went to the trade centers of his day and shared the gospel with people from all parts of the world (both Jews and Gentiles) who undoubtedly then took this new gospel home with them. UAE offers us and you a similar opportunity today! A chance to go and engage unreached people, share the gospel with them, and as God sends them back home, they take the Gospel back with them.

While we could be disappointed that we cannot move to India at this moment in time, instead we find ourselves amazed that God has shown us a place where we and Indians can both go and live side-by-side! We are excited about this new direction, and we hope that you are excited, too, to see what God does over the next few months. Please help us as the Lord leads you.

Thanks,

Cody



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To support our family --
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