

Volker and JinHyeog Glissmann

Location: **Blantyre, MALAWI**

Mission: **Theological education**



The Glissmanns are living in Malawi. JinHyeog is involved in a local Primary School as a music teacher. Volker works off-campus as a programme developer for TEEC, the Theological Education by Extension College in Johannesburg, South Africa, and does grassroots theological training in Malawi.

New adventure but with some known flavours

Change is in the air. A new call, a new adventure, a farewell, a relocation, but also a return to some familiar territory. Volker has been asked to serve as Associate General Secretary of the Increase Association for church-based training in Asia (many TEE programmes are part of the association). Initially, Volker will serve as Associate General Secretary, with a view to installing him as General Secretary for the Association later in the year. This means that, we will be leaving Malawi and the ministry in Malawi and southern Africa in July and we hope to relocate to Malaysia. We are looking forward to a new ministry adventure.



Volker has regularly attended Increase Association meetings and workshops and contributed to their ministry in multiple ways over the years, including a transformative learning workshop in Mongolia a few years ago. During Volker's theology degree in Belfast, the family did a study abroad year, spending a year studying and living in Singapore. Asia is not unfamiliar to us.

Yet another link exists. One question some Increase Association members asked Volker was how good his Russian is. This might sound strange, but JinHyeog and I actually used to speak Russian. Many years ago, when we were not yet married, we spent three years (1997-2000) living and studying in Russia.



We lived in Novosibirsk, a key city in Russia's Asian part and the "unofficial" capital of Western Siberia, halfway between St. Petersburg and Vladivostok. Novosibirsk is also a main transport link into Central Asia and close to the borders where Kazakhstan, China and Mongolia meet. While in Russia, we decided to study theology in the hope that we might one day return. So far, that was not possible. Yet, JinHyeog and I have always had a great interest in Central Asia and the Russian-speaking countries and people of the former Soviet Union. Now, through the links of the Increase Association, there are very interesting doors opening for us to use our experience, even our Russian again, and to find ways to support the church and theological training among Russian-speakers wherever they live. Just this week, Volker sent our emails in Russian to reach out to individuals involved in church-based training. So far, the internet helps with writing, but a language and an alphabet long buried are waking up, and words, phrases, and grammar are already coming back. Let us see what God has prepared. We are looking forward to the new adventure and to adding to the growing ministry of church-based training in Asia.

Prayer Points:

- Join us in praising God for calling us to a new ministry adventure and for opening new doors to support church-based training.
- Please pray for us as we leave Malawi to say goodbye to many friends after 16 years.
- Please continue to pray for the health and safety of the whole family.