



Gleanings for the Hungry

A Ministry of Youth With A Mission

SEPTEMBER
2023



WELCOME NEW STAFF MEMBER:

STEPHANIE GOEI

We are excited to introduce Stephanie Goei as a new *Gleanings* staff member! Stephanie is from Shoreline, Washington, north of Seattle. She grew up in a Christian household. Her mother is Dutch and her father is Indonesian. She has two brothers, Nathan (older) and Tim (younger). As a young adult, Stephanie found her identity in academics and achievement. "I put a lot of pressure on myself to achieve," Stephanie said. After studying neuroscience for over two years, including a study-abroad in New Zealand, Stephanie had an unfortunate situation where her schoolwork and credits were not properly recorded, and her hard work was lost. "My entire identity crumbled, and I became depressed," Stephanie said. "I walked away from God and faith. It was a dark time."

After this huge setback, Stephanie went home and got a degree in accounting. She began a season of traveling, which led to discussing various religions with people from all over the world. "Through it all, I met a lot of atheists," Stephanie said. "In these conversations, religion and

politics inevitably came up. Their beliefs confirmed that I must be atheist because the Christians I met never seemed to be able to answer my questions. For me, it confirmed that religion didn't matter that much. Why would I believe it if it really had no effect on my life?"

Not long after, Stephanie's brother Tim got into apologetics. He asked Stephanie to help him research. "It stirred my brain," Stephanie said. "What did I believe? What did I really know about Christianity? I looked and compared religions. I read it all, and the more I read, the more I learned. By the end of the summer of 2018, I began to believe Christianity could be true."

Stephanie began traveling and having these conversations again, but now she was, in her words, a baby Christian. She found *Gleanings* on the backpacking website in 2021 and she thought, "That may be good for me. I don't know, we will see." She first came to *Gleanings* in May 2021. "My first impression was that everyone was so friendly and excited," she said. "There was clearly something different about this place. Within two weeks of my stay at *Gleanings*, Sheldon and Carol approached me and asked if I could be the head of housekeeping for a couple of months. That was one of the first times since I had become a Christian again that I was given an opportunity to lead, set an example and come alongside fellow believers. My faith was still very intellectual. Very much in my head. And I felt like while I was here it started to trickle down into my heart. I saw how God was affecting the people around me. Maybe he could do that for me as well."

And God did! In between seasons at *Gleanings*, Stephanie went camping at Pinnacles National Park where she wanted to see condors. One afternoon as she was sitting outside, she began to talk to God and ask for forgiveness. As she was praying, a condor flew overhead. "By myself at the top of one of the mountains, God gave me this gift and I experienced Him in a new way," she said. "It was the first time that I cried out and I felt a response. It was more than just what I could imagine or think. More than my knowledge. He still comes for me, still pursues me and loves me despite all my failures."

Stephanie completed her DTS at *Gleanings* and a School of Biblical Studies in YWAM Yosemite, where her joy in relationship with the Lord grew exponentially. "The verse that has come up over and over and one that I've kept thinking about is Deuteronomy 6:4-9. *"Hear, O Israel: The Lord our God, the Lord is one. Love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your strength. These commandments that I give you today are to be on your hearts. Impress them on your children. Talk about them when you sit at home and when you walk along the road, when you lie down and when you get up. Tie them as symbols on your hands and bind them on your foreheads. Write them on the door frames of your houses and on your gates."*

"It's so cool to know Him," Stephanie said. "It still blows my mind. This is God! God! Somehow I'm connected to Him and He loves me! Who am I that He would love me?"

Welcome to the team, Stephanie!

Would you like to help Stephanie launch as she offers her skills to the Lord? You can give monthly support or a one-time gift. Please go to gleanings.org/staff-support-gallery and click on her photo.

Thank you so very much for your generosity and prayers.



COUNTRY REPORT

Last Harvest Ministry: SENDING FOOD TO MEXICO AND UKRAINE

Gleanings for the Hungry partners with **Last Harvest Ministry**, which sends food to Mexico and Ukraine. We interviewed the founder, Nicolai.



MEXICO: In 2004, one of Nicolai's friends went to Mexico and told Nicolai he had to go see how people are living there. When Nicolai went to Tijuana for the first time, he decided he had to help the Mexican people. That was when they started **Last Harvest Ministry** and started helping. "We would always take food there to feed the hungry people," Nicolai said. "We started opening more churches. Our main goal is bringing souls to Christ. Using products as a key for it. People wait four hours just for the bread. We make rice, sausages, and soup mix. People walk miles just to get some food. Pastors in Mexico are there at the food distributions and invite people to attend the local churches. The goal is to open new churches. *The Gleanings'* soup mix and other products helps open new churches."

Nicolai had some health problems and went to a hospital. He thought his life was over, but God allowed him to live. So he continued to serve the Lord, even though he didn't have the same strength as when he was young. The ministry continues. Each time they give food, they share the gospel. "We have a long-term vision for the ministry: to bring people to Christ. With the food, more is possible. We continue to do this ministry because we are serving God," Nicolai said.

UKRAINE: "Right now more than 80% of the donations of food go to Ukraine because of the war," Nicolai said. "In Ukraine it's different. In there we partner with other ministries, and we send out containers to Poland. From there the food is taken into Ukraine by a Ukrainian pastor. Brothers and sisters in Christ are helping each other. A lot of refugees ran to other places for safety. Their houses are gone. They don't have anywhere to live. We are helping out with food and helping people in need."

UKRAINIANS in SACRAMENTO, CALIFORNIA: According to Nicolai, five thousand families from Ukraine came from Mexico border to Sacramento for a two-year asylum. **Last Harvest Ministry** helps by providing food to churches to help these families.

"Most came without dads because the men are not allowed to leave Ukraine," Nicolai said. "They also need more basic items: milk, meat, staple items."



PRAYER NEEDS: "Churches are praying for the war to end. There is physical damage to land and damage to children who see what's happening. And for the safety of their families. A lot of refugees don't have anywhere to return. Some are trying to go back, some are trying to start a new life in a new country, which is difficult because of the language barriers."

THANK YOU: From **Last Harvest Ministry** to the friends and family of *Gleanings for the Hungry*: "Thank you for all you do. Your products are currently feeding people in need who are hungry in Ukraine and Mexico. We are very grateful and thankful for everything."

DIRECTOR'S CORNER

Dear friend,

A big thank you to everyone who helped make this summer an awesome time of production of dried fruit and a bountiful time of ministry. Many of you have traveled to come and serve. Others have donated fruit or equipment, and many have donated funds for us to operate. And of course, we appreciate every prayer that went up to heaven on our behalf. We love the family of God and how we get to work together to build His kingdom.

This fall we will build another warehouse to add space to our existing one. We are trusting God for the volunteers and the resources for this project. Would you pray about a special gift to **Gleanings** so we can build this warehouse debt free?

We appreciate all of you and pray the Lord's richest blessings on you as we go into the fall season.

Fritz Meier

