

Doug and Erlene Johnson

1 Peter 5:10 "God himself will restore, confirm, strengthen, and establish you."



Our Story

January 2016

We share our story with you in bits and pieces with every newsletter we send out – stories of how God is moving in our lives and our ministry through your generous support. We have had people ask how we came to minister at MRAP/MRI, and we want to share that with you: our personal stories of how God has brought us to where we are now.

Doug grew up in Round Lake, Illinois, a town near Chicago. Just shy of his 18th birthday, he joined the Air Force, which is where God found him. In 1985, in a time of prayer and fasting, the Lord called him to Russia. He protested until he was reminded of Jonah, and he quickly acquiesced. Not long after, he saw a poster for 'NCBC' and felt God telling him to go. Once he learned it was North Central Bible College, he enrolled, majoring in missions. With further prompting from God, he brought along his trumpet from high school and joined the jazz band.



Approximately 1982



1985

Erlene grew up as a Pastor's Kid, bouncing between Minnesota and Wisconsin. She and her siblings were playing church one afternoon and the Lord convicted them. How could they lead their baby dolls to Jesus if they didn't know him first? So at the age of 5 she made her parents' faith her own. At 17 she felt the call of ministry on her life

and so attended North Central Bible College, majoring in Sacred Music. A saxophonist, she also joined the jazz band, where she met and fell in love with Doug.

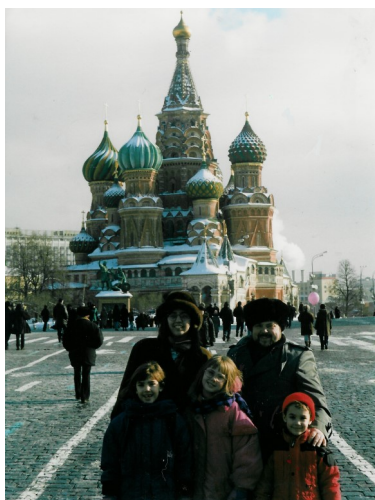
We married in 1987. After graduating from NCBC, our service in the ministry began. We were associate pastors in Yucca Valley, California, from 1990-1993. Our three children, Meredith, Kate, and Chris, were born while we were there. In 1994, we moved to Needles, California, where we pastored until 1997. In 1997, we were approved as missionaries and began itinerating.

We arrived in Moscow in February of 1999. It was a chilly time to move to Russia. We served in Russia for 10 years doing church planting, mentoring new pastors, teaching at Bible schools, pastoring an international church, and assisting the national Royal Rangers program. We have years of love and ministry and stories to tell from our time in Russia. Our children call it home.

In 2009, we came back to the States on what we had planned to be a short medical leave. We were at Ministry Resources International (MRI) during our medical leave. When it became clear that we could no longer live overseas because of Doug's chronic and complex medical issues, we considered the possibility of staying stateside and felt the Lord leading me (Erlene) to Missionary Renewal Asia Pacific (MRAP) and MRI. In 2011, I joined the ministry team.

I now minister full-time at MRAP/MRI. I am a pastoral counselor and also help the team doing some administrative work. Being here, the Lord has awakened in me a passion for ministering to the shepherds of His flock. Pastors and missionaries often experience burnout because it is difficult for them to have a pastor themselves. I am pursuing my masters in pastoral counseling so I can continue to invest in this ministry.

(Continued on back)



1999



2009

(Continued from front)

When we receive testimonies and stories from people we minister to at MRAP/MRI, it reminds us how important our ministry here is. A missionary I recently counseled described her experience at MRAP/MRI this way:

The counselors at MRI are some of the best people in the world. Why? They know how to love well. They are passionate about a person's wellness. They have forsaken all to follow Him. They love with kindness, compassion, and empathy.

I went to MRI believing for growth in my relationship with my husband and praying for a desire to know Him [Christ] more. I walked away with so much more. I walked away with a sense of joy and freedom in my spirit that I haven't felt in years. I walked away laughing, a laughter that my husband said he hadn't heard in a long time. I walked away knowing that Jesus died to take away all of my shame, all of my anger, and all of my hurt and believing that I was worth it. I walked away on a pathway to complete freedom, no longer a slave to sin, but as a child of God.

Partnering with an organization like MRI that believes in an individual's potential makes all the difference in the world.



We love to share our stories and our lives with you. You, too, are an integral part of our story. Without your prayers and support, I (Erlene) wouldn't be able to minister at MRAP/MRI and help bring Christ's love and healing to so many hearts and lives. We need your ongoing prayers and support to continue ministering to those the Lord has called into ministry. Your prayers and support help us to touch many lives and change many stories. We can't wait to see how God will continue to use us and how the Author and Finisher of our faith will take our story from here.



*This is our story, this is our song,
praising our Savior all the day long*



Health Update

I (Erlene) am in weekly chemotherapy until the middle of February. In March I will begin daily radiation for 6 weeks, probably through the end of May. There have been ups and downs through the treatment, but I am doing okay, am managing side effects and ministering full-time again. The Lord continues to minister to me and through me even in my weakness, and I continue to hear Him speak comfort, peace, and hope through this time.

We have received several encouraging cards, emails, and gifts through this difficult time, and it is a real blessing to us to hear from you. Thank you!

Prayer Pleas

Erlene's ministry at MRAP/MRI
The ministry & team of MRAP/MRI
Visiting guests of MRAP/MRI
(missionaries & pastors)
Erlene's breast cancer
Doug's ongoing health concerns
Meridith
Kate & John & Jayelle & Jack
Chris & Rachael & Eli

Visit our web site at www.ministryri.org for more about who we are and what we do at MRI.

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OR

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MRI is a member care ministry for missionaries and pastors.
Our mission is to enhance the life quality, ministry effectiveness,
and longevity of those in ministry.

We believe God's love heals and that God loves those He sends
as much as those to whom He sends them.

