IT HAPPENED ON HIS WAY TO SCHOOL

Siwa was headed to class in Papua, Indonesia, when he heard gunshots and saw billowy, black smoke. Soon a large, angry mob came rushing toward his middle school. As his classmates started running in all directions, a young Papuan in the mob demanded of Siwa, “Are you with us?”

“I just want to go home,” Siwa replied. Before he knew it, he was dowsed with gasoline and lit on fire. Siwa somehow made it to the local hospital, where he was treated for burns on more than half of his body.

He is among the dozens injured in recent deadly Papua riots. Siwa is also a soccer player for Papua United Football Club, a program that CAMA workers Buzz and Myrna started, focusing on developing young leaders. This young man is loved by our workers and the Papua United family, and they continue to visit and pray with him in his recovery.

Will you pause right now to pray for Siwa and others at risk in Papua, Indonesia? The island is experiencing some of the deadliest violence and riots in years due to tribal, ethnic, and religious conflict. More than 60 people have died, and many houses, shops, and cars have been burned.

While we continue to pray for peace, we also praise God for the two new CAMA workers sent to Papua to work alongside a couple serving with aXcess*. They arrived in October before the tension erupted. Let’s also rejoice that this region is one of the 12 pathways to be launched this year through gifts to the Alliance 2019 Year-End Offering. Thanks to those who gave!

Even in the turmoil, there are glimpses of peace. Late last year, Buzz, Myrna, and a local committee hosted a fundraiser for those affected by the riots. People from different ethnicities and religions came together to donate sweet potatoes, fish, baked goods, coffee, cows, goats, and chickens that were auctioned or sold—they raised more than $10,000!

The committee members want to remind their anxious community that God has not forgotten them. Christ has come to bring light and life to all—he is our hope.

Adapted from a story by CAMA staff

*CAMA and aXcess are two of the four specialized structures of Alliance Missions (formerly International Ministries).
TWO YEARS AFTER HURRICANE MARIA, STRONG EARTHQUAKES CRIPPLE PUERTO RICO

A 6.4 magnitude earthquake struck Puerto Rico early Tuesday morning, January 7, prompting the governor to declare a state of emergency. A 5.8 magnitude quake had struck just the day before, and hundreds of other tremors have been felt since late December. Tuesday’s quake, believed to be the most destructive to the island since 1918, resulted in one death, several injuries, and significant structural damage.

The people of Puerto Rico have suffered greatly and desperately need prayer. Many are still rebuilding from the devastating destruction of Hurricane Maria in September 2017. C&MA Puerto Rico District Superintendent Javier Gomez reported that power was down across the island after the January 7 quake. “Some people have water, others don’t,” he said. At this writing, there have been no reports of casualties among Alliance church members, “but there is a lot of anxiety in the air. Prayers are appreciated!”

Another strong quake shook Puerto Rico on January 11; no additional deaths or injuries were reported. Since the first earthquake, thousands of Puerto Ricans have been sleeping outdoors. They include those whose homes were destroyed or who fear their houses could collapse in another aftershock. Some have sought refuge in government-run outdoor shelters; others now sleep on their beds outside their homes.

Pray for recovery efforts and that many will find lasting hope through a relationship with Jesus.

“THANK YOU FOR HOLDING THE ROPE FOR US”

The pastor of our home church often uses the term “rope holders” to refer to those who pray for missionaries. As you support us—and other Alliance workers—through prayer, you hold the rope on our behalf. Of course, it is the Lord who sustains us, but He does so through you. We are humbled that as we depend on Him, we also rely on the people who intercede for us. So, thank you for holding the rope!

As we continue to study the language, we are also preparing for the work we will be part of when we return from home assignment in July 2021. We anticipate partnering with international workers Tim and Penny Iverson to plant a church in the city of Tainan, one of the least reached regions of Taiwan. Currently, our focus has been prayer and research as we choose a district for the site. We have also been meeting with pastors from the Taiwan Alliance Church Union to ask them for their partnership, prayers, and insight as we move forward. This month, we are planning to spend a night in Tainan with the Iversons to explore and learn more about the district we are considering. Would you hold the ropes for the ministry that will take place in Tainan as you join us in praying for this future church plant? Ask God to guide clearly and for unity in the Spirit. We look forward to sharing more as we watch the Lord direct and provide!

By Eric and Mary Francisco, Alliance International workers in Taiwan

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Thank you for praying for Alliance workers and for the people with whom they share the gospel. To receive the Call to Prayer and weekly prayer requests via email, subscribe at cmalliance.org/pray. Alliance ministries are supported by gifts to the Great Commission Fund and CAMA.