

Cathy Alford April 2023

Good afternoon from Spain,

Can you believe we are already halfway through April? The days go by so quickly as I begin my second year in Spain. Yes, you may be thinking I was only supposed to be here for one year, right? Me, too! As I've mentioned before, it takes months to acclimate to everything here and to think I could adjust to the culture, the language barrier and accomplish anything of value was short sided of me. I'm still loving my time here and I am without doubt that God orchestrated this experience for so many reasons.

As an update, I want you to know God miraculously healed my elbow that was fractured during my cycling accident last September. Both the US and Spain doctors were amazed at how quickly and painlessly I recovered the FULL use of my elbow. I am so grateful. The next We Love Spain cycling trip that raises money for the Mosaico Cultural Center is May 31- June 11/15. I will attend and serve as a host on the touring phase. I want to ride badly, but I know this trip will not include a bicycle. 😊 (My children are glad to hear this, as conveyed by my grandchildren. They always keep us honest. 😊)

I have been busy working with missionaries and pastors in Spain, Bulgaria, and Greece. As we began the CliftonStrengths® work with Core Leaders and missionaries in Spain, we have also completed that training with all Free Methodist pastors in Spain as well as Chance and Dee Dee Galloway's team in Bulgaria and Greece. Tomorrow, I will begin the second level of training with the Spain pastors as we take the next dive into leadership training on Myers-Briggs, Emotional Intelligence and Communication skills. Our plan is to take this additional information back to Bulgaria for the second phase of their training in November. I also am playing the keyboard at church and love serving with our local missionary team.



The Madrid Missions team



Teaching in Bulgaria



Praying for youth in Bulgaria

Sharing in Europe requires building relationships. As an introvert, that isn't the easiest for me – even in America – and, doing it in Spain with a language barrier is even more challenging. I have the sweetest neighbors and have been so blessed by their friendship. Isabelle and I don't speak each other's language, but we connect through our love of flowers. I have also been received and loved well by those who attend the Light and Life Church. I've included some photos of some of the women God brought into my life recently who took me to Madrid for the afternoon.



My neighbor, Isabell

My new friends from church

I am always amazed at how God puts people and teams together to use their gifts. It is life-giving to me! Chrissy Wagner, Jennifer Shawa and Katy Hedge arrive the first week of May for a work week as they help relaunch Impact Europe – an NGO that connects and supports life changers across Europe to impact the kingdom. They have been working hard on the project from the US and their time here will solidify the organizational structure and process moving forward. This is the perfect example of how each person brings their individual gifts to help impact the world. I am excited for how God has used them already! Please pray that this week will not only be productive for a business result, but that it will launch a wide spirit lead revival through the work of the recipients.

I have one of those significant birthdays coming up at the end of May and the best gift I could receive is to have my family visit me in Spain. They will arrive June 12th and I cannot wait for them to see where I live and meet the people who have become family to me. Please pray for their safe travels.

Personally, God continues to hold me close. Some days I am so aware that He had to get me away from my comfortable environment and routine in Georgia to bring me healing. The last 5 years have not been easy for me. I lost my mother in 2017, the same year my 29-year marriage came to an end. I can see now how I hid my hurt behind a wall of work and independence, realizing those can be an unconscious way of hiding pride. Bringing me to Spain – alone - took away every security blanket I **thought** I ever had, and I have never been more vulnerable. I am praying a lot about how to transition the self-awareness I'm learning here about being still and just being, to my life back in the States. It is going to take some work to shift my US mindset of filling every moment with something, to just simply being present in each moment and being still — with Him.

I want to thank you for your support. I know so many of you pray for me, and it is the reason I can be happy here and do what God has asked me to do. You have no idea how much it means to me. Many of you have been faithful to give financially. I'm often reminded of the widow's mite and how God saw and honored her faithfulness even though what she had was little in other's eyes. No gift is too small for supporting God's work. If you would like to support me during my second year, I would be so grateful. I am still in need of approximately \$15,000 for this year. Here is the [link](#) to give or you can give through Christ Community Church. Both options will provide a tax-deductible receipt for your giving. Please know I am mindful of your sacrifice and I am very thankful.

Friday, May 28th, I will get my renewed visa and it is for two years. I'm not sure what that means so my plan is to pray and decide in January about staying longer than March 2024. If I feel I am to stay another year, the good news is my visa is already approved through February 2025. Penny Lane is a beloved Spaniard now so we will have to pray her home, and pry her from her friends here. 😊

Please stay in touch via email, WhatsApp, Telegram or Messenger. I love each of you and pray God's richest blessings on your life.

With love,

Cathy



Cathy Alford, MA, PCC
ICF Executive & Leadership Coach, Gallup CliftonStrengths® Coach

US +1 706-888-3000 | Spain +34 648 874 287

cathy.alford@gmail.com

Calle Libertad 1, 2º, D Rivas-Vaciamadrid (Madrid) 28523