An update from Joe Pagano and Amy Richter, Episcopal Volunteers in Mission (EVIM):

How do you see the work that you are doing as a part of the Way of Love?
Our mission is to work on theological education. In the Episcopal tradition, theological education isn’t Anglican trivial pursuit. It’s formation for a life of discipleship. Discipleship is about following Jesus, and following Jesus is about the Way of Love. For the past year, we’ve been teaching at the College of Transfiguration in Makhanda/Grahamstown, South Africa. The College of Transfiguration is the residential college for people preparing for the priesthood in the Anglican Church of Southern Africa. Amy taught biblical studies and homiletics and Joe taught systematic theology and ethics. Along with our partners in the Anglican Church in Southern Africa, we helped to form clergy leaders for the church who will equip and empower all baptized people to live as disciples of Jesus Christ. As we say in our Book of Common Prayer, the ministry of all the baptized is “to represent Christ and his Church; to bear witness to him wherever they may be; and, according to the gifts given them, to carry on Christ’s work of reconciliation in the world; and to take their place in the life, worship, and governance of the Church” (BCP, 855). This ministry, we believe, is at the heart of the Way of Love.
Why did you choose to serve as an Episcopal Volunteer in Mission?

We believe that God calls everyone to use our gifts and opportunities to serve God and our neighbor. Someone told us that there is a need for people with PhDs in theological subjects to teach in Anglican colleges in Africa. We looked into opportunities to do this and in conversation with staff members of Global Missions, we received this call. We have both been interested in learning more about the bigger church of which we are a part and serving as Episcopal Volunteers in Mission is a wonderful way to do this. Whenever we receive correspondence from The Episcopal Church, we are reminded by the return address that the official name of our church is the Domestic and Foreign Missionary Society of the Protestant Episcopal Church. This name is making a claim about who we are as a church: whether we are at home or abroad, we are all missionaries and called to take our part in the mission of the triune God, which is to draw all people into the reconciling love of Jesus Christ. Serving as Episcopal Volunteers in Mission is one way we can live out that identity.

How can we pray for you and the people you work with?

Please pray for a spirit of cooperation, collaboration, and creativity amongst people working on theological education throughout the Anglican Communion. Please pray that we may find many ways to listen deeply, to identify and share resources, to work together, and to find new ways to teach and learn.

You can continue to follow and find out about Amy and Joe’s mission on their blog at amyandjoegotoafrica.com. Learn more about Episcopal Volunteers in Mission at iam.ec/EVIM.

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