

Mississippi's "GOOD NEWS" magazine for churches of Christ.



THE MAGNOLIA

# Messenger

Vol. 46 | No. 3 | FALL 2024

# WORLD Missions

*He said to them,*

***"Go into all the world and preach the gospel to all creation.***

*Whoever believes and is baptized will be saved,  
but whoever does not believe will be condemned."*

*Mark 16: 15-16*



Digital Issue on our website: [www.magnoliamessengermag.com](http://www.magnoliamessengermag.com)

***"Let us consider one another to provoke unto LOVE and GOOD works."***

*(Hebrews 10:24)*

# from Dennis

While we may lament shrinking numbers of churches in our own country, it is good to know that the Lord's church is growing by leaps and bounds outside our borders. I have learned that there

are more churches of Christ in Nigeria than in America, and that there are more churches of Christ in India than there are in Nigeria! There is a great Gospel revival going on around the world!



As I was working on this special "World Missions" issue, I began to think of how *The Magnolia Messenger* itself is also involved in world outreach. Through our website, and the posting of each issue online, we have received

"hits" from Pakistan, Turkey, Germany, Russia, Peru, Nigeria, and Poland. The internet has become the greatest aide to proclaiming the Gospel ever created.

In the late 1990's, as email was just developing, I started an e-mail account on the new Yahoo.com website. Remember those early days? About the same time, I went on a mission trip to the south Pacific Island of Fiji. After a few days, we walked down to

an internet café, where you could get a cup

of coffee and pay for a few minutes on their Apple computers. I pulled up Yahoo and was amazed to find the exact same interface as I had in the states, and was able to email my family back home. It hit me then that the internet was truly the "World Wide Web!"

What a blessing it has been to missionaries to be able today to communicate with their families and their supporting churches through the internet. I appreciate Mark Bridges, our layout editor, for the great job he does keeping up and managing our webpage. He uploads a digital copy of each issue where anyone can flip through our pages from any place in the world.

"The mountain of the house of the Lord will be established," Isaiah prophesied, "and all the nations will stream into it" (Isaiah 2:2). Read these pages and see that this prophecy has come to pass, as Christ's Gospel is proclaimed around the world. **MM**



## Church of Christ - Kosciusko, MS

Published about every 3 months (as funds and time permit). Mailed without charge to all who ask to receive it and to others for whom it is requested. Contributions from churches and individuals make possible the circulation of more than 31,000 copies of each issue of the "Magnolia Messenger". Your prayers and support are requested, needed, and appreciated!

### Supported By Contributions

**Dennis Doughty**, Editor  
dennis1848@bellsouth.net

**Dan Winkler**,  
Bible Questions Answered

**Glenda Franks**, Special Assistant  
glendafranks@yahoo.com

**Beth Beall**, Copy Editor  
**Glenn Beall**, Question Box Editor  
**Greg Ledbetter**, Youth Page Editor  
**Eddie Lewis**, North MS, Editor  
**Mark Bridges**, Layout, Production  
and Website [markbridges1757@gmail.com](mailto:markbridges1757@gmail.com)

**Share the Website:** [www.magnoliamessengermag.com](http://www.magnoliamessengermag.com)

**Magnolia Messenger • P. O. Box 1578 • Kosciusko, MS 39090**

*Editor's Note: The mention of a person or church in the Messenger does NOT necessarily mean that we either endorse or approve all the person or church may believe, teach and/or do. We do not (cannot) have full knowledge of every person or church mentioned in the MM; furthermore, we do not believe that our role before God is to be that of a judge. We pray, however, that we will never lend encouragement to anyone or anything in conflict with, or not in harmony with that which is plainly taught in Scripture. Your comments invited and encouraged.*

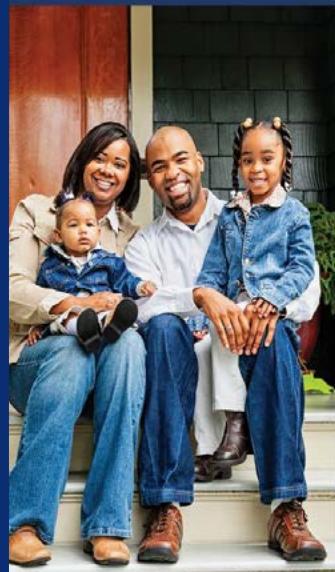
(Dennis Doughty, Editor)

**MESSENGER Addresses: Changes and / or Additions:**  
[glendafranks@yahoo.com](mailto:glendafranks@yahoo.com)

P. O. Box 1578 • Kosciusko, Mississippi 39090

## 5<sup>TH</sup> ANNUAL BROTHERHOOD-WIDE DOOR KNOCKING DAY

9/21/24



*A knock can change everything.*

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1,000 churches of Christ going into their communities on the same day. The world starts next door.

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*Since starting in 2019, almost 1000 congregations have participated.  
For every 10 churches that knock, one baptism has been reported back.*



# 40 YEARS OF WORKING the Mission fields in Cuba

by Robert Shelton

In April of this year the Clinton, MS, church of Christ conducted their 40th evangelistic campaign in Cuba. The campaign consists of visiting members and conducting Bible studies. These have resulted in 1,215 baptisms.

About 49% of Cubans are Catholic, 49% atheists and 2%

Protestant. Less than 1% of Catholics attend Mass on a regular basis. You can ask them, "When was the last time you went to the Catholic Church?" and they will generally answer, "When I was baptized as baby." Less than 5% of the Cubans attend any kind of church service.

That is the lowest percentage of any country in the Western Hemisphere.

When Fidel Castro became president of Cuba in 1959, there were 60 congregations of the Lord's church, with 3,000 members. When he came to power he placed a ban on Christianity, and atheism became the national religion. The Christians had to worship "underground." If they were caught worshipping, they could be put in jail, lose their jobs, or be punished in other ways. To keep from being detected, they would worship in different houses at various times of the day, and when they sang, they sang in whispers. Now the Cubans have freedom of religion. In 1991, a delegation from the Lord's church went to Cuba on a fact-finding trip. They found only 8 to 12 congregations with 300 to 400 Christians worshipping there.

Bill Stough (now deceased) and James Andrews from the U. S., who were on that fact-finding trip, were watching for the opportunity to work in Cuba. They organized a campaign for that country in the spring of 1993, which was as soon as the Cuban government would allow. This was the first U. S. led campaign to go into Cuba since Castro became president. Juan Monroy, from Spain, and perhaps some others, had led campaigns there before. There were 17 of us on that first campaign.

Upon arriving in Cuba, we were divided into groups of 2 or 3 and sent to different cities to work. Brad Blair, of Chattanooga, TN, and I were sent to the city of Matanzas. Working in this city was an afterthought and no plans had been made for the

work there. Chano Fernandez, the preacher, was in the hospital recovering from surgery. However, the Cuban Christians began working with us and we had a number of Bible studies resulting in 22 baptisms.

When we arrived in Matanzas, that congregation was six months old. There were 24 members, and they met in the preacher's living room. It was not long before they outgrew those facilities. The Clinton Church of Christ raised money to buy a piece of property to build on. At that time, it was against Cuban law to build a church building. However, a house could be built for the preacher to live in with enough space for the church to meet in it. A house was built with a covered patio out back that could seat between 300 and 400 people. It is warm enough in Cuba that no heat is needed. Fans were installed for summer comfort. The property is completely enclosed so there is no outside interference.

Extremely few people in Cuba have cars; therefore, if there is no congregation in walking distance people cannot worship. To remedy this, the congregation in Matanzas planted 52 congregations in the province so there is one close enough for most everyone to attend. There are several capable men in the Matanzas congregation who go out every Sunday afternoon and preach for these congregations.

On April 19 of this year, Glenn Newell and Robert Shelton boarded a plane for a two-week campaign in Cuba. While there we preached, conducted a number of Bible studies, and visited church members for the purpose of encouraging them. There is a fuel shortage in Cuba which limited our travel, but we were still able to travel to cities such as Cardenas, Alacarnes, and the Bay of Pigs. We conducted Bible studies and baptized several people at these locations. The Cuban Christians invited their friends, neighbors, and relatives to study with us. In this campaign we had 35 baptisms.

There is another Cuba campaign scheduled for October 2024. In addition to what we are doing, Tony Fernandez, the regular preacher in Matanzas, is teaching and baptizing people on a regular basis. The church in Cuba is growing. **MM**

*rob3rtshelton2@gmail.com*



# Q&A

HOLY BIBLE

*“What Does  
the Bible Say?”*



*Send your  
Questions*

to Dan Winkler

danddwinkler@gmail.com

# *Sing, Sang, Sung, and “Say, What?”*

*This issue, we will focus on two interesting questions we've received about the music of our worship. To protect institutions or individuals that were mentioned, both have been slightly paraphrased from the way they were originally received. Hope our thoughts prove helpful.*

## **YOUR WONDERFUL QUESTIONS:**

**QUESTION #1** – What's the difference between a Christian University coming to perform at our churches and a praise team? Is it okay just because our elders have not declared it an “hour of worship?” Thank you.

**QUESTION #2** – Brother Dan, I have reached out to you before and I always appreciate your answers and kind demeanor. I had a question about instrumental music. “Will God send me to Hell because I sing in worship with mechanical instruments?” I ask this because sometimes we (myself included) are consumed with wondering if something is a Heaven or Hell issue rather than viewing it from the standpoint of ‘what God wants?’

## **MY THOUGHTS:**

I want to thank both of you for thinking. When discussing the music of our worship—or any other Bible subject—I've encountered five types of people.

- **Some aren't willing to think.** They automatically classify something as right or wrong because of their traditional experience. Read Matthew 15:1-9 to see what Jesus says about this mindset. Hint. It's not very favorable.

- **Some don't want to think.** They're happy with the latest fad-of-faith promoted by their religious community and they do what they want to do. Read Colossians 2:20-23 to see what God thinks

about the worship of “self-made religion.” Caution. You may not like it.

- **Some think they've already thought.** They've respectfully been told what to think and are content in their comfort zone. Read Acts 18:24-28 and Acts 26:9-19 to see if that kind of thinking made Apollos and Paul great servants of Jesus. You might be surprised.

- **Some aren't happy if you think.** They're “quick on the flaw” and critically jump to conclusions when you don't say what they want you to say ... the way they think you should say it. Really?! Matthew 7:1-5 and Romans 14:1-13 are still in my Bible. How about yours?

- **Some are happy to think.** They know what they believe and, with a proper use of God's word, they're not afraid to be challenged for the sake of truth. Read James 3:13-18 and see if an “open to reason” mind isn't what we are to have. All of that said, let's look at our questions.

First, what should we say about the difference between choruses and praise teams? We might want to remember the main New Testament word for “worship”: *proskuneo*, “to kiss toward.” To worship God is to purposefully sacrifice our feelings to him. That requires INTENT. If there is not an intent to worship, it's not worship ... even if the activity mentions the names God, Jesus, Spirit, or directs our thoughts to spiritual matters. Accordingly, we can listen to hymns and spiritual songs or listen to a Christian University Chorus for the sheer joy of music and do so without worshipping if the intent of expressing our feelings to God is not there.

If by “praise teams” you're talking about a plurality of people leading others to sing songs that are intended to praise God, that's worship, and it must be regulated by the authority of scripture

(Colossians 3:16-17). If the “team” involves women leading dual-gendered audiences, scripture prohibits such a practice (1 Timothy 2:11-14). If the “team” is a plurality of men, authorized expediency would allow for multiple song leaders as much as it allows for one. But, we must remember that God wants nothing to do with orchestrated confusion in our worship (1 Corinthians 14:40, the context of this passage is about worship).

Second, what are we to say about God sending someone to Hell for worshipping with mechanical instruments of worship. Watch how I word this! “When it comes to the worship of God’s church on earth, the only music He authorizes is vocal music.” His words are sing, sang, sung, and fruit of the lips (Acts 16:25; Romans 15:9; 1 Corinthians 14:15; : after “Ephesians 5:19; Colossians 3:16; Hebrews 2:12; 13:15; James 5:13). Does God know what He wants? Can He adequately express what He wants? So, what does He want? Acapella music, pure and simple.

Now, what about God sending someone to Hell for attempting to worship with mechanical instruments? Let me respond to that with four brief observations.

**Observation #1**—Like it or not, today’s culture calls for a less-than-judgmental interaction with others. The feelings of others must never dictate what we believe. But, when it comes to sharing our faith, what we believe teaches us to consider the feelings of others (1 Peter 3:15; cf. Ephesians 4:15). “Do we want others to be right OR do we just want to prove that we are right?” Our answer to the above question needs to be thoughtful and respectful.

**Observation #2**—Our place is to lovingly and clearly teach others what the Bible says … what God wants (2 Timothy 4:2; 1 Peter 4:11) with a hope of drawing them into His favor. Like Paul, we must remember the cultural sensitivities of others and, without compromise, “become all things to all people, that by

all means [we] might save some” (1 Corinthians 9:22). That means our response to the above question needs to be considerate.

**Observation #3**—The Bible clearly says there is only one lawgiver and judge (James. 4:12). That would be God, and He has delegated His final Judgement to Jesus (John 5:30). He has appointed: (a) the day for determining our destinies and (b) the one who will make that determination (Acts 17:30). I am not that one. Today is not that day. Those thoughts should also help us with the above question.

**Observation #4**—Our answer to any Bible question should be wrapped in the sentiment of these words: “Let your speech always be gracious, seasoned with salt, so that you may know how you ought to answer each person” (Colossians 4:6).

Soooo, here’s my affectionate response to the question at hand. “I am not the one who is going to determine your destiny, but I will prayerfully remind you that God has been very clear about the music He wants in worship. I know what He wants and, if I love Him, why would I want to give Him anything else … anything He has not authorized for His worship of the church on earth? I don’t think either one of us would be comfortable standing before Jesus on the Day of Judgment knowing we did what we wanted instead of what God wanted.”

Folks, the Bible says, “Examine yourselves, to see whether you are in the faith. Test yourselves” (2 Corinthians 13:5). We need to make certain we do that when it comes to the way we worship. We must be equally sure we do that when it comes to the way we answer questions about our worship. Both should be carefully and obediently crafted for the glory of our God. Amen?! **MM**

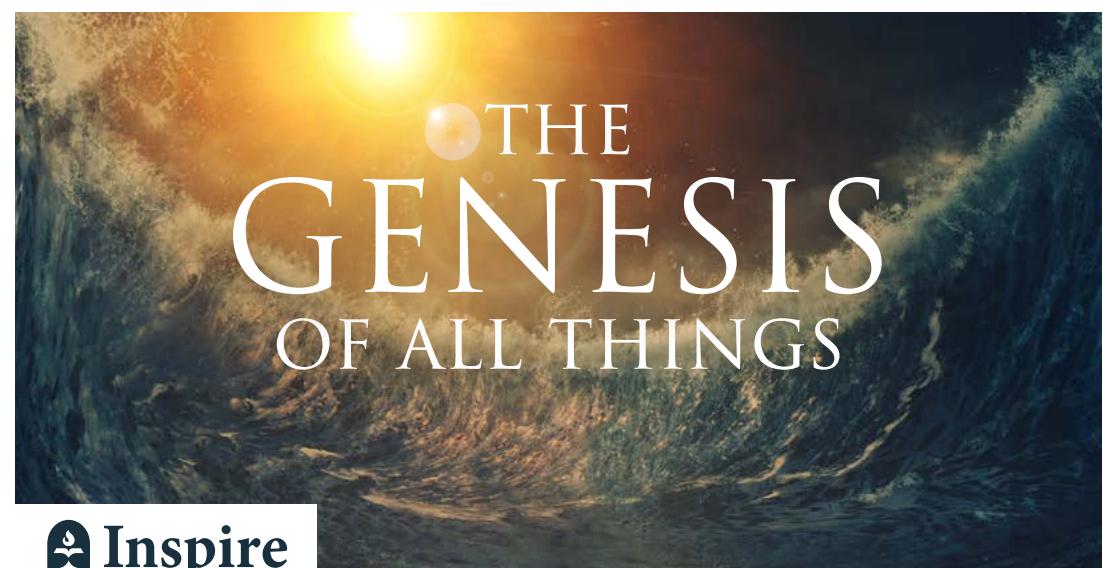
*Dan Winkler*

Welcome to Harding University for the Inspire Lectureship! This event brings together Christians from all over the globe to be equipped and inspired to join God in his redemptive mission. Numerous sessions will give practical ministry solutions born out of the significant experience of our presenters.

This year’s theme of “The Genesis of All Things” could not be timelier. The Church attempts to engage an increasingly non-Christian ethos in culture. The book of Genesis anchors our worldview as we see the biblical text speaking truth into our secular society. The contemporary relevance of this ancient text casts a powerful vision for the world God intended from the beginning.

Best wishes as you enjoy this tremendous week of inspiration, learning, fellowship and worship. Please let us know if we can help you in any way.

  
Mike Williams  
President



# THE GENESIS OF ALL THINGS

 **Inspire**

101ST HARDING LECTURESHIP | SEPT. 29-OCT. 2, 2024  
Join us as we explore the creator’s design for our lives in an increasingly secular culture.  
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# HOUSE TO HOUSE

# Worldwide!

*House to House Heart to Heart is known primarily for our work in the United States. Some may not know that House to House does almost as much work internationally! So far, we have worked with congregations in 124 different countries. We hope to eventually work with a group of Christians in every country.*

*House to House is printed monthly in English, bi-monthly in Spanish, and frequently in British English, Chinese, French, Korean, Latvian, Nepali, Polish, Portuguese, Romanian, Ukrainian, and several Indian dialects.*

*Here are some recent updates on some of these international efforts.*

## ● Ukrainian Relief Efforts and Evangelism

At the beginning of the war, HTH staff members joined life-long missionaries to Ukraine and Russia in weekly Zoom meetings to discuss how to help those affected by the war. The goal was to help physically and spiritually. We translated three of our best tracts into three languages to be shared with refugees and those welcoming them. They were provided in English, Polish, Romanian, and Ukrainian. Copies have been included with some of the supplies given out all over each of the countries.

## ● Evangelism Posters Around the World

Earlier this year we mailed a free evangelism poster to every church of Christ in the United States. We also emailed a copy of the English and Spanish versions to every church of Christ whose email address we had in the world. Keith Kasarjian loved the evangelism poster so much that he asked if we would send him some to take as he visits/starts Bear Valley preaching schools. Keith sends us pictures of those who receive the poster all over the world.

The evangelism posters, which we also turned into a bookmark and PowerPoint slides, have also been translated into Farsi and Spanish. They are currently being translated into French and Latvian.

## ● HTH in Korean

A church in South Korea is trying to translate all of our issues into

Korean. They keep them on this site and then update them as they go. <https://housetohouse.kr/>

You can hear an audio tract they created of an issue here: <https://housetohouse.kr/?p=6556>

## ● HTH in Portuguese

We have translated the July 2021 issue, *The New Testament in Just 12 Verses – An Introduction to Christianity*, into several languages. Portuguese is the newest. It is finished and we are just waiting on a congregation in Brazil to print it. When they print, we will send digital files to Angola and Mozambique to print and distribute. We have not worked with the church in Angola and Mozambique until now.

## ● HTH in Nepal

The church in Nepal is translating House to House into their language, Nepali. The first issue has been printed and is being distributed.

## ● Direct Mail in Guam

Some countries have a connection with the US Postal Service. For those that do, House to House can be direct mailed into the homes in that country! The July 2024 issue of House to House is currently being mailed into homes in Guam.

## ● Canada

Matt Wallin spoke at the Strathmore Blvd. congregation in Toronto, Canada, in 2023. Austin Fowler spoke there in 2024. The congregation is very evangelistic and made up of members from 30+ nations! Todd Clippard, who answers House to House Bible questions that come in online or through the mail, spoke at Riverview church of Christ in Riverview, New Brunswick, in 2024. We are thankful for a growing relationship with the church in Canada!

## ● Helping Your Mission Work

Most congregations support some kind of mission work. For those that do, House to House has been a great tool. Congregations who support a missionary often pay to have copies of House to House sent to them. Congregations that are planting churches or going on

short-term mission trips order copies to take with them.

We can help supply customized, affordable materials for their work. Each copy of House to House is just .20 cents.

If your missionary is willing, we can work with them to get our material translated into their language and they can have the copies printed locally.

If someone asks you for resources in any language, just ask us! There is a good chance we have SOMETHING in their language or know someone who does.

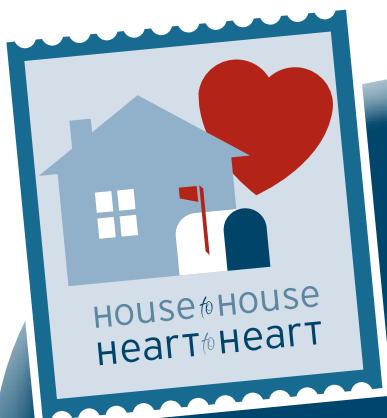
## What's Next?

There are a few other exciting things in the works.

What language/country will we work in/with next?  
Only time . . . and you . . . and God will tell! **MM**

Matt Wallin  
House to House Heart to Heart

*I recently became aware of what HTH is doing internationally and was amazed, thrilled, and overjoyed by the work they do around the world. I have known of and used the HTH mailings in my previous local work and have always been impressed by the quality and content of the publication. I am so glad that we can share this good news about their international work! -dd*



# HTH

## WORLD MISSION FACTS!

*We have worked  
with 4,400 congregations  
of the Lord's church in all*

**50 states and 122 countries. We have sent out 323,969,868 copies of House to House all-time.**



# CAMP BEBRUSAI LITHUANIA, 2024

# Family Camp

By Danny Dodd

Levy Church of Christ  
North Little Rock, AR

During the week of July 22-27, 126 folks from eleven countries gathered at Camp Bebrusai near Moletai, Lithuania, for rest and refreshment in the Lord. This, the Baltic Family Camp, began in 2012 for the purpose of offering missionary and ministry families, along with Christians across Europe, an opportunity for spiritual retreat and renewal. God blessed this summer's edition with great success as participants from Estonia, Latvia, Lithuania, Poland, Ukraine, Belarus, Germany, the Czech Republic, England, Spain, and the United States spent the week focused on the theme of "Not of this World."

Each day the adults experienced rich Bible study while their children and teenagers enjoyed their own schedule of Bible classes, games and activities, along with arts and crafts. This year our guest teachers for the adults were Drs. Evert and Ileene Huffard of Memphis, TN, and Mitch Anderson from the town of Olomouc in the Czech Republic. These gifted teachers provided in-depth study for the men and women who attended—making the classes one of the most anticipated segments of the camp.

The camp setting on the beautiful lake fosters relaxation and rest for those serving throughout this region of Europe, most often in small isolated congregations. For them the camp is a highlight of their year, giving them the chance to enjoy the kind of fellowship, teaching, and encouragement that we, in the states, sometimes take for granted.

Attending this year was Alexander Piletsky and his wife, Irene. You may have heard about this courageous couple from Mariupol, Ukraine. Last year, they, along with over 30 other Christians sheltered for days in their church building in that city as shells exploded all around them. They survived in part, by collecting dirty water to drink out of bomb craters. Alexander was hit in the face by shrapnel—his scar very much evident. He shared this incredibly compelling story with us during the week. He spoke of their rule of keeping two walls between them and the warzone erupting around them—hoping that two walls might protect them from the artillery—as they waited on God to deliver them. And hallelujah, He did! Now Alexander serves as a preacher in the church in

Tallinn, Estonia, where they have relocated.

More amazing stories of courageous faith were represented at this camp, such as the family who fled Belarus because of persecution—escaping just as police were searching to imprison them. Now living in Germany, they drove 20 hours to attend the session. Liza, the wife and mom in this family, grew up attending the Christian youth camp in Lithuania, crossing over the Belarussian border with a group from the church in Minsk during

better times in the early 2000s. Now she and her husband bring their own kids to enjoy their own Christian camp experience.

That these

different people from such diverse countries in that troubled part of the world could be together, overcoming political and nationalistic barriers to honor God as one people, is a sweeping testimony to the power of the Gospel of Christ. It is reflective of John's statement in Revelation 7:9 of him seeing, "a great multitude that no one could count, from every nation, tribe, people and language, standing before the throne and before the Lamb." It is quite an amazing and uplifting experience to witness God working in and through this camp in this way. It truly is "not of this world." There simply is no other explanation.

Of course, for the families to be free to enjoy their week, it takes a dedicated staff to serve them. The Baltic Family Camp is blessed with terrific servants from the Levy Church of Christ in North Little Rock, Arkansas, which sponsors the camp, along with a couple of Mississippians (David and Lourelia Pryor) from the Lake Harbor Drive congregation in Ridgeland.

Christian camping in Lithuania, after all, has deep Mississippi roots. It began in 1998, when a group mainly from Sardis Lake Christian Camp made the journey over to introduce this ministry concept to that country. It remains strong there with both the youth and family camp continuing each summer.

Mission work in Europe remains most challenging. The continent is overwhelmingly secular. War is still raging in the region. Missionaries there have tremendous tasks. Please keep praying for them as they proclaim Christ to their land and for the Baltic Family Camp as we strive to minister to them through the camp and the connections made during that wonderful week. God is working in the Baltics and all throughout Europe! **MM**



# The Preacher's Page

/ PRESENTED BY THE JENKINS INSTITUTE



## The Preacher and Mission Work



### TOP 10 PLACES MINISTERS GO ON MISSION TRIPS

1. Mexico	6. Ukraine
2. Honduras	7. England
3. Panama	8. Canada
4. Guyana	9. Guatemala
5. Russia	10. Costa Rica

### WE CAN HELP

Each year thousands (probably 10's of thousands of young people go on both stateside and foreign short-term mission trips. It encourages the mission work, the members of the church in those places, the young people. It plants seeds for these young people to be involved in mission work perhaps for the rest of their lives. And most of all, souls are led to the Lord. We publish a list of locations looking for a group to come help them and we help pair them with groups looking for places to go. If you'd like to host a group for a VBS, Door Knocking Campaign, or some other type of evangelistic campaign, let us know and we'll try to help. Send your name, the congregation name and location to [TJI@TJI.Life](mailto:TJI@TJI.Life) and we'll get you started.



### POSITIVE FINDS FROM THE MINISTERS' & MISSIONS SURVEY



### Ministry Verse of the Quarter

During my (Jeff) high school and college years, it was a tremendous joy to participate in many mission trips, at home and in other countries. After graduation from college, it seemed like the local work of the church got in the way of making mission trips. Then one day, an associate minister said to me, "Don't you think it would help encourage our members to go on more mission trips, if you went on one with us. I did, and it was life changing.

Every preacher believes the words of our Lord when He spoke what we often call the Great Commission. We believe that it is the mission of the church to preach the Word to the whole world. My thought for all preachers is, if we preach the Great Commission but don't put it into practice in our lives, are we really speaking the whole counsel of God. Paul was involved with local congregations, such as Ephesus, Corinth, and others, but he was never too busy to serve as an Evangelist to people around the world.

If you are a local preacher, and you haven't been on a mission trip lately, considering joining your young people or others in your church family on a mission trip, somewhere in our country or in another country. It will bless you and those who you work with as together you proclaim the Message of salvation to those who need to hear.





# Was Jesus POLITICAL?

by Danny Dodd

*Levy church North Little Rock, Arkansas*

I have been mulling over this question for quite some time. It is an increasingly significant one, particularly since Jesus is frequently used to prop up political agendas from all over the spectrum.

“Support me (or my cause). Jesus is on my side!”

Then there are the theologians and biblical scholars who also make various claims as to the politics of Jesus. Some deny that He had any direct political involvement while others support a highly political Jesus.

***Who are we to believe?***

***Well, you could say it is complex.***

In any attempt to sort through this, I think we must first look at the term “political.” If we frame it just in our current cultural usage, then to me it appears that Jesus was not really into politics at all. He could not run for any office. He did not lead any public political protests; make any overt political demands for Himself or His followers; try to create an organized political party; or attempt to ingratiate Himself to the political powers that were during His lifetime. In fact, when an effort was made to draw Him into a potential political discussion, He deflected it (Mark 12:16-17).

During His life, He seemed content to live under the existing Roman political system, even advising His followers to not fight against it (Matthew 5:41). This certainly does not paint a picture of a radically political Jesus. So, from this view of the Christ, I personally cannot picture Him marching in some rally for or against something now; leading a political party or movement; or seeking a political office.

***Would this Jesus even vote?***

***I honestly do not know.***

Could He be considered more political within His own Jewish community? This is the better question. He certainly challenged the existing political ruling structure in and around Jerusalem. He posed such a threat to their regime that they manipulated the Roman system to have Him killed. Turning over tables and turning

out the money changers could certainly be considered a bold political move.

***But what kind of politics?  
Again, He desired no office.***

He did have followers, but even within the Jewish community they never sought political power. Amazingly, just the opposite was true. Jesus specifically taught His disciples to not grasp for the kind of power that defines politics (Matthew 20:25-27). He obviously lived His teaching. So, what are we to make of this?

Don’t you think that if the King of Kings so desired, He could have called upon legions of angels, swept the Romans and the Sanhedrin away, and taken up residence on David’s throne, fulfilling the Zionist Messianic dream? But He did not. That was not His brand of politics. And I think this is exactly where we end up confused. Jesus is not an American. He is certainly not a Republican or a Democrat, and neither does He belong to any political party anywhere. He is not into this kind of politics. Actually, embedded within His teaching and that of His followers in the New Testament is a basic ethic, which subverts this brand of politics.

Ever heard of a politician stumping for votes on a platform including “love your enemies,” “turn the other cheek,” or “love your neighbor as yourself?” How about “not to think of yourself more highly than you ought,” “bless those who persecute you and do not curse,” or “do not repay evil for evil?” Or what about “let no debt remain outstanding, except the continuing debt to love one another?” Didn’t think so.

To see the political Jesus, just read the Sermon on the Mount (Matthew 5-7), it perfectly captures His brand of subversive politics. It undermined the accepted norm—the practice of power politics from both the Roman and Jewish perspectives. Asked to carry a Roman’s bag one mile—make it two. Trying to manipulate the Torah to your advantage—think again! Those “blessed” are not the strongest, the richest, the most advantaged, the most politically placed. No, those truly blessed are the poor, the mournful, the meek, the merciful, the pure, the peacemakers, and the persecuted. Wow!

No wonder “the crowds were amazed at his teaching” (Mat-

*For our citizenship  
is in Heaven, from  
which we also  
eagerly wait for  
the Savior, the Lord  
Jesus Christ,*

*Philippians 3:20*

thew 7:28). They had never heard anyone speak such things—especially politicians and people in power.

Jesus's politics demolishes business-as-usual politics. Recall Matthew 20:25-27 again: "You know that the rulers of the Gentiles lord it over them, and their high officials exercise authority over them. Not so with you. Instead, whoever wants to become great among you must be your servant and whoever wants to be first must be your slave."

Jesus's first followers took all of this to heart. Their grassroots movement changed the world, but not through power politics. They sought no office nor engaged in any political lobbying or posturing (unless you count Paul appealing to his Roman citizenship for a trial before Caesar). Instead, they were taught to obey and pray for whatever form of political government they happened to be under and to live "peaceful and quiet lives in all godliness and holiness" and not to rebel against such authority (See 1 Timothy 2:1-4; Romans 13:1-7; 1 Peter 2:13-17). And these statements were made to Christians living under anything but a democratic form of government.

So how did they change the world then without a political machine, without accumulating power and position? The answer is the politics of Jesus, the subversive nature of His teaching, and the power unleashed by the Spirit in the Kingdom of God.

This Kingdom knows no boundaries, has no nationality, is not limited by any particular form of government, is not beholden to the whims of politicians, does not depend on any nation, and is quite unstoppable.

It has thrived in such hostile environments as totalitarian states and communist governments, as well as friendlier democratic and republic forms of government. Those in this Kingdom have their citizenship in Heaven and are to be "aliens" and "strangers" in whatever place they may find themselves on the map (Philippians 3:20; 1 Peter 2:11).

What primarily guides them, shapes their goals, and defines their behavior, is not found in any constitution, government document, or political platform.

It is the politics of Jesus—subverting the callous, loveless, power-grasping, brutal, unforgiving, unmerciful, deceptive, self-seeking, intolerant, murderous, dehumanizing culture through quiet but purposeful Kingdom living and teaching.

It was once said that His ragtag group of followers—who without power or any political advantage—"turned the world upside down" (Acts 17:6). They accomplished this without any ballots or bullets. Rather, it was by faith.

Faith—not in any form of government, political party, politician, or country, but in the Most High God and His eternal plans for His unstoppable Kingdom. **MM**

***By faith, history is changed  
(see Hebrews 11).***

***By faith, power politics  
looks puny.***

***Faith — it seems to me that this  
is the radical politics of Jesus.***



# THE MISSION WORK IN *Africa*

by **Emmanuel Madu**

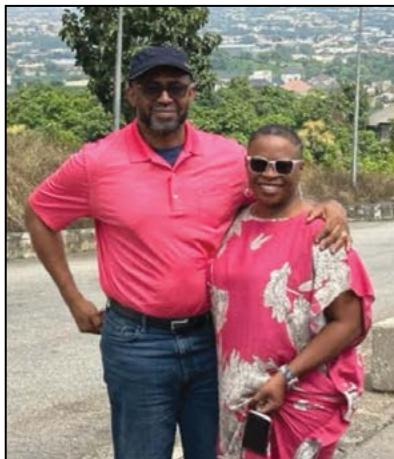
*Oliver Creek Church of Christ  
Bartlett, Tennessee*

Africa, the second-largest continent, presents unparalleled opportunities for evangelization with its vast number of unreached souls and extensive land. Comprising 54 countries, diverse religions, and approximately 1,500-2,000 languages, Africa's rich cultural and religious tapestry necessitates a nuanced approach to evangelization. Understanding and respecting these differences while adapting our message of the Gospel and strategies for spreading it are crucial for effective outreach and mission work.

The history of the Church in Nigeria, the most populous country in Africa with 223,804,632 people and the largest black nation in the world, is a testament to the power of indigenous evangelism. C.A.O. Essien, an ex-policeman, learned of Jesus through a Bible correspondence course in 1948. He and a friend baptized one another and established the church with a dozen village neighbors. By the time resident Americans arrived, there

were an estimated twenty-five congregations. This foundation laid by local believers highlights the potential of Africans evangelizing Africa, leveraging their deep cultural and language understanding to communicate the Gospel effectively. Today, Africa has the fastest growth in Christianity, with more congregations and members than any other continent. According to Pew Research, by 2060, more than 4 in 10 Christians are expected to live in Sub-Saharan Africa.

Although my daytime job is in cancer research and teaching, I also serve as a deacon of Global Missions at Oliver Creek Church of Christ. My wife, Pamela, a nurse, and I have led numerous mission trips to Africa for over twenty years. Oliver Creek adopted the Africa Mission work as one of their four missionary efforts they supported (including missions in Ukraine, Argentina, and Greece) in 2022. The mission work in Africa embraces the potential for growth by building relationships with remote communities, spending a month in the summer and two weeks in the winter to



establish trust and understanding. We focus on collaborating with local professionals, such as doctors and preachers, to evangelize Africa through what we call "The Jesus Method"—a blend of preaching and humanitarian efforts.

Our goal is to empower local churches in North and West Africa, reaching nearly 50 million people. We focus on evangelism, church planting, and addressing health challenges like high blood pressure, malaria, waterborne diseases, and diabetes. Partnering with local preachers, teachers, doctors, and church leaders, we conduct medical outreaches and preaching campaigns using the 4-Field Disciple Method (evangelism, discipleship, church planting, and leadership development) and provide tools for sustained efforts year-round.



We provide resources for preaching, education, free health clinics, and poverty alleviation initiatives. Fundraising efforts are not for preachers' salaries, but to facilitate the vital work they perform. We believe in empowering local churches to take responsibility for community outreach projects like those Oliver Creek actively supports.

Pam and I visit various places in Nigeria to support community growth and spiritual development and engage in campaigns using the 4-Field Disciple Method. Additionally, we distribute laptops and cell phones to improve communication and manage projects like building church buildings. During recent outreach, the community received essential health services, including

blood pressure checks, blood sugar tests, and malaria screenings. Complimentary medications were distributed, and while the medical team addressed health needs, evangelists presented the Gospel of Christ. Many individuals, including Pentecostal church leaders, a military officer, and several Muslims, chose to be baptized.

One of our significant impacts has been through the radio program "Let the Bible Speak," which reaches the Federal Capital Territory (FCT) of Nigeria and beyond. The program has led to numerous baptisms and the establishment of new congregations. One notable conversion is Victor Yusuf Olukayode, a former General Overseer of a Pentecostal denomination, who embraced



the true faith through our broadcasts. His journey exemplifies the transformative power of the Gospel, leading to the establishment of a Bible training program for new converts. This effort led to the establishment of the first-ever Christian radio station, Truth and Life Radio, run by the churches

of Christ in Northern Africa. With the support of the OC mission team, Truth and Life Radio Station started broadcasting in February 2024, aiming to provide daily content, including preaching, discussions, music, and uplifting messages.

Our mission is a testament to the belief that "It is not so much the case that God has a mission for His church in the world, as that God has a church for His mission in the world." We are humbled and honored to be entrusted with such a significant task, witnessing God working globally in the hearts of many through the efforts of His missionaries and the support of OC and our partner churches. **MM**



# THE MISSION FIELDS OF Thailand

by Sam Kammanees  
Kalasin, Thailand

Thailand is a country in southeast Asia. The country is populated by 66 million people and most of the people (about 95%) claim Buddhist affiliation. Our mission's goal was "To establish a faithful congregation" where there is none.

Our great and challenging task started (May 2007) here in the city of Kalasin where about 150,000 people live. To fulfill our goal and the Great Commission of the Lord, we started making contacts by going from house to house to meet people. Church of Christ was introduced to the people in communities. Tracts, flyers, booklets were distributed. We found

that most of the people were very friendly, but none of them really wanted to have Bible studies with us. When people heard about a religion foreign to theirs, they feared change. If they changed, they felt like they became a traitor to their country and their ancestors' religion (Buddhism). Discouragement was occupied for times. But it could not have enough power to extinguish the great love of God for mankind. We knew God will provide people with good hearts.

We continued to walk to our goal. Beginning is always difficult. We do our part; God will do His!

After almost a year, the first two souls in the city obeyed the Gospel. On one hand, and generally, new Christians are very helpful to the work. They have friends. They have family members. This

opens more opportunity for us to make connections in order for us to share the Gospel of Christ with the people our new converts know. On the other hand, their friends and family members could also become the enemy to their faith. Those unbelieving folks may try to pull the believers back to where they were before. We have experienced this latter case, and there was not a small number.

As our effort went, more souls were added to the Lord's church.

The church at Kalasin currently has 35-40 people in attendance. We have also established 3 other congregations in other areas in this region of N.E Thailand. The believers continued to be grounded in the faith through our edification program called "Weekend Bible School" (WBS). We also run a preacher training school to train men to serve the Lord. And each congregation continues to do the work of the church. **MM**



**from a**  
**Woman's**  
**VIEWPOINT**  
*"In Memory of Miss June"*

# MISSION for WOMEN

by Teri Meadows

Crystel Springs, Mississippi

A dictionary defines the word mission as a “specific task with which a person is charged; a person sent to perform or carry on an activity.” A missionary is one who is sent out.

Women are a needed evangelist (an enthusiastic advocate) in the Lord’s church. The Gospel will not be spread without beautiful feet to take the message. Romans 10:15 states, “How beautiful

are the feet of those who preach the gospel of peace. Who brings good tidings of good things!”

Some of those feet should have painted toenails! I’m not advocating a women’s appointment to pulpit work or trying to guilt you into a missionary journey to a foreign country. There

is plenty of work to do right here at home, in mine and your neighborhood, and plenty of ways we, as women, can do so. 1 Timothy 2:12 states, “I do not permit a woman to teach or to have authority over a man, but to be in silence.” This scripture clearly tells women not to teach or usurp authority over men, but there are many kinder, gentler, and less aggressive ways to be part of spreading the message of Christ.



Teri Meadows

Let’s think about the involvement of women in Christ’s mission today.

## Women can choose to join in **CHRIST'S MISSION** by following Him as disciples.

We need to let our lights shine. We know the difference between right and wrong. By making the choices in our lives that show we intend to live by God’s standards and not those of the world, we demonstrate we are a testament to the Truth. When we do good, our light shines—not because we think we are good, but because God has given us the standards and ability to make the proper choices and we want to glorify Him with our lives. 1 Corinthians 6:20 states, “for you were bought with a price. So, glorify God in your body.”

When we are in circumstances where many would become impatient or discouraged, but we choose to demonstrate patience and courage, others will see a difference in us and wonder why. That will create an opportunity to explain why we have a joy and

# Christ's

a calm that will diffuse many frustrations and the tendency to lash out. If one grows tired of doing right and starts to live selfishly and not selflessly, the world will also see that, so we need to be careful what we teach through our actions and make wise choices.

## Women can choose to join in **CHRIST'S MISSION** by spreading the Gospel and teaching the Bible.

Women should be holding out the Word of God to those we meet each day. We can reach out to our friends who aren’t Christians. We can touch the lives of children in which we come in contact. Titus 2: 3-5 states, “older women are to teach what is good and so train the younger women to love their husbands and children, to be self-controlled, pure, working at home, kind, and submissive to their own husbands, that the word of God may not be reviled.”

- Teach or assist with Vacation Bible School
- Teaching a children’s Bible class
- Host a youth event in your home.
- Serve as a summer camp counselor, camp nurse or food preparation assistant.
- Visit and support the work of a local children’s home.
- Care packages for college students
- Host a dinner or a pizza party for a student center at a local college.
- Coordinate a Bible study. Check out *Digging Deep in God’s Word*, a ladies’ study by Cindy Colley.
- Offer to babysit a neighbor’s child or at a Mothers’ Day Out program
- Visit the sick and shut-in women
- Go with a friend to her chemotherapy treatment
- Prepare a meal for the sick or the grieving
- Present a welcome basket for a new neighbor or a visitor at church services
- Send out cards for birthdays, anniversaries, get well cards, Start a card ministry
- Offer assistance to widows and shut-ins
- Offer to help coordinate or participate in a Ladies’ Day

- *Invite a new neighbor, friend or a visitor at church to eat lunch*
- *Sign up to serve at a local Stew Pot or community kitchen*

Women can choose to join in  
**CHRIST'S MISSION**  
 by participating in the  
**Great Commission** by giving resources.

The Great Commission can be found in Matthew 28:18-19 and states, "Go therefore and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the father and of the son and of the Holy Spirit, teaching them to observe all things that I have commanded you. And behold, I am with you always to the end of time." Women in the church should reflect on their gifts, skills, and life situations to consider ways they can support the work of Christ locally and around the world.

- Give monetarily to Christ's church that supports foreign missionaries
- Give monetarily to Christ's church to support local missions

If you live by the Bible's standard, women will not stand in front of a congregation of men and women and preach the Gospel. (1 Corinthians 14.) However, your effect and influence on others outside of the church should be evident. Matthew 5: 13-16 states, "You [and the word means all, male and female] are the salt of the earth. You are the light of the world. Let your light shine before others so that they may see your good works and give glory to your father who is in Heaven."

Notice how very effective and influential the Samaritan woman was, though. She did not fill a pulpit. She spoke one-on-one to those who knew her, and her enthusiasm is evident. She was not a perfect person, but when those who knew her saw the changes she had made and the clear message she spoke, they couldn't help but be persuaded to come and hear for themselves the preaching of the Gospel. "So the woman left her water jar and went away into town and said to the people, 'Come, see a man who told me all that I ever did. Can this be the Christ?' They went out of the town and were coming to him" (John 4:28-30). It is never too late to get to work in God's kingdom! If you are not active, get active now.

May God bless each of our efforts as we seek to join in Christ's mission and do His will. **MM**

*tmeadows@mmrcrehab.org*

*(Teri is the Chief Nursing Officer at the Methodist Rehabilitation Center in Jackson, Mississippi. She is a member at the Crystal Springs congregation where her husband serves as an elder. She is a regular writer of this column, and I greatly appreciate this wonderful article. -dd)*



by Philip Slate

Since its beginning, members of the Germantown congregation have had an interest in "mission work". In the early years that interest expressed itself through participation in campaigns, short-term work, chiefly in Central America. Supplemental funds were sent to various missionaries outside the USA. A turning point came in the late 1990s, however, when Dave Phillips, Germantown's preacher, taught a class on "Missions". The initial outcomes of that class were the formation of a Missions Committee and an elder-approved Missions Policy that called for a transition to a more focused and proactive approach to the church's global work. It decided to provide greater financial, emotional, spiritual, and sponsorship support to fewer evangelistic workers. That goal came to initial fulfillment when they provided full support for and sent the Leslie Williams family to PNG in 2001. Their mission was to plant and nurture a church in Milne Bay, Alotau, the provincial capital city.

The Williams family, Canadians, had previously worked in PNG for eight years, so they knew the nature of the work. Supported fully by Germantown, they worked ten years in residence: a church was planted and developed to the point of having good local leaders. The Williams family returned to Canada to work and make periodic trips to PNG for teaching and encouragement. Germantown continues to support the Williams in these works.

From 2008 to the present, the Germantown church has fully supported Sasha Maliuga, first in Donetsk and later in Kyiv, Ukraine, where he is the preacher of a local congregation and teaches in the Ukrainian Bible Institute. Natasha, his wife, is equally active in various aspects of the work and is a skilled translator.

A small slice of the evangelism budget at Germantown goes to people who make short-term trips, mostly to Latin America, to engage in a combination of benevolent work, encouragement, and evangelizing. Others, however, have gone to Ghana, Jamaica, Nigeria, and Canada for teaching and encouragement. Limited support is also given toward the development of leaders in Ghana.

In May of this year (2024), Germantown began a partnership with Alfred and Diana Zike, natives of Albania, to evangelize among the half-million Albanians in and around Athens, Greece. The Zike's are twenty years in the church, have lived in Greece before, know the Greek language, and are proven workers.

Through the years, various elders and mission committee members have visited the works chiefly supported by Germantown. Through his preaching and teaching, Dave Phillips, still Germantown's preacher, routinely reminds the church of its responsibility and joy in making disciples at home and abroad. It is a satisfying thing to be doing what a church knows God wants His people to do. **MM**



# SENDING & SUPPORTING

# Mission Work

by John Pigg, Director  
Mexico Missions

When I began preaching 56 years ago, churches of Christ had a global missionary goal of "Into All the World By the Year 2000." We have surpassed that date by 24 years, and although there has been significant progress, we have fallen way short of reaching that goal, and it gets more difficult to achieve every year. We must take local and global missions more seriously than ever before if we are going to carry out Jesus's great commission charge: "Into all the World" (Mark 16:15). Sharing the Gospel through worldwide

missions demands that we be more urgent than ever before about "sending" missionaries to share the Gospel to lost humanity and more sacrificial about adequately "supporting" them financially as they deserve.

In John's account of the Great Commission, Jesus commanded, "As the Father has sent me, even so I am sending you" (John 20:21).

The greatest "Great Commission" in history was when God sent His Son to be the Savior of the world. In Gethsemane Garden on the night before He suffered the cross, He prayed, "I glorified you on earth, having accomplished the work that you gave me to do" (John 17:4). And after six long hours of crucifixion, some of His last words were, "It is finished" (John 19:30).

But Jesus didn't just complete a Great Commission for Himself, He commanded a Great Commission for His church. He was not making a great suggestion, offering a great opinion, or giving us a great option, although, it has been a great omission! Sending is critical to carrying out the Great Commission.

One of the greatest missionaries of the first-century church of Christ was Paul, the apostle. When he was giving a defense of his missionary work before King Agrippa, he told him that Jesus had charged him, "I am sending you to open their eyes, so that they may turn from darkness to light and from the power of Satan to God, that they may receive forgiveness of sins and a place among

those who are sanctified by faith in me" (Acts 26:17-18). In Romans 10:14, Paul asked three critical questions, "And how are they to believe in him of whom they have never heard? And how are they to hear without someone preaching? And how are they to preach unless they be sent?" His answer was a citation from Isaiah 52:7 which exclaimed, "How beautiful are the feet of those who preach the good news!" We not only need more Christians who are willing to be "sent" on short and long-term foreign missions, but we need more local churches to "send" them!

"Sending" out missionaries requires in most cases "supporting." When Jesus sent out His apostles on the limited commission to the lost sheep of the house of Israel, he said, "You received without paying; give without pay" (Matthew 10:8). Jesus sent them out as "givers," not "getters," and was in essence telling them to be willing to share the good news whether they were paid or not. But He

also said, "The laborer deserves his food" (Matthew 10:10). Even Jesus Himself and His disciples received support from several women "Who provided for them out of their means" (Luke 8:3).

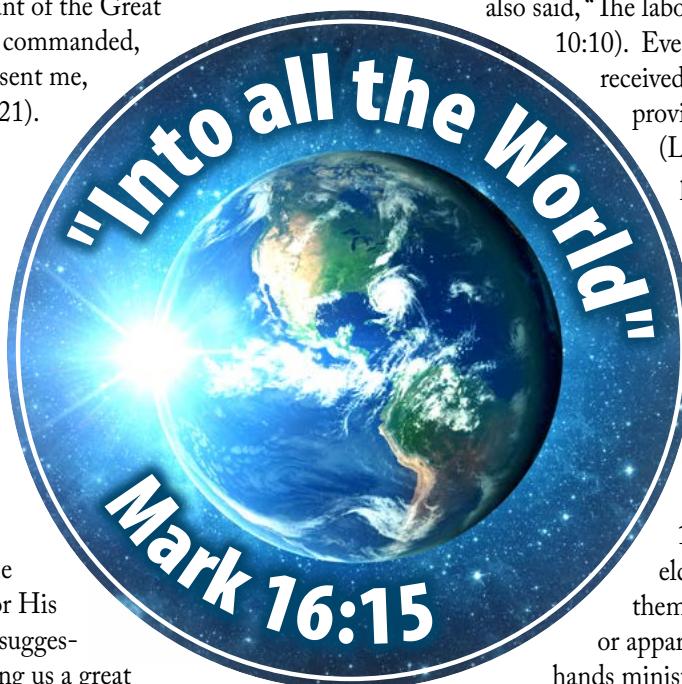
It was Paul's general practice to refrain from his right of salary for his missionary work because he never wanted to be a financial burden to the brethren or accused of preaching for personal profit (cf. 1 Corinthians 9:6, 18). In order to support himself as a missionary in Corinth, he worked nights at tent making and taught the Gospel during the day (Acts 18:1-3). He reminded the Ephesian

elders that while a missionary with them, "I coveted no one's silver or gold or apparel. You yourselves know that these hands ministered to my necessities, and to those

who were with me. In all things I have shown you that by working hard in this way we must help the weak and remember the words of the Lord Jesus who Himself said, 'It is more blessed to give than to receive'" (Acts 20:33-35). I commend all missionaries today, foreign and domestic, who are working tirelessly throughout the world, supporting themselves often from their own financial resources, or are wanting and willing to be bi-vocational. Without their selfless sacrifice of supporting themselves, we would



John Pigg



be falling far more behind in world missions.

Of course, Paul was not opposed to receiving monetary support from the churches that sent him on his missionary journeys. For example, the church at Philippi had done so on more than one occasion. He wrote, "You Philippians yourselves know that in the beginning of the Gospel when I left Macedonia, no church entered into a partnership with me in giving and receiving, except you only. Even in Thessalonica, you sent me help for my needs once and again" (Philippians 4:14-16). Paul defended the church's duty to pay those whom they send out to preach the Gospel, telling the Corinthian church that it was written for our sake in the Law of Moses, and he cites Deuteronomy 25:4 as authority to do so, "You shall not muzzle an ox when it treads out the grain" (cf. 1 Timothy 5:17). It was written for our sake because the plowman should plow in hope and the thresher thresh in hope of sharing in the crop. If we have sown spiritual things among you, is it too much if we reap material things from you? If others share this rightful claim on you, do not we even more?" (1 Corinthians 9:8-12). And then he adds, "the Lord commanded that those who proclaim the gospel should get their living by the Gospel" (1 Corinthians 9:14). Paul's primary point is, "One who is taught the word must share all

good things with the one who teaches" (Galatians 6:6).

When it comes to financial support by churches for missionaries that are sent out, a sad reality is most local preachers receive far more generous salaries compared to missionaries and are given many more benefits. Few missionaries are given even annual standard of living increases, much less meritorious raises. It is a fact that the total amount of money most churches generally budget monthly for missions is extremely small compared to all other expenses.

Sending and supporting missionaries has never been more critical and urgent for several reasons: (1) The world population stands at 8.1 billion people and is growing every day at the rate of 4.3 births per second; (2) The world death rate is 2 per second; (3) The number of missionaries sent locally and globally is decreasing every year through death, retirement, and resignation, and fewer are heeding the call to replace them; (4) More importantly, the second coming of Christ could be any day now to bring every living, lost person into Judgment. It is my prayer that this article will not be taken as a negative evaluation of the Lord's church regarding sending and supporting missionaries, but a positive encouragement to do more and better than we have done in the past. **MM**

# From Mississippi to Australia

My name is Sam Lawrence, and I am from Kosciusko, Mississippi. I just graduated from the Southeast Institute of Biblical Studies in Knoxville, Tennessee, in May of this year. I am now in the process of moving to Tasmania, Australia, to begin working there full-time. I will be working, Lord willing, with the Mersey Bluff church of Christ in Davenport, Tasmania.

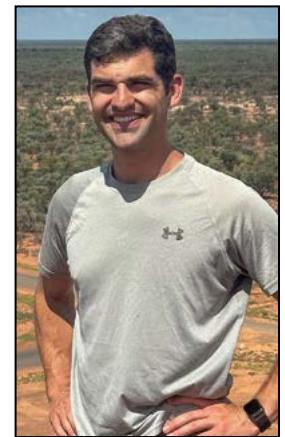


Mersey Bluff church Australia.

If you had told me two and half years ago that I would be moving to Australia, it would have surprised me a bit, to say the least. I became interested in the work in my first year at school. Our world evangelism teacher, Brett Rutherford, and his family have been working in Tasmania for over 20 years. Brett mentioned something that caught my attention about the work in Australia: There are around 28,000,000 or so people in the country and only around 1800 Christians in the entire country. For reference, there are more Christians where I currently live in Knox County than there are in the entire country of Australia. This piqued my interest

in the work immediately, and from there doors began to open, and now on August the 8th, Lord willing, I will take a one-way trip to Tasmania and begin to work with Brett down under.

It is a very encouraging work and the potential is exciting. I was able to visit there at the beginning of this year and work for about a month, and I was greatly encouraged by what I saw. Brett has done a tremendous work, along with others, at the Mersey Bluff congregation. It is a lively, vibrant, and growing congregation! The brethren I met there, along with the brethren I met from all over the country, probably did more to encourage me than I did to them. They are some of the kindest, most sincere, and hard-working brethren I have ever come across. While I know the work in Australia will have its challenges, as do all works in the Lord's church, I also know that the Gospel is just as powerful today as it was on the day of Pentecost! I know that we serve a God who can do more than we can imagine (Ephesians 3:20). Therefore, I know the work will bear fruit, and I am encouraged and blessed to be able to partake in this wonderful and exciting work. Would you partake in the work with me please by praying for the work in Australia? **MM**



Sam Lawrence

Your servant in Christ,  
*Sam Lawrence*



# WORLD EVANGELISM & THE VOICE OF TRUTH

# International

The work at World Evangelism has continued since its start in 1962 with JC & Betty Choate (overseen by the Liberty church of Christ in Dennis, MS). The Choates saw a need for literature in the USA and foreign countries, not only for the edification of brethren, but for outreach to the lost. Thus, the printing of Bible study books, tracts, and *The Voice of Truth International* quarterly magazine began and have continued to be distributed all over the world.

Through the years, others have come along to volunteer with the work: Wayne & Janet Barrier (overseen by Double Springs church of Christ, AL); Louis & Martha Rushmore (Siwell Rd church of Christ, MS) – Louis is the editor for *The Voice of Truth International*; Jerry & Paula Bates (Strickland church of Christ, MS); Shane & Emily Fisher (Springer church of Christ, TN).

The Gospel has been taken to many countries around the world through radio, TV, Internet, massive distribution of literature, Bible schools, and campaigns abroad. *The Voice of Truth International* is the prominent facet and most recognized part of World Evangelism to American brethren. As of this writing, we are on issue #119. Over 50,000 copies in several languages are printed quarterly. This magazine is translated into three major languages and Braille in India, Nepali in Nepal, and Swahili for distribution in many countries in Africa. English editions go into many countries including the Philippines, Guyana, Nigeria, Ghana, and Zimbabwe. Brethren in these countries, as well as the States, use *The Voice of Truth* in evangelistic efforts and report that it helps greatly in reaching lost souls.

Other material is distributed by the thousands annually. Our little orange book, *The Church of the Bible* by JC Choate is among



Shane Fisher, Emily Fisher, Betty Choate, Paula Bates, Jerry Bates

the most used of the literature, continuing to be translated into various languages around the world. Recently, over 10,000 copies went into prisons in eight different provinces in Zimbabwe, Africa, and the brethren have reported numerous baptisms as a result. Brethren in northeast India have been using this book, as well as others such as

*New Testament Worship*, to reach their respective communities with the Truth despite the persecutions of Christians in this area.

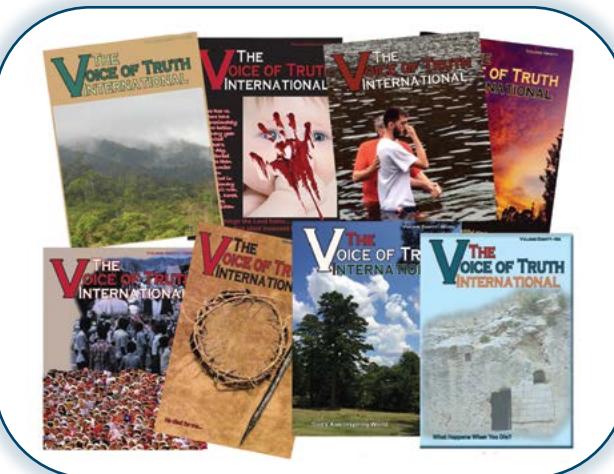
Funds, made possible by generous brethren here in the States, are sent regularly for the on-going TV/radio programs in India and Africa. These programs have the potential of reaching millions, and brethren provide the local churches' contact information for viewers to reach them in order to get free Bible correspondence courses, Bibles, and other literature.

Throughout the year, team members travel to several countries in southeast Asia, Africa, and South America to edify and encourage brethren by teaching and providing the resources to help evangelize their countrymen. We thank God for the opportunity and strength to do this work and appreciate all brethren and supporters who pray for the Gospel to continue to go into all the world. **MM**

For free, downloadable Bible literature, please visit:  
[worfdevangelismlibrary.org](http://worfdevangelismlibrary.org).

To order physical copies of books or tracts go to:  
[worfdevangelismmedia.com](http://worfdevangelismmedia.com).

If you would like to subscribe to *The Voice of Truth*, please call us at 662-283-1192 or email [worfdevangelism1962@gmail.com](mailto:worfdevangelism1962@gmail.com). Our office and warehouse of books is located in Winona, MS. Please come by for a visit!



# In the SPOTLIGHT

## Betty Choate

*I was speaking recently at the Huntsville congregation near Winona, Mississippi, when I looked out in the audience and immediately recognized Miss Betty Choate. She came along with her team of workers who had been sending out a large mailing that day.*

*Most missionaries, and all of Mississippi, know of the work of J.C. and Betty Choate. Over five decades she and J.C. helped establish churches in Pakistan and Sri Lanka, just off the southern tip of India. What better person could we honor in this special "World Mission" issue than Miss Betty Choate. We are proud to put this worthy woman "In the Spotlight." -dd*

### **The following was written by her friend Janet Barrier**

Betty Choate! What can I say? She's one of a kind. When we first met in the late 1970's J.C. was holding a Gospel meeting at the Pine Hill congregation, near our house. She always accompanied him wherever he went to preach or report on the work. She and J.C. stayed with us that week and helped to encourage us to do mission work by sitting for hours discussing the work and how we might be involved. I had always wanted to do mission work, but didn't know where to begin. Later, we traveled to their home in Winona, Mississippi, where we discussed plans to begin our work. Her amazing home was filled with relics of faraway places. My children and I couldn't believe the many carved, wooden elephants, strange looking objects sitting everywhere, thousands of books, a life sized mannequin of a woman in a Muslim burka, which scared the children, but intrigued them too. It was so exciting to see all of these things and made us all want to go where she had gone.

She would host a yearly gathering of missionaries for those who were interested in mission work. She prepared fabulous meals for everyone. The women would spend hours around the large kitchen table, sitting on stools, talking, learning to make chicken curry, and basmati rice, dhal, and of course chapatti. About 20 of us would then sit around a huge dining table, eat, and talk for hours. Her desserts were wonderful as well, especially the fruit pizza, cakes, or the freshly cut mangoes. She would take the women into another room and show us how to wrap a sari out of the many yards of silk she brought back from India and then we would show the men how we looked dressed as Indian women.

Several times she would prepare food for an entire congregation for those interested in mission work. She also fed the congregation when we were visiting with them in New Delhi. When in the states, she speaks to many ladies groups and everyone is amazed at her messages.

She was instrumental in the hosting of about 30 missionaries who met each month for 2 years in the World Evangelism Building in Winona, when we were planning the curriculum for World Evangelism School of Missions. The school classes are now used by the Heritage Christian University Missions Training Center that meets 6 times a year, where our son Joey Barrier is the director. Betty's "First Steps in Faith" is the first book he suggests that people read at the beginning of the school. She attends several times a year to hopefully find that one person who is really interested in mission work, hoping to inspire them to get involved.

The lessons learned from Betty over the years have been invaluable. **MM**



# Venezuela: UP CLOSE AND PERSONAL

**Venezuela: The Beautiful Land!**  
A country of lovely people, majestic mountains, stunning beaches, and verdant grasslands. A nice place to visit.

**Venezuela: The Tragic Land!**  
Currently in Venezuela . . .

\*Approximately 20-25% of the population have fled the country and many of them are professional people.

\*Of the 75-80% of the remaining population, 75% are malnourished. The children are victimized as well. The current rate is 51.4%. 4 years ago it was 700%. The average Venezuelan lost 25 lbs. last year.

\*There is a 75% shortage of medicines and medical supplies. Approximately 42,000 health workers-including doctors- have fled due to the economic crisis and miserable salaries.

**Venezuela: The "Rest of the 'Story"!**  
\*Several years ago now it was our pleasure to meet Cristian and Angelica Yovera. In Venezuela they had worked as civil engineers. When Jane and I learned that they were sending a small amount back to Venezuela, we asked if they would allow us to help. They graciously allowed us to do so. Consequently, to date we-and many others-have sent 60+ tons of food and other needed supplies. Most of the food goes to malnourished children. Also due to our relationship with Kingsway Medical Charity, we've sent \$1,000,000 (US RETAIL). GOD HAS DONE AMAZING THINGS!



**Venezuela: Want to Help?**  
Please contact me (706-207-9513/steverwatson8@gmail.com) and Jane or I will tell you how to make that happen. Remember this: Venezuela needs your help! Dios los bendiga! **MM**



# GROWING PHYSICALLY & SPIRITUALLY WITH *The Manna Project*

"It's a horrible thing when a man must stop preaching the Gospel. Yet, that's the case for many preachers overseas. The congregations are small and can't pay their wages. Then American support dries up. Now that man drives a taxi in town and the village is without a preacher or in some cases a church. Preachers and their families need to eat and have an income to survive. How do we fix this problem?"

That's where the Manna Project begins. Since 2010 they have been solving these issues around the world. They combine sound Biblical teaching with solid agriculture instruction to produce self-sufficient Christians. "Preachers in Africa shouldn't have to have American support to work for the Lord" says Gage Coldwater, founder and Director. Gage started the work in 2010 after teaching a class in Nepal. "The students would approach me daily saying their families were starving. I told them that was something I could help with."

"We have a great team of tireless workers that make all this possible. Justin Hopkins oversees our academics and the work in Tanzania while Gregg Knight oversees the work in Uganda. Josh Robinson works on all our media and travels the country giving reports on our efforts. Because of our experience, all of us regularly teach, preach, and farm as we travel overseas". Gage explains that each member of the project is a preacher and has a background in agriculture. They also each have special talents that enable the Manna Project to succeed where others sometimes struggle.

"We want to strengthen the brethren overseas, both physically and spiritually. We have preaching schools and resource centers to teach preachers and Christians how to produce the food they need to live." Gage goes on to state that, "From a Bible perspective, our preaching schools are full two-year programs modeled after a modified MSOP curriculum. Since 2010 we have trained dozens of men in Africa to preach, teach, and farm." Gage says the success

of the Bible programs is in keeping things native. "We have bush schools where we train street preachers. This means we keep our campus and curriculum focused on being as native and practical as possible. We never want to provide an environment or conditions that these students are unable to replicate when they return to their villages."

The Manna Project is in the process of expanding. In the past couple of years, they have added Resource Centers in Nepal and Kenya. They are also looking to begin work in Central America in

the near future. Gage talks about the importance of training Christians, not just preachers. "At our Resource Centers we offer short courses year-round to provide Christian growth and development. We want brethren to gain knowledge in Church leadership, how to handle issues and combat false doctrine and denominationalism. We also want to give them the tools they need to teach their neighbors." The Manna Project provides Bible classes, agriculture, and vocational training at their schools and Resource Centers.

"We are really blessed to have the opportunity to work with such great folks overseas and to have

an eldership here that encourages our growth." The Manna Project is overseen by the eldership at the Forest Hill church of Christ where Gage and his family attend. He also teaches mission classes at the Memphis School of Preaching. While based stateside, the members of the Manna Project travel around the world every few months to check on and maintain the works overseas. You are invited to check out their website to learn more about this great work. **MM**



# THE CHURCH IN ROME

by Dennis Doughty, editor

"To all the beloved of God in Rome, called as saints; Grace to you and peace from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ" (Romans 1:7).

During the early years of the New Testament church, the city of Rome was the center of the universe. Residents of Rome were in attendance during the day of Pentecost and most likely were among the some 3,000 who were baptized on that momentous occasion (Acts 2:10). Members of the church in Rome included close friends of Paul, Prisca and Aquila, as well as a long list of other members, several of whom were well known among the Apostles (Romans 16:3-15).

Now, two-thousand years later, what is the state of the church today in this ancient city?

In 2017, my dear friend, Steve Watson, and I spent five days in Rome during a trip to celebrate our fifty years of friendship. We would continue that trip to visit the ruins of Ephesus. One of the highlights of our days in Rome was to worship on the Lord's Day with a nearby congregation.

While the congregation was small, about 50-60 in attendance that morning, it was a joy to be worshiping with the church in this city some two thousand years after it was first established. The preacher that day was also one of the elders of the congregation.

He spoke in Italian, but his PowerPoint slides were also done in English, so it was possible to follow his general points. In the early church they did not have PowerPoint, but they did have the helpful spiritual gift of interpreting.

It was a joy for me to be asked to lead prayer during that service, and to partake of the Lord's Supper in the city where so many Christians gave their lives for their faith. We were told that there was also another congregation in different part of the city.

It was to the church in Rome that Paul pinned these familiar words, "Salute one another with holy kiss. All the churches of Christ greet you" (Romans 16:16). While small in a city of six million, the church Paul longed to visit, and in the city where he gave his life, is still there! **MM**



*Getting there a little early, we waited for the "Church Door" to be opened. It opened up into a nice courtyard and church entrance.*



*The church auditorium made use of every inch of space to seat those who came, including several visitors like us.*

## Prison Work in Hartselle, Tennessee

*This publication contributes to many good works. One thing I am proud of is how many prisoners receive The Magnolia Messenger. I hear from them from time to time. Here is a letter I recently received—dd*

Brother Dennis, While not a foreign mission, I would still like to recognize the prison missionary work of brother Tom Watson. Tom Watson is both the preacher and one of the three elders at the Philadelphia church of Christ in Lebanon, TN. He brings the truth to us here at Trousdale Turner Correctional Center each Tuesday morning, and Communion every other Sunday. In addition, brother Watson works with Tennessee Prison Outreach Ministry (T.P.O.M.) to teach "New Life Behavior" courses here. In his younger years, brother Watson and his family spent several years doing missionary work in Cameroon, Africa.

In our prison chapel, one can be misled by many denominations, and lied to by false religions. It is nice to know that brother Watson brings the Truth on Tuesday mornings. Let us pray he is allowed to bring us Communion every Sunday as we are instructed. **MM**

In Christ,  
**Clyde Ray Bradford, Jr.**  
#506338

TTCC HY-CB-120  
140 Macon Way, Hartselle, TN 37074



*Magnolia Bible School Students, Keith Wilson, class of 1988 and Winfred Frazier class of 1989 reunite at a Gospel meeting in south Mississippi after years of service preaching the Gospel.*

# *A Song for Harding School of Theology*

## AS WE BID FAREWELL TO THE MEMPHIS CAMPUS

Harding School of Theology's campus rang with hymn harmony on June 13, 2024, as friends, faculty, and students joined the last chapel service to be held on its Memphis, Tennessee, campus. The school is relocating to Harding University's Searcy, Arkansas, campus in August. Dr. Leon Sanderson, who holds two degrees from the school, led a series of songs including "Be Not Dismayed Whate're Betide," "The Precious Book Divine," and "Doxology". The chapel's wood, plaster, and high ceiling provide ideal acoustics for a cappella singing.

The final chapel service at Harding School of Theology in Memphis was an occasion to honor its 66-year history in Tennessee and anticipate the school's next chapter. Classrooms and faculty offices are being prepared for fall classes in the Jim Bill McIntee Bible and World Mission Center on Harding University's campus. Space for the school's extensive theological library is being prepared in a separate structure near the classrooms.

Dr. Sanderson concluded the chapel service with Harding School of Theology's alma mater, a song for which he wrote the music many years ago. The alma mater's opening line, "Near the banks of the river," provides the title for a recently published book on the history of the school: *Near the Banks of the River: Celebrating Harding School of Theology in Memphis* is edited by Dr. Mark Powell and Dr. Steve Cloer, with contributions from alumni on the impact of the school in theological education, ministerial leadership, and

missions. Copies of the book are available for purchase on Amazon.com.

Mark Powell is Dean and Professor of Theology at Harding School of Theology. "For 66 years, the mansion chapel has been a space devoted to the worship of God. It was good to see so many alumni and supporters join faculty, staff, and current students

for this special Farewell Chapel. Our prayer is that God will continue to work in and through the school as it transitions to Searcy."

HST graduate, Angela Rusk, commented, "I am thankful to have had the opportunity to meet with colleagues and mentors in the place that God used to profoundly impact our lives and ministries. Chapel was a place where I could almost feel the presence of the great cloud of witnesses of the many who had gone before me. It was a blessing to come together to worship our Lord who remains constant throughout change, who redeems our struggles, and who gives us hope for the future."

Advancement Director Greg Muse will remain in his role for Harding School of Theology

after the move to Searcy. Regarding the transition, he said, "The school's mission remains the same. Harding School of Theology will continue to prepare graduates for Christian service, both locally and around the globe."

Visit [Harding.edu/HST](https://Harding.edu/HST) for news about the move, degree programs, and opportunities to support the school's mission. **MM**



*In each issue this year we want to highlight one of our great schools of Preaching:*



**Bear Valley Bible Institute**  
INTERNATIONAL

Bear Valley Bible Institute  
2707 S. Lamar St.  
Denver CO 80227

Director: Denny Petrillo  
Current Enrollment: 33  
Contact Office: 303.986.5800

## “ON THE ROAD AGAIN” with the Editor

# Polishing The Pulpit goes to Branson

## PTP Inaugural Event West of the Mississippi

The Bible lectureship known as “Polishing the Pulpit” has long been one of the largest gatherings of Christian families in our brotherhood. The annual meeting in the Smokey mountains of Sevierville, Tennessee, has drawn over five thousand annually to a weeklong spiritual feast of study and fellowship. With an overflowing convention center, it was time to expand this great event and offer it to audiences west of the Mississippi.

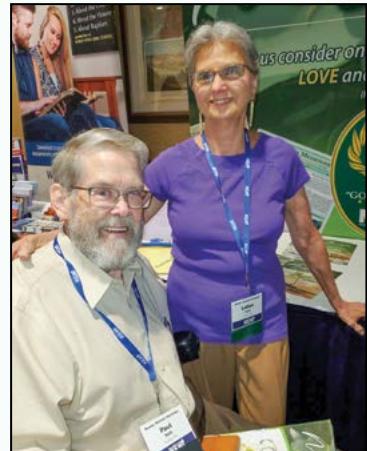
This time, to the Ozark mountains of Branson, where an inaugural PTP lectureship was held July 10-15th. Branson is a tourist city and well known for its family environment of entertainment and recreation.

It was held in the mountain top Chateau Hotel and Convention Center. As with the Tennessee event, Bible lectures and youth camps provided spiritual enrichment for all ages. A wide selection of preachers was invited to share God’s word, in addition to inspiring youth programs and women’s classes. All these happening together in a weeklong blend of worship and Bible study in a vacation environment.

I was excited to attend this inaugural event to promote and grow *The Magnolia Messenger* to those on the other side of the Mississippi river. This event drew many from Arkansas, Texas, Missouri, Oklahoma, and Wyoming. It was good to talk to many of the estimated 2,000 Christians who passed by our display each day.

This event has already been booked for next year, at an even larger convention center. The original event in Sevierville was held with continued great success in August and has no plans to leave this successful location. **MM**

Paul and LaDon Sain stopped by our display with some nice comments about the Messenger. He owns Sain Publications which offers many excellent brotherhood books and material.



Chateau Hotel and Convention Center



Dan Winkler speaking in the Great Hall of the convention center.



Every one went to the tree in the middle of the hotel to register.



# BE NOT WEARY IN DOING WELL

# Work the Fields

by Dale Jenkins, Minister

*The Jenkins Institute*

“...let us not grow weary of doing good” (Galatians 6:9). I’m thankful for this verse. Obviously, it is a danger that one might grow weary even in doing well or else the injunction would not be in the text. So, we know it might be easy to be weary or wearied in certain areas of doing well. Sometimes, because as we age, it is easy to lose focus. Sometimes the work seems unending. At times we do not see the fruit of our labor. We see our work misunderstood, unappreciated, and misappropriated. Our motives might be questioned. And sometimes we just get tired. Each of these might cause us to be weary.

Over the years of ministry, I have found the prime areas people grow weary in are benevolent help where it never seems to end, and we often feel used and/or lied to. Add to this, Bible class teaching where it seems they asked you to teach a quarter and then locked the door and threw away the key, and that was 20 years ago.

But few, if any, areas of our work in the Kingdom can be as wearying as that of funding, supporting, and aiding in mission work. Let me explain. I know the issues.

1. There are bad missionaries and bad people in mission points. But remember, it is the non-sequitur that gets the headline. We naturally hear about the one who mismanages funds, the one who is lazy, the one who is on the dole. That story gets passed

around and before long what is a handful seems like everyone. You know “dog bites man” does not get any ink but “man bites dog” is front page stuff. More than one congregation, leadership, individual has become jaded and thrown in the towel of feeling good about supporting any work. There are many worthy works out there that need you and your congregation’s help.

2. It is easy to become disconnected. A little over 10 years ago I started supporting an impressive young man who I felt would do great work. I met him one time and had him in a class in



Dale and Jeff in Belize



## Memorial & Honor Giving

Honor the life and/or memory of a loved one by giving to the Magnolia Messenger.

**In Memory of:**

**In Honor of:**

Send Acknowledgment to:

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

City/State/Zip \_\_\_\_\_

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

City/State/Zip \_\_\_\_\_

Phone \_\_\_\_\_

Congregation \_\_\_\_\_

E-mail \_\_\_\_\_

Tanzania that I taught. When I began to help with his work, I all but commanded two things in return for that help. First, that he be transparent and if/as he got other help from a financial standpoint, he let me know. And second, that EVERY month he sends me a direct message telling a little about how his month had gone and any news he wanted to share. I did not want to feel like an ATM, and I wanted to stay involved in where I was sending the money the Lord has entrusted to me.

3. There legitimately is no end to the request and need: I believe you could send support every day to a missionary in India, Africa, or the Philippians and never run out of works worthy to encourage. It is wonderful the work being done around the world, and it is likely that the church is growing more rapidly today than at any time in history, BUT it can get wearying trying to determine which to help and which must be passed on.

Into all of this mix God throws in this simple injunction: "And let us not grow weary of doing good, for in due season we will reap, if we do not give up. So then, as we have opportunity, let us do good to everyone, and especially to those who are of the household of

*"But few, if any, areas of our work in the Kingdom can be as wearying as that of funding, supporting, and aiding in mission work."*

calloused (everyone is a crook, so I will not help anyone). A few things to think about this:

Beware of the person who is "too smooth;" Be cautious about EVER sending money to someone who is shady with details about their work; Ask questions; Take your time.

3. While there are some dishonest people in other countries who will deceive and take your money and then not do the work, the fact is just as true in the states. Guard your heart. Do not let getting burned (even multiple times), keep you from supporting others. Remember this is all about the Great Commission (Matthew 28; Mark 16; Luke 24). Souls are at stake. When discouraged remember, souls are at stake.

4. Remember, we all make mistakes. We would do well to give grace. A report was not sent, an innocent mistake was made in accounting, how to handle a difficult situation. The reality is, you may be dealing with a young man, or a new convert on the mission field. And remember, we ALL mess up from time to time.

5. Often a little can go a long way: I have regularly "dipped my toe" into a work before I am ready to go all in on it. Little gifts are significant in any work of God.

6. The wonderful news is that there are so very many who help in God's good works that our brothers and sisters see to it that MUCH good is done. Never feel like you are alone in this.

7. Known works are wonderful BUT they had to start at zero in order to do the good works that makes them worthwhile. So, while I hope you will support some works you know well, I also hope you will not totally shy away from a work just because it is new, or you do not know as much about it. There are many, many good servants out there.

May God bless you as you encourage good works with the blessing God has given you! If The Jenkins Institute can ever help you in learning more about a work or with an onsite visit to see and encourage a work you are currently involved with, let us know.

Finally: "..the grace of God has appeared, bringing salvation for all people, training us to renounce ungodliness and worldly passions, and to live self-controlled, upright, and godly lives in the present age, waiting for our blessed hope, the appearing of the glory of our great God and Savior Jesus Christ, who gave Himself for us to redeem us from all lawlessness and to purify for Himself a people for His own possession who are zealous for good works. Declare these things, exhort and rebuke with all authority.

Let no one disregard you. Remind them to be submissive to rulers and authorities, to be obedient, to be ready for every good work..." (Titus 2:11-3:1). **MM**



Supporting the work in India

faith" (Galatians 6:9-10).

These thoughts are not LAUNCHED toward anyone or any work but are general observations over time and especially as Jeff and I have visited over 20 countries and multiple works in a few of those places over the last three years.

1. Mission Work can be done without support. Money, by its very nature, has a corrupting influence. The money we give to mission efforts should serve to progress the Gospel. It should support adequately those who are presenting and promoting the Truth of God's glorious Message. The godly approach is generosity.

2. It is relatively early, and we are all still learning to navigate social media and mission work: The ability to send "friend requests" over social media has increased the opportunity for those who may be dishonest. I am sure I am not the only person who feels that three "communications" with a "brother" from a handful of countries will ask for support of their work. This can cause those who wish to do good to feel either guilt (I should help everyone) or

Dale Jenkins, [TJI@TheJenkinsInstitute.com](mailto:TJI@TheJenkinsInstitute.com),

# Visiting among Churches in north Mississippi

By Eddie Lewis, Missionary to North Mississippi, 9423 Laurel Hill, Olive Branch, MS 38654. E-mail: lewis7946@gmail.com



of MBC and has preached at Greenville for 8 years. We enjoyed visiting the brethren and hearing bro. Stanley speak. His lesson was on the church as the Bride of Christ.



Stanley and Averill Williams

## May through August 2024

by Eddie Lewis

**We appreciate so much the opportunity to inform you about our mission work among the churches in North Mississippi and our ministry at the Christian Student Center at Mississippi Delta Community College. We appreciate the Germantown church of Christ sponsoring us in our North Mississippi ministry. Several individuals and churches support us in our work at the CSC. This report covers thirteen Sundays from May through July 2024. I continue to preach one Sunday each month for the Coffeeville, Indiana, and Crockett churches of Christ. All these churches continue to look for a full-time minister. Please pray for them.**

granddaughters who attend church there, and I have both my grandsons there.

**May 19:** I was invited to preach for the Indianola church of Christ. Jason Zuehlke continues to serve as their interim minister. I appreciate so much his work with the congregation. They have no elders and around 30 in attendance. Please remember them in your prayers. In Bible Class, we continued our study of 1 Thessalonians. We looked at chapter 2. Paul, in the first twelve verses gives us an example of what it takes to be a shepherd, to grow and nurture a church. In the worship, I preached on "Learning to be a Giver, not a Getter." Sunday night I preached about "Humility." It was a good day, and we had a good visit with old friends..

**May 26:** I was invited to preach for the Coffeeville church of Christ. They continue to search for a full-time minister. They have no elders and about 40 in attendance. Please pray for them. In the worship service, I presented the lesson, "Learning to be a Giver, not a Getter." Paul gave this principle in Acts 20 to the Ephesian elders as he visited with them on his return trip to Jerusalem. The other Beatitude is, "It is more blessed to give than receive." We reap what we sow, so we need to be sowing to the spirit.

**May 28:** We attended a meeting at the Roosevelt Street church of Christ in Indianola. The guest speaker was bro. Stanley Williams of the Southside church in Greenville. He is a graduate

**May 5, 12:** Madolyn and I were in Nashville for my granddaughter's graduation from Pharmacy school, Dr. Talley Weeks, and Mother's Day. On both Sundays, we visited with Brentwood Hills church of Christ. They celebrated their graduating seniors one Sunday



Eddie and Walt Leaver, Brentwood Hills

and Mother's Day the second. We were able to be at church with both our families. Madolyn has a daughter and three

**June 2:** I was invited to preach for the Crockett church of Christ near Senatobia, Mississippi. They are looking for a full-time minister. They have no elders and around 25 in attendance. It is an older congregation. Please pray for them. In the Bible Class, I presented a lesson on "God's Resources to Help Us in Trials," based on 1 Thessalonians 2:13-20. In the worship, I preached on "Decoding the Mystery," based on Ephesians 3:1-13. We enjoyed our visit with the good folks at Crockett.

**June 5:** I was invited to speak at a luncheon for seniors at the 7th and Mueller church of Christ in Paragould, Arkansas. Madolyn and I enjoyed visiting with the senior members. I preached there from 1973-78. It was special for me to see some old friends and for Madolyn to meet them. I told them about the ministries that we are involved in. I encouraged them to take care of themselves and continue to serve God as best they could.

**June 23:** We visited with the Enterprise church of Christ in Myrtle, Mississippi. Jay Tidwell is the bi-vocational minister there.



Jalema and Jay Tidwell

He is a lawyer and has preached for the congregation for around 20 years. He received his training at MSOP. The congregation is a young group with an active Lads to Leaders program. They have around 40 in attendance and no elders. We enjoyed visiting with the congregation. After the services, we

enjoyed eating with Jay and his family. Jay had two wonderful lessons. In Bible class, he looked at "Forgiveness." In the worship, He looked at the life of Peter in Acts. He noted the change that took place in Peter as he became one of the leaders of the church.

**July 7:** I was invited to speak at the Crockett church of Christ. They continue to look for a full-time minister. They have around 30 in attendance and no elders. I have been preaching there once a month as they search. The congregation is mainly made up of older Christians. They need our support and prayers. In Bible class, we have been studying 1 Thessalonians. This week we were in chapter 3. Paul did three things to help the church. In the worship, I preached on the second prayer that Paul offers on behalf of the Ephesian church found in chapter 3. He has four petitions: for their strength, depth, comprehension, and fullness. We enjoyed our visit.

**July 14:** Madolyn and I visited the Southside church of Christ in Grenada, Mississippi. Ben McAnally is the minister there. He is a graduate of FHU and has done wonderful work with the congregation. The church has two



Charlie- Ben- Anna Reid and Slon McAnally

elders and around 80 in attendance. We were able to eat and visit with Ben and Anna Reid and their boys after the service. We enjoyed getting to meet them and visiting with them. In the Bible class, they are studying 2 Corinthians 4. The emphasis was on understanding gratitude. There is a fine line between frustration and faith. In the worship, Ben began a series on the parables. He looked at Matthew 18: 21-35, the parable of "The Unmerciful Servant." The point is, that we must practice mercy. It was great seeing old friends and wor-

shiping with the congregation.

Sunday night we visited the West President church of Christ in Greenwood, Mississippi. Luke Quinn is the minister there. We always enjoy visiting with old friends there. They have four elders and around 60 in attendance. Luke presented an interesting lesson on conflict in our lives and how that leads us to greater love and commitment. It was great seeing everyone.



Gibson Family

**July 28:** Madolyn's family was in Olive Branch to celebrate her birthday. Her birthday is September 28th, but we are celebrating early because this is a special year and so that all her family could be here. It was a wonderful weekend of fun and food. It's been a while since all the children and grandchildren could be together. All the family were able to attend worship service with us at Germantown.

**Update on the CSC:** School is out for the summer. We attended four Freshman Orientations this summer. The first was Wednesday, May 29, and the last was July 11. Each session a good number of



Orientation 5-29-2024

students came. We handed out literature on the CSC and gave them Cuties and candy as a sweet treat. It is always exciting to see new students and contact them and their parents.

As I look back on this school year, we have had great success in sowing the

seed of the Gospel among the students at MDCC. We have had some of our best numbers in attendance this year at our Wednesday Night Bible Studies. What a blessing to average over 40 students at each study in the fall and 25 in the spring. All these students are not members of the church. They come to us with a desire to learn more about God's word, and we open our Bibles and read and study what the text is teaching us.

The students seem to love it and keep coming back. I'm sure that one of our assets is having Ms. Madolyn hug them and make each of them feel so loved and appreciated. Some of these students will be going on to four-year universities, and we contact the CSC at these schools to pass along their information and pray that they will continue to seek to know more about Christ and His love for them. We have enjoyed a blessed year.

We are excited to announce that at the board meeting on July 12, they approved the selection of Cory and Mary Ashley Ramsey as the new directors of the CSC at MDCC. Mary Ashley is Madolyn's granddaughter. She has grown up hearing about the ministry there.

Both are graduates of Lipscomb University. Cory has a Masters in Conflict Resolution. They are very excited about the



Mary Ashley, Rhett, Aria, and Cory Ramsey

ministry at the CSC. When they learned about the opening at the CSC, they approached us about the work and their desire to do an evangelistic ministry. We are so excited for them and their talents and abilities to carry on the work. They have asked us to mentor them this year, which we are happy to do. The focus and ultimate goal in this work is leading the students to Christ.

MM

# I Must be about MY FATHER'S BUSINESS

In Luke 2:41-52, we get a glimpse into the young life of Jesus. At the age of 12, Jesus decides to stay in Jerusalem on their journey home from the Passover feast. After traveling, Mary and Joseph realized that Jesus was not with them. They return to Jerusalem to find Him. When they find Jesus, He is in the temple. Any parent would ask their son the same question: "Why would you scare us like that?" His response in Luke 2:49 is, "I must be about my Father's business." Jesus was expressing His awareness of His unique relationship with God. Referring to God as "my Father" highlights His recognition of His divine sonship. Also, even at a young age, He recognized that His life had a special purpose aligned with God's will.

Young people, for those of us today who are Christians, we should be saying that we are "to be about our Father's business." But what does it look like? I will be honest with you: when I was a teenager, and I heard someone say we were to be about "our Father's business", I would nod my head yes, but in my heart, I had no clue what they

were talking about. I would go to passages like Matthew 28:18-20, where the Great Commission tells me to go into all the world. That seemed unobtainable for me as a young man. That is not true when we look at the smaller picture. Now that I am older, I understand better what it means to be about "our father's business." I want you to understand it now, so here are three things I believe we can apply to our lives that show us to be about "our Father's business."

## 1. Consider spiritual growth as being about our Father's business.

We do this by prioritizing time for prayer and studying the Bible regularly to deepen our understanding of God's word. We must actively participate in church services and activities directed to grow the youth groups.

## 2. How about living out the Christian values that we learn?

We show kindness, compassion, and empathy to others, reflecting the love of Christ in our interactions at school, at home,

## Youth & Family

by Greg Ledbetter

North Brandon Church of Christ



and in the community. We have integrity and honesty in all situations, even when it's challenging, demonstrating the moral standards taught by Jesus.

## 3. When talking about our Father's business, we make ethical choices.

We are making choices that align with our faith, whether in our relationships, media consumption, or personal habits, seeking to honor God in all areas of life.

So, I am saying that for us to be "about our Father's business" today means integrating our faith into every aspect of our lives, making conscious decisions to follow Jesus's teachings, serving others, and growing in their relationship with God. It involves a commitment to live out Christian values faithfully and courageously in a world that often challenges their faith. We see these challenges more now than we have in a very long time. Being about "our Father's business" requires us to wake up each day with the mindset we are doing the Lord's work. May God bless you as you navigate life doing his work. **MM**

# Eastern Kenya

by Carl Burkybile  
Caring for Kenya Director

NGO Caring for Kenya works in the Kitui District of eastern Kenya. The sponsoring congregation is Philo Road church of Christ at Urbana, Illinois. We work with 6 congregations and train preachers.

We began 25 years ago working with Erastus Kavuti who said, "We want to be known as the church that cares." We have drilled water wells, taught people how to improve their food production with composting, raised planting beds, and drip



irrigation, provided medical supplies, and sponsored the secondary school education of aids, orphans, and students from poor families. While we have provided food aid at times of famine, our goals are long term to equip and empower the people in the name of Jesus Christ. Following Jesus's instructions in Matthew 25, we have sought to meet physical needs as a way of creating opportunities to meet spiritual needs. To date we have trained 12 preachers, educated 450 students, taught survival gardening to 600 farmers, provided medical supplies to two hospitals and two medical clinics, and drilled 10 water wells in partnership with Healing Hands International, and Rotary Clubs.

Caring for Kenya Director, Carl Burkybile, works with board



members to arrange an annual mission trip to Kenya. As we meet with Kenyan leaders,

we listen, teach, and plan for the future. As described in Philippians 1:3-6 we consider ourselves as partners in the Gospel with the Kenyans as we strive to bring people to Christ. **MM**

# The MAGNOLIA MESSENGERS / PREACHER SEARCH

## MIAMI FLORIDA CHURCH OF CHRIST

Looking for a Preacher, here in Miami Florida congregation of 30 to 45 members suffering the passing of our own preacher recently. **Please feel free to contact. Onofre Barrientos 305 951 8077.**

## THE CALLAHAN CHURCH OF CHRIST

in Callahan, Florida is seeking a full-time minister with a strong faith, who is doctrinally sound. Our congregation has approximately 55 members, led by a Christ-centered group of men. We wish to partner with an energetic servant of Christ in the work of the church. Our preference would be a married/family man but it is not required. Candidates with experience and advanced Theological/Biblical training will be preferred.

Primary duties will include preaching on Sunday mornings and Sunday nights, along with teaching adult bible classes on Sunday mornings and Wednesday nights. Other duties will include ministering to the sick and shut-in of the congregation, writing articles for the bulletin, preparing weekly bulletin as needed, and maintaining weekly office hours.

**Please email an up-to-date resume along with a link to recent sermons and classes taught to preachersearch@callahanchurch.org**

## VANCEAVE CHURCH OF CHRIST

Is a small congregation of about 50-60 regular members, meeting in the small town of Vancleave in coastal Mississippi. We are currently led by three elders along with two deacons. Vancleave is a growing and safe community that we feel provides great opportunity for growth. If you are interested in serving with us, please send your resume and, if possible, two audio or video sermons to: **Vancleave church of Christ , 11101 Hwy 57**

Vancleave, MS 39565

Or email it to: **vcocomministry@vancleavemschurch.org**

## COFFEEVILLE CHURCH OF CHRIST

A congregation of 45-50 members. Salary based on experience. House is provided.

**John Allen 662-473-8702**

**Jim Peters 662-675-8623**

## THE CHRISTOPHER CHURCH OF CHRIST

Is seeking a minister for a congregation of about 33 members, located in southern Illinois. Salary is \$36,000 per year.

Please send resume to **jurbanmail@gmail.com** or call George Marshall at (618) 218-1401.

## INDIANOLA CHURCH OF CHRIST

We are searching for a new full-time minister. We have office space in the building and a 3-bedroom 2-bath house within city limits.

**IndianolaMScoC@gmail.com**

**662-887-4025 - church building**

**662-207-9843 - Jason Zuehlke**

## THE CLARKE COUNTY CHURCH OF CHRIST

is seeking a minister in Athens, located 70 miles from Atlanta. **For more information, visit clarkcountycoc.org.**

## DEGAULLE DRIVE CHURCH OF CHRIST

4700 Degaulle Dr. Algiers, La. 70131, Looking for a sound, energetic, evangelistically minded gospel preacher. salary dependant upon experience. approx. 60 members. **Wesley Arabie 504-858-2881**

**aascreenglass@bellsouth.net**

## THE EUPORA CHURCH OF CHRIST

Eupora, MS, is looking for a full-time preacher. We have approximately 42-51 that attend. We have a preacher's home.

**huntpe@yahoo.com or text/call Paul Hunt 662-634-1651. However, I do prefer text messages.**

## MERIDIAN CHURCH OF CHRIST

The Meridian church of Christ, located in Meridian, MS, is in search of a full-time minister. **E-mail Andy Duncan (Elder), hadunca62@gmail.com Tom Fair(Elder),htfair1@gmail.com**

## ROCKY CREEK CHURCH OF CHRIST

Youth Minister Search. Contact: Rocky Creek Church of Christ in George County. **Stan James Email: Stan-james4him@gmail.com**

## THE FARMERVILLE CHURCH OF CHRIST

is searching for a full-time Gospel minister. The compensation package includes a 4-bedroom/2-bath, unfurnished home if desired.

**Chris at: fvcocf@outlook.com • (fvcocf.org)**

**Farmerville Church of Christ, 306 East Franklin Street, Farmerville, Louisiana 71241**

## THE CORNERSTONE CHURCH OF CHRIST

in Baton Rouge, LA, is looking to grow its Youth Ministry. If you are humble, spiritual, and scriptural, we may be a good fit. **Please contact George Myer 225-229-5830**

## ACADIANA CHURCH OF CHRIST

Looking for a part-time preacher in Lafayette, LA. We are a congregation of around 50 members. If you are interested,

**contact us at office@acadiana.church.**

**Roger G McCafferty Email: grmccaf@cox.net**

## DEFUNIAK SPRINGS COLLEGE AVE. CHURCH OF CHRIST

is looking for a replacement in the pulpit.

**Contact: Mack Moore 850-892-5376 or email**

## WELSH CHURCH OF CHRIST

Welsh, La. SWLA . Seeking a qualified Minister.

**Contact info: Lewis 573.703.1243, Jerry 337.496.8992 Orise 337.458.2603.**

## KINDER CHURCH OF CHRIST

We are looking for a sound, full-time preacher, married, energetic, willing to work with children of all ages, and be active in the community. We are a congregation of just under 40 members. We have 2 elders and 2 deacons. Kinder, Louisiana, 413 2 second Street. **Please email resume and references to Sbm eaves@yahoo.com or call Seth Eaves 337-302-4070**

## THE CHURCH OF CHRIST

In New Jersey is actively seeking a full-time minister. Approximately 125 diverse members led by elders and deacons. The primary responsibilities include preaching, teaching class, evangelizing in the community, and ministering to the family. **The Compensation includes housing. ttcocpreachersearch@gmail.com.**

## RUSTON CHURCH OF CHRIST

The Ruston Church of Christ in Ruston, LA, is looking for an enthusiastic disciple maker that has a passion for teaching and evangelism. We have 140 members and 5 elders. **Contact: George Johnson (318)-255-0417**

## CHURCH OF CHRIST IN SAYRE

On the border of New York and Pennsylvania, the Church of Christ in Sayre, PA, is entering its tenth year. We are looking for a sound, loving minister of the Gospel to take this church into the next phase of growth.

**Contact Arthur Barry - arbry21@gmail.com**

**Evangelist at Valley Cities church of Christ Sayre, PA 607 280 1732**

## JOHNSON GROVE CHURCH OF CHRIST

The Johnson Grove Church of Christ in Bogue Chitto, Mississippi, is actively seeking to employ a full-time Associate/Youth minister but could be open to a bi-vocational person under the right circumstances. The primary focus will be ministering to our youth group of 20+ young people. **please email:**

**Andrew Redd (Elder) aredd5268@gmail.com**

**Douglas Kimble (Minister) dkpreach@bellsouth.net**

## WINONA CHURCH OF CHRIST

Is currently seeking out a qualified individual to fill the role of outreach minister. Responsibilities include, but are not completely limited to, planning, organizing, and coordinating church events designed to draw interest to the congregation. **Contact Brad Gray 662-801-0437 coachgray8@gmail.com**

## OXON HILL CHURCH OF CHRIST

is searching for a full-time minister. We have 50+ members. The position requires someone who is sound in biblical knowledge and has excellent communication and writing skills.

**Contact: 1oxonhillcoc@gmail.com, or mail to Oxon Hill Church of Christ at 4201 Brinkley Road, Temple Hills, MD 20748.**

## MANKATO CHURCH OF CHRIST

is seeking mission-minded Christians in Minnesota. At this time, we are seeking part-time preachers, teachers, and general volunteers as we work to build a vocational ministry, starting with the focus in the city of Mankato, MN. **Mankato Church of Christ <mankatochurchofchrist@gmail.com>**

## MEIGG STREET CHURCH OF CHRIST

a congregation of approximately 50 active members and located in Corinth, Ms, is seeking a full-time minister to fill the position of current minister. **Submit resume and a video/audio of a sermon to Meigg Street Church of Christ; P.O. Box 47, Corinth, MS 38834 by December 28, 2023. Paul Waddle: (662) 523-5708**

## IUKA CHURCH OF CHRIST

We looking for a full-time minister for about 90-100 members. We have 3 Elders and 2 deacons. We are located in Iuka MS, which is in northeast MS close to Pickwick Lake. We have recently become involved in the House to House evangelism program and are looking for a preacher that is interested in local evangelism.

**Contact-Dwight Pharr (662) 427-0076 pharhouse@att.net**

## GEOGETOWN (SC) CHURCH OF CHRIST

seeking experienced minister. 100 member congregation with elders. Send resume with references, including training with recent video sermons, by email or mail to Preacher Search Committee, **Georgetown Church of Christ, P.O. Box 250, Georgetown, SC 29442 Email: GeorgetownCofCSearch@gmail.com**

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by Dennis Doughty

# "INSCRIPTIONS"

## Our Worldwide Challenge

When Jesus said "Go into all the World and preach the Gospel," it was an amazing challenge to his 12 Apostles, who had no missionary or preaching experience. Having gone around the world on several mission trips, I can say that world evangelism remains a difficult challenge. International travel today, especially to some parts of the country, is stressful and can be dangerous. The constant security checks, the long lines and packed airplanes and delays wear upon one physically and mentally. Add to this language, culture barriers, and fund raising, you have a real task on your hands.

But it is nothing compared to what the Apostle Paul faced. He was beaten more times than he could remember and stoned once. Three times the ship he was on sank. He was thrown into prison several times. He faced many dangers on the roads he traveled. He went without food and water for days and endured many a sleepless night. He faced fierce opposition to his teachings from Jews and Gentiles alike (2 Corinthians 12:23-29).

But he, and his dedicated group of followers, got the job done. They spread the Gospel, establishing congregations in every major city of the known world. Paul said the Gospel had come to Colossea "just as in all the world" (Colossians 1:6). Today the work lives on, and our worldwide challenge continues.

## "Into all the World"

Jesus gave His disciples the challenge to "Go into all the world and preach the gospel" (Mark. 16:15). After the Day of Pentecost, the gospel message spread like wildfire across "Jerusalem, Judea, and Samaria, even to the remotest part of the earth" (Acts 1:8). As the 12 Apostles spread out, and the early Christians "went everywhere preaching the word" (Acts 8:4), it wasn't long before Christ's message of Salvation had "turned the world upside down" (Acts. 17:6).

Thirty years after Jesus gave His Great Commission, the Apostle Paul wrote to the Colossians and stated that the gospel had come to "all the world, also it is constantly bearing fruit and increasing." He went on to say that the Gospel which they had heard, "was proclaimed in all creation under heaven" (Colossians 1:6, 23).

With no mass media, with no planes or trains, and under resistance and persecution, they changed the world. They never wavered, never became discouraged, and never gave up. They lived for, and died for, their faith in Jesus and His resurrection. I can say that post-World War 2, the Lord's church again spread the gospel across the world, from India, Singapore, and Korea, from Canada, Mexico, and yes, even in America, the Gospel message is "bearing fruit and increasing." **MM**

"If you would like to receive Dennis' weekly "Inscriptions;" column drop him a note at dennis1848@bellsouth.net."

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 377. Charlotte Slayton  
 378. Jason, Shane & Maverick French  
 379. Kurt Pfaff  
 380. Lorenzo Carter  
 381. Marie Lively



**BIBLE WINNER**  
Jimmy Dillinger  
Baldwyn, MS

South Huntington Street  
Church of Christ  
P. O. Box 1578  
Kosciusko, Mississippi 39090

## Question Box - September 2024

# Paul's Missionary Journeys

*The Apostle Paul's missionary journeys took place over several years and covered regions along the Mediterranean Sea. His goal was to "win obedience from the Gentiles" and bring them to "the obedience of faith". Paul's journeys are described in Acts 13–20, and here's an outline of his three main journeys:*

### 1st Journey:

(Acts 13–14) Paul and Barnabas were called by the Holy Spirit to spread the Gospel, and they traveled to Cyprus, Antioch in Pisidia, Iconium, Lystra, and Derbe. They preached in synagogues about Jesus Christ as the fulfillment of Old Testament promises.

### 2nd Journey

(Acts 15:36–18:22) Paul's travels took him to Phrygia, Galatia, Macedonia, Thessalonica, Berea, Athens, Corinth, Ephesus, and Caesarea. (Acts 18:23–21:14) Paul traveled to Ephesus, Macedonia, Greece, and Troas before returning to Asia Minor.

### 3rd Journey

(Acts 18:23–21:14) Paul traveled to Ephesus, Macedonia, Greece, and Troas before returning to Asia Minor.

### Question Box answers for June MM 2024

#### "Jesus Taught Absolute Truth"

1. True; way, truth, John 14:6	6. False
2. True, truth, voice, John 18:37	7. True, joined, asunder, Matthew 19:6
3. True, word, truth, John 17:17	8. False
4. False	9. True, ye, teach, baptizing, Matt.28:19
5. True, male, female, Matthew 19:4	10. False

### Match the following:

<input type="text"/> 1. First island stop in 1st journey	<input type="text"/> a. Elymas the sorcerer
<input type="text"/> 2. 2nd journey who joined Paul and Silas	<input type="text"/> b. Gathered to break bread
<input type="text"/> 3. Value of magic books burned	<input type="text"/> c. Acts 15:36–18:22
<input type="text"/> 4. Ephesus on 3rd journey	<input type="text"/> d. Philippi
<input type="text"/> 5. Paul's First Missionary Journey	<input type="text"/> e. Lydia, seller of purple
<input type="text"/> 6. Troas, first day of the week	<input type="text"/> f. Barnabas
<input type="text"/> 7. Paul's Third Missionary Journey	<input type="text"/> g. Cyprus
<input type="text"/> 8. City on 1st journey where Paul was called Hermes	<input type="text"/> h. David, the son of Jesse
<input type="text"/> 9. Demetrius	<input type="text"/> i. Acts 13-14
<input type="text"/> 10. The jailer was baptized at	<input type="text"/> j. School of Tyrannus
<input type="text"/> 11. Paul's Second Missionary Journey	<input type="text"/> k. Made silver shrines to the great goddess Diana
<input type="text"/> 12. Jesus is from this man's seed	<input type="text"/> l. Fifty thousand pieces of silver
<input type="text"/> 13. Baptized at Philippi	<input type="text"/> m. Acts 18:23–21:14
<input type="text"/> 14. He was blinded by Paul 1st journey	<input type="text"/> n. Timothy
<input type="text"/> 15. Paul with _____ on 1st journey	<input type="text"/> o. Lystra

Prepared by Glenn & Beth Beall, foyfoyrish@gmail.com

### Please Send Your Answers To Us

(Print your name... Please. Thank you!)

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

City: \_\_\_\_\_ State: \_\_\_\_\_

Zip: \_\_\_\_\_ Phone: \_\_\_\_\_

NOTICE: Each person who sends in answers will be recognized in the next issue of the "MM" (see page 31). ALSO, by random drawing, the name of ONE student will be selected to receive a beautiful New Study Bible.

**"The Question Box"**  
P. O. Box 1578 • Kosciusko, MS 39090

