

MISSIONS mosaic

in your home | in your church | in your world

JUNE 2024

COMPASSION THROUGH HOSPITALITY

LOOKING AT THE IMPORTANCE OF
HOSPITALITY AS A CHRIST FOLLOWER

KEEPING THE DOOR OPEN

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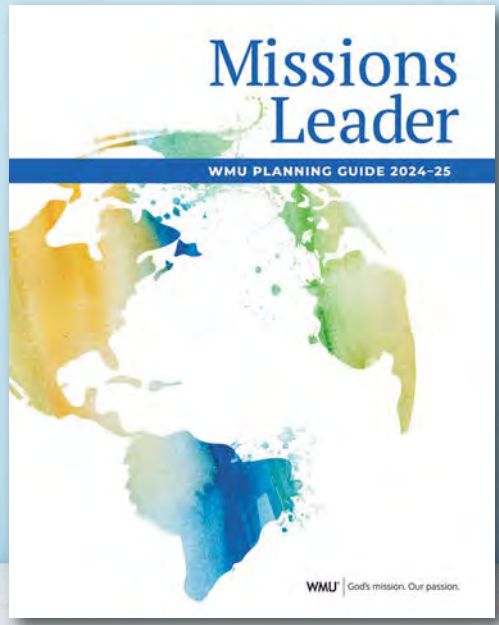


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2022-24 WATCHWORD

Be joyful in hope,
patient in affliction,
faithful in prayer.

—Romans 12:12

OUR MISSION

... is to inform and inspire Christians to influence their world for Christ.

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LEAD WOMEN ON MISSION



Find a meeting plan to use with the This Month's Spotlight, Bible Study, and Prayer articles, along with activity sheets and a promotional flyer, in *Women on Mission Leader* Summer 2024. To purchase an annual subscription or the digital edition of the summer issue, visit wmustore.com.

a word from us



Hospitality is a spiritual gift. In fact, it's one of mine. I discovered that through a spiritual gifts survey my youth group leader encouraged me to take. I remember being surprised; it seemed like such a practical, earthly, nonspiritual thing.

But as so many of the articles in this month's *Missions Mosaic* point out, hospitality showcases Christlike compassion in myriad ways. The Bible is full of examples, not the least of which feature Jesus Himself.

I'm going to cast a wide net here, but please remember what Colossians 1:16 says of our Lord: "All things have been created through him and for him."

One of my favorite stories is recorded in Luke 7:11–17. As Jesus approached a certain town, "a dead person was being carried out—the only son of his mother, and she was a widow" (v. 12). Jesus' "heart went out to her" (v. 13), or, as the New King James Version puts it, He "had compassion on her." One commentary from Blue Letter Bible says the Greek word used for *He had compassion*, *splogechnizomai*, is the strongest possible word to express *feeling sympathy for*. Jesus saw that grieving mother and told her, "Don't cry" (v. 13). Scripture goes on to record, "Then he went up and touched the bier they were carrying him on, and the bearers stood still. He said, 'Young man, I say to you, get up!' The dead man sat up and began to talk, and Jesus gave him back to his mother" (vv. 14–15).

How old was that young man? I only ask because I want to picture properly how "Jesus gave him back to his mother" (v. 15). Surely Jesus guided that loquacious fellow into his mother's trembling, longing arms. Such compassion, to "[give] him back to his mother." I don't suppose Jesus told her to dry her tears, which were now tears of joy. I imagine He cried and laughed for joy too.

The other story that melts my heart regarding Christ's compassion is His brief interaction with a rich man. The man came urgently and humbly, running to Him and kneeling, and asked, "What must I do to inherit eternal life?" (Mark 10:17). Jesus knew how the conversation would end: the man would walk away, sad, because he would not yield his whole heart to God. Even so, knowing his hard heart, "Jesus looked at him and loved him" (v. 21).

In His compassion, Jesus restored the dead to life. The widowed mother also was granted life, emotionally and financially. In His compassion, Jesus loved one who would not submit to Him, for He "wants all people to be saved and to come to a knowledge of the truth" (1 Tim. 2:4).

Jesus Christ, Lord of heaven and earth—heaven His throne, earth His footstool—welcomes the dead back to life on earth and the living (in Him) to life eternal in heaven. His compassion leads to ultimate hospitality. And, as His servants, we get to participate in that hospitality: showing His compassion as the Holy Spirit works in us and through us.

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Meghan". The script is fluid and cursive.

Meghan Bowker, Editor
mbowker@wmu.org

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PRISONER PACKETS PROJECT

South Carolina WMU sponsors a prisoner packets missions project every year to bless those who are incarcerated. Throughout the year, Women on Mission groups collect and package the items that go in each packet. The packets are then gathered from churches and distributed to inmates across South Carolina. For years, members of Liberty Baptist Church in Chester, South Carolina, have donated needed items to create prisoner packets. Four years ago, church member Ms. Ann Clack decided she

could serve by helping assemble the packets for the church. Her first year, she told the WMU director she would put together ten but actually ended up making 75. Fast forward to 2022, and she put together 180 prisoner packets! Ms. Ann is a wonderful example of seeing a need, giving of her time, and being willing to take that step of faith to allow God to use her for His glory and her good.

-Dana Ogburn, South Carolina



BLESSING THOSE IN NEED

Women on Mission at Hamlet Baptist Church in Benton, Kentucky, made and delivered fruit baskets to shut-ins for Christmas 2022. We are a small church but have a big spirit for loving and serving others. We participate in many projects during the year, and our most current one is a blessing box. Anyone needing food can simply stop at our parking lot and get what he or she needs out of the box installed in front of the church.

-Cindy Rose, Kentucky



REMEMBERING THE FORGOTTEN

Women on Mission of First Baptist Church in Castle Rock, Washington, packed and wrapped 32 plastic shoeboxes with gifts for residents at a local assisted living home. Women in the group donated personal care

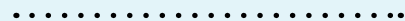
items, Christmas ornaments, snacks, and jewelry to fill the boxes, which were each personalized and hand delivered. One man was teary eyed as he put on the knitted hat and scarf he received. He didn't think anyone cared for him. This annual event continues throughout the year with cards and treats.

-Diana Lerma, Washington



HAVE NEWS TO SHARE? We'd love to hear from you. Please send a five-to-eight-sentence paragraph with two or three high-resolution photos to mosaic@wmu.org or *Missions Mosaic*, 100 Missionary Ridge, Birmingham, AL 35242. The paragraph and a photo may appear on the Letters from You page in a future edition of *Missions Mosaic*. Letters may be edited for space or clarity.

Making disciples of Jesus who live on mission.



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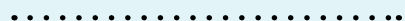
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Mentoring IN THE KITCHEN

WORK TOGETHER TO NOURISH THE BODY AND THE SOUL.



The kitchen is often called the heart of the home. Have you considered how you might take a simple chore like cooking and turn it into a mentorship or outreach opportunity? With a little planning, you can offer a culinary class to help people learn or improve their skills while simultaneously opening doors for gospel conversations. This allows you to meet a practical need while blessing others in the process.

FORMULATE A PLAN AND SCHEDULE

When it comes to cooking, you can teach a lot of different topics. For example, some people may want to learn how to cook from scratch. As food prices continue to rise, more people may be interested in this skill. Based on your geographic location, people may want to learn how to preserve food they grow themselves. This is a skill set that was common in previous generations and has been lost over the years. If your church is full of busy moms, consider teaching how to plan and prepare slow cooker meals to help juggle all the demands on their time and save money by avoiding the drive-through. Opportunities related to cooking abound, and you do not have to teach the same skills each time.

As you formulate a plan, carefully consider the rhythm of your cooking classes. One option is to set up a schedule where you meet occasionally, such as once a month or once a quarter. This allows people to join as they are able without adding a big commitment to their calendar every week.

Another option would be to have short bursts of classes on a specific topic, such as a four-week class on how to can food and then a break before another four-week class on how to cook from scratch. When you offer events for a short duration of time, people are better able to decide whether they want to join based on other time commitments.

The goal is to provide practical skills while also making the class about more than cooking. Ideally, women in your group would invite other women in the church to join the class with them and learn alongside one another. This allows for relationships to form or deepen and for women to interact with other women of various ages and life stages. The group could also minister to women outside the church as an evangelism or church outreach opportunity.

Solicit input on what types of cooking skills people want to learn, what their cooking struggles are, and how

much time they have available to participate in the classes. For example, a busy working mom might be overwhelmed by the thought of growing and canning food. However, learning how to make one-pot meals or recipes in under 30 minutes could be a breath of fresh air to her already packed schedule.

LOGISTICS

As you think through the cooking topics you will cover and the cadence of your meeting schedule, consider the logistics of where you will meet. Different setups will be needed based on the topics of the classes. Depending on class size, you may need to hold class in a home or at your church or community center.

If your church has a gym or fellowship hall, you can spread out and host your cooking classes there. This type of space would work best if you are teaching a cooking skill that people do not need to practice in real time. If you have several instructors and several skills to teach, set up small tables or workstations around the perimeter of the gym or fellowship hall, near electrical outlets if needed. Ensure you have sufficient chairs or stools so people can gather around and easily see what the teacher is demonstrating.

If your class requires active participation, you will want to ensure everyone has access to the necessary utensils, cookware, and food. Depending on your class size, the church kitchen may have sufficient utensils for everyone. If not, be sure to instruct participants on what they will need to bring to the class to be able to fully participate.

Handouts or recipes help people remember what they learned in class. Additionally, you might incorporate a recipe swap to help participants expand their go-to recipes. Ask participants to come prepared with copies of their favorite recipe so everyone has several new ideas when answering the dreaded “What’s for dinner?” question.

MENTORING IN THE KITCHEN

The purpose of offering these culinary classes is multifaceted. On the one hand, you are aiming to meet a practical need. But these classes should go beyond that. The desire is to create a space for participants to get to know other women and share life experiences while also providing a welcoming place for younger-in-the-faith

believers or nonbelievers to interact with mature Christ followers. Natural opportunities to swap stories and life experiences will come up while participants work together in the kitchen. Seize these moments to share what God has done in your life and what He is currently teaching you. It does not have to be a formal devotion, though that is certainly an option. The Deuteronomy 6 version of discipleship, which involves talking about the Lord as you go about your daily life, also has immense value. Look for natural bridges to share testimonies of what God has done to encourage and edify others.

Titus 2 instructs older women to teach younger women, and cooking classes are one practical way to do that. *Mentoring* can sometimes feel like a heavy word, cloaked in responsibility and formality. However, it does not have to be that way. Instead, view mentoring as an opportunity to share your story. What life experiences have you endured that shaped who you are? What lessons did God teach you through mountaintop experiences and through valleys? Your encouraging words or squeeze of someone’s hand may be just what she needs to persevere through a difficult season.

SERVING THE PROCEEDS

One benefit of offering a cooking class is that you can enjoy the fruits of your labor. If you find you have excess food, consider whom you might share it with. For example, do you know a homebound church member who would enjoy a home-cooked meal or a college student or group of students who might enjoy the food? Has anyone within the church recently had surgery or welcomed home a new baby? The extra food could be a blessing to them.

You can also plan to conduct cooking-related missions projects in addition to giving away leftovers from the class. This format will require a more focused effort but can be a practical way to teach a new skill, practice it, and bless others with the end result.

Regardless of whether you opt to offer a recipe exchange or teach on a specific cooking topic, such as one-pot meals, slow cooker recipes, or how to grow food and can it, cooking classes can be a practical way to nourish bodies and create bridges to gospel conversations. What a great way to engage a wide age range of women within your church and community. We all have to eat!

.....
ASHLEY HALL is a freelance writer and pastor’s wife based in east Texas. She grew up watching her grandmother actively serve in WMU, and God used that to foster a heart for serving others, both at home and abroad, within her.



ORAL BIBLE STORIES REACH “EVERYDAY” PEOPLE

Riding home on the subway, Patrick Stein casually looked around at fellow passengers. Two things stood out: First, as someone in his 50s, he was probably one of the oldest commuters. The median age in this North African city is 26. Second, all of the other commuters wore earbuds and stared at their phones, each person in his or her private world.

The International Mission Board (IMB) missionary wondered what would get people as interested and engaged in Bible stories as they were with their phones. An idea began to take shape. Why not create oral Bible stories for phones? Because people listened to their phones with headphones or earbuds, no one around them would know what they were listening to—creating a natural level of privacy in this Muslim-majority region.

For months, Patrick’s team of veteran missionaries and local believers had prayed for the Holy Spirit to show them a strategic new way to reach their city, and the answer came on this train ride.

The common Bible available in his area, Patrick explained, is written in a local dialect no one speaks. People who are able to use an English Bible do so more often because it’s easier to understand. More than a decade of living in this culture had made Patrick aware that using either of these Bibles wasn’t the way to go anyway. While many in the city are literate, Patrick’s team understood oral learning is still the natural way of learning for most. Plus, if the team wanted to reach the “everyday person” selling a soft drink on the side of the road, paper wasn’t going to work.

Creating 50 Story Together Bible Stories in the local modern language took the team two years, and the project used a story arc called *The Promised Savior*. Each two-minute story points to Jesus, whether it is from the Old Testament or Revelation.

“We have a story team made up entirely of national believers who craft the stories in a simple, clear, and understandable way,” Patrick said. “We used professional actors to record them because we wanted it [to be] engaging and draw people in.”



Phones are life for most twentysomethings around the world. A Story Together Bible Stories project produced 50 stories for people to view or listen to on their phones.

IMB PHOTO

Stephens Amani, a local pastor, has used this method for sharing the gospel. “This is something very easy to use, and people really like it,” he said. “People are sharing it on social media with each other.”

Moving the stories to social media was a natural extension of the project. In a region where Christians are often persecuted, it provided another layer of privacy for evangelism. A story can be posted so anyone can watch it. Then people are able to ask questions via the comments. Many have no one they can safely ask questions of about Christianity.

On the other end of the social media account is a team of trained local believers. Patrick said there are a lot of “trolls” just fishing for an argument or trying to find the identity of Christians. The local believers have learned how to sift through the noise and find the person who is truly seeking the Lord.

Patrick noted there’s always some risk in this region when sharing the good news. “The local believers decided spreading the gospel is worth the risk,” he said.

One man saw an advertisement for the Jesus stories on social media and began to engage with local believers online, asking them deeper questions.

“Then it came time to meet in person,” Patrick said, explaining that the purpose is to take those seeking the truth from online to a face-to-face encounter. “This man met with our national partner, heard the gospel, and became a follower of Jesus. He is now being discipled using the 50 stories.

“This is just one story of how this Story Together Bible Stories project has been instrumental in being a first contact with the Word of God,” he added.

SUE SPRENKLE writes for IMB.



SEND RELIEF MISSIONARY IN THE BADLANDS

Send Relief’s South Dakota ministry center operations director Amanda Hadden grew up as a pastor’s kid, so compassion ministry felt like an organic part of life’s daily rhythms from a young age.

When she met her husband—Send Relief partner Matthew Hadden—in high school, he let her know on their first date that he had been called to full-time ministry, and if she didn’t feel the same prompting, there didn’t need to be a second date. It set the tone for their marriage early on: they would follow the Lord’s leading, wherever that led.

Years later, as youth group leaders, they began pursuing positions as international missionaries in Nicaragua, but the opportunity fell through when a supervisor became suddenly ill.

“We were confused because we’d been praying about this for so long,” said Amanda. “But last minute, Matt had been asked to attend a short-term construction trip to Pine Ridge Reservation. We didn’t know that we could afford the trip since we [had] recently visited Nicaragua, but God made a way.”

As Matt drove across the South Dakota cornfields later that week, the Holy Spirit spoke clearly to his heart, saying this would be the site of their calling. Hundreds of miles away in Georgia, the Lord spoke to Amanda at the same time—so the next year, the Haddens connected with a local pastor and moved to South Dakota.

Today Amanda is the operations director of Čhankú Wašté (*ch-ahn-koo wash-tay*) Ranch, a Send Relief ministry center that serves its community, which primarily consists of members of the Oglala Lakota Tribe on the Pine Ridge Reservation. She oversees the summer camp program on the reservation and supports the other two lanes of ministry: construction projects and the wellness center.

“Send Relief has been a great encouragement and catalyst for us in planning long-term programs,” she said. “Our ministry is unique in that it involves a people group who have had a rocky relationship with the church and whom we feel protective of. Preparing



Amanda Hadden

approximately 700 volunteers and church groups whom we [receive] every year for cultural sensitivity requires a lot of training and communication.”

The summer camp offers children nine weeks of Bible lessons, crafts, and recreational activities curated to the churches serving and their groups’ strengths. Year-round construction projects help the local Lakota people by meeting whatever needs arise as the community continues to grow, and the wellness center includes dentistry, optometry, and prenatal services that were not previously easily accessible on the reservation.

“This isn’t something we want just anyone involved in,” Amanda commented. “We want believers who aren’t interested in numbers . . . but who want to walk alongside someone through a full treatment plan and listen to [his or her story]. We’re not just looking to solve an immediate problem. We want to . . . walk with [individuals] through life on deeper levels, whether that be grief support or an [Alcoholics Anonymous] group or trauma counseling or home repair. Our heart rests in connection: connecting with the individual and [his or her] family and introducing them to Jesus. It always comes back to desiring a restored life for them, and sometimes, that means meeting the immediate need so they have ears to hear.”

.....

If you or your church would like to volunteer with Amanda Hadden and her family at the Pine Ridge Reservation, visit volunteer.sendrelief.org to learn more about Send Relief’s South Dakota missions trip opportunities today.



REFUGEE WOMEN FIND KINSHIP AND SECURITY THROUGH SEWING



Artisans of Refugee Sewing Society sit in their new permanent working space. For five years, the artisans worked out of a portable trailer on the campus of Clarkston International Bible Church.

Every year, June 20 is recognized as World Refugee Day. According to the UN Refugee Agency, this is a day to shine a light on the “rights, needs and dreams of refugees.”

As a WMU Compassion Ministry, WorldCrafts seeks to meet the needs of refugees while shining the light of the gospel into their lives.

The WorldCrafts artisan group Refugee Sewing Society is located in Clarkston, Georgia. Because 60–70 percent of Clarkston’s population is composed of people from more than 50 countries and 100 ethnic groups, the city is known as “the most diverse square mile in the United States.”

Refugee Sewing Society provides a safe place for Clarkston’s refugee women to build relationships and create handmade items to earn a supplemental income for their families. The refugee women also receive access to English as a second language (ESL) and citizenship classes, as well as other resources to help them adapt to their new lives in the US.

One of the refugees working with Refugee Sewing Society is Farzaneh, a woman from Afghanistan who lived as a refugee in Turkey for eight years before coming to the US. There was no housing available when she, her five children, and other Afghans arrived in January 2023, so they were placed in Atlanta hotels.

Members of a nearby church visited the refugees and discovered the women were looking for sewing machines. Farzaneh had sewn while living in Turkey and Afghanistan. Susie Helton, director of Refugee Sewing Society, worked with Georgia Baptists to secure sewing machines, and Refugee Sewing Society put together sewing kits for the refugees to use. “When you help someone who’s new to our country, you’re one of the first people they know. It makes a lasting impression, and they never forget it,” reflected Susie.

When Farzaneh’s family settled in Clarkston several months later, Susie invited Farzaneh to join Refugee Sewing Society and begin taking an ESL class. Farzaneh’s daughter later told Susie her mother had been very depressed, but coming to sew with the other women helped her.

“Being with other women in a place where they can be loved and feel safe in relationship brings a sense of peace and joy to their lives,” Susie said.

Refugee Sewing Society artisans handcraft two WorldCraft products, the African Cross and African Nativity Ornament. By shopping Worldcrafts and sharing about its mission, you can help refugees like the women at Refugee Sewing Society and other artisans throughout the world earn an income with dignity and learn about the hope of everlasting life. Visit WorldCrafts.org to learn more.

ROBIN McCALL lives in McCalla, Alabama. After retiring from national WMU, she now works with TAB Media Group and is a freelance writer and editor. She enjoys teaching Mission Friends and serving alongside her pastor husband, Bill.



LEADING BY FAITH

HELPING OTHERS BE FAITHFUL STARTS WITH SELF

Faithfulness is a characteristic of Christ we are given through the Holy Spirit at the time of salvation. God shows His faithfulness to us in how He always keeps His promises. Jesus said in John 14:15, “If you love me, keep my commands.” Then in Matthew 22, a Pharisee asked Him, “Teacher, which is the greatest commandment in the Law?” and Jesus replied, “‘Love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind.’ This is the first and great commandment. And the second is like it: ‘Love your neighbor as yourself’” (vv. 36–39). Just as we can trust God because He has shown Himself faithful, we can show our faithfulness by keeping this command to love God and His people.

As leaders, we lead by example, and we take our lead from Jesus and from godly examples. Hebrews 11 is full of wonderful models of the faithful ones. Verse 6 says, “And without faith it is impossible to please God, because anyone who comes to him must believe that he

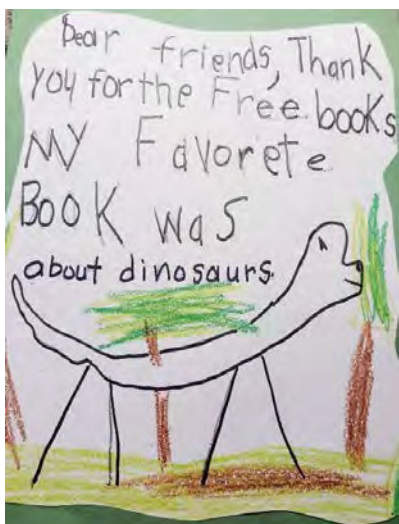
exists and that he rewards those who earnestly seek him.” If we are going to live and lead by faith, we must diligently seek to follow the Lord in all we do. The closer I get to Jesus, the more I will seek to please Him. In John 15:4, Jesus said, “Remain in me, as I also remain in you. No branch can bear fruit by itself; it must remain in the vine. Neither can you bear fruit unless you remain in me.”

We all want our ministries to bear fruit and be faithful to the Lord. We all want to lead by example, passing these characteristics on to those we serve alongside. However, we cannot teach what we do not know. I have learned with my four children that I can tell them a truth from the Word of God, but if I don’t know it and practice it myself, they will never follow what it teaches. I must invest the time to abide in Christ. I must trust my every decision to the One who has all the answers.

.....
CHERYL STAHLMAN is the wife to Reverend David Stahlman, mom to Mia, Hannah, Matthew, and Noah, and is executive director of Missouri WMU.

READING THE GOOD NEWS IN VIRGINIA

INCREASED LITERACY LEADS TO INCREASED GOSPEL COMPREHENSION.



Dinosaur books are always a favorite!



Debbie Rago from Mill Creek Baptist Church enjoys reading to a group of students.



BookNet books bring lots of smiles.



Matt Ferguson from Mill Creek Baptist Church is surrounded by kindergarten boys who want to hear a good story.



Third-grade boys love their new Bibles.

In the last half of Acts 8, Philip, one of the seven men chosen to become deacons in the fledgling church, was told by an angel of the Lord to go out to a road leading from Jerusalem down to Gaza. He encountered an Ethiopian eunuch reading from the Book of Isaiah who had just come from worshipping in Jerusalem. Philip asked the man whether he understood what he was reading, to which the Ethiopian eunuch responded, “How can I . . . unless someone explains it to me?” (v. 31).

Reading is not a naturally acquired skill; both reading and comprehension must be taught. Even though the eunuch could read from the book, he needed what he was reading explained to him. Across the United States, many children, teens, and adults cannot read, read at a very low level, or can read but are unable to understand, or comprehend, what they are reading.

A MINISTRY IS BORN

Back in 1999, Virginia WMU called together a group of concerned women to form the Great Commission Teachers Task Force. Keenly aware of the illiteracy issues in Virginia, this task force set out on a mission to combat illiteracy through tutoring students who were struggling to help them improve their reading skills and tutoring adults who needed to obtain their GED. This group mobilized churches in the region to participate. Valerie Carter Smith, at that time the associate of Christian social ministries for Virginia WMU, shared with the task force the importance of books—especially new books children could own. From her presentation, BookNet was born.

The first BookNet missions trip to southwestern Virginia took place in July 2004 and was made up of men and women from Roanoke Valley Baptist Association (RVBA). This team set up in a park across from a school in Saint Charles, and the team members began distributing books they had collected for this trip. The school principal came out to inquire about what they were doing and then asked whether they would come during the following school year.

A MINISTRY GROWS

While the BookNet ministry remains a statewide project of Virginia WMU and RVBA, Mill Creek Baptist

Church in Fincastle, Virginia, is also an integral part of the project. Judy Deel, WMU director at Mill Creek and missions involvement consultant for RVBA, helps lead the way. When the ministry first began more than 20 years ago, Virginia WMU created it to get books into the hands of children and to reach an underserved area in the state of Virginia, the region of the Appalachian Mountains.

Today, in addition to the team that goes into the schools, the ministry has a construction team and a food pantry team. As is common for any missions trip, much work is needed to prepare for the trip itself. RVBA churches collect new and gently used books that a team of teachers and librarians then sort into grade-appropriate stacks in advance of the missions trip.

A MINISTRY THRIVES

Mill Creek Baptist Church houses the books, but many churches in RVBA contribute to the project. Mill Creek, along with other RVBA churches, still makes trips every March to southwestern Virginia.

In 2023, the five-day missions trip consisted of 15 members from Mill Creek and 15 others from 11 RVBA churches. During the three days spent in the nine schools, the team was able to distribute books, Bibles, storybook Bibles, and ditty bags, care packages filled with personal hygiene items, to 1,800 students.

The children loved their books and the volunteers reading to them. The construction team was able to replace a porch for one elderly homeowner and a bathroom floor for another. The food pantry team assisted a food pantry in Gate City by packing bags of food, greeting people who came in, and carrying food bags to cars. This team was also able to help with stabilizing shelving at the food pantry.

The beauty of ongoing ministries like this one is that they involve the church in giving, sending, going, and praying, and anyone at any age can participate. The church lives out being the body of Christ. It's His hands giving, sorting, and labeling the books, it's His heart serving and loving, and it's His Spirit going forth to help people better understand His Word.

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STEPHANIE HAYSLIP is a pastor's wife and teacher in White Hall, Arkansas. She has been a part of many short-term missions trips both abroad and in the US. She has a master of divinity degree with a missions concentration from Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary.



BRAZIL WMU

AS ZEALOUS AS THE APOSTLES

Right: Dione Vasconcelos, former interim executive assistant of Baptist World Alliance Women's Department, provided translation for this article.



In Acts, we see the apostles, filled with the Holy Spirit, committed to spreading the good news of the gospel in Jerusalem, Judea, and Samaria. They wanted to make Christ known and encourage hearers to become disciples who knew Him and wanted to be like Him.

Like the apostles, in June 1908, the Missionary Union of Baptist Ladies of Brazil was established to share Christ. The Missionary Union learned the most effective ways to evangelize and practice charity among the people. The organization expanded its reach to educate, support, and teach about the need for Christ and the importance of missions. União Feminina Missionária Batista do Brasil (Brazil WMU) was formed to help others see the world through the lens of the Word of God, to promote spiritual growth and development, and to provide the support needed to face life challenges while following biblical truths.



Women enjoy a WMU event at First Baptist Church in Alto da Boa Vista in Rio de Janeiro, Marli Gonzalez's former church. Marli, who is the former executive director of Brazil WMU, is kneeling on the far left of the first row.

Brazil WMU is as zealous as the apostles who witnessed Christ's life, death, burial, and Resurrection. Crime, drug trafficking, and corruption don't deter these believers from witnessing and sharing the gospel with those who live in darkness. With the growth of the evangelical movement within the past 30 years, the allegiance to God and His Word is strong—approximately 70 million evangelicals live among Brazil's more than 210 million people.

NAVIGATING CULTURE AND LIFE STAGES

Marli Gonzalez is an excellent example of the influence Brazil WMU has on young children who are taught to follow Christ and serve as missionaries within their people groups. "My journey with [Brazil WMU] started very early. I was nine years old when I began attending a missions [group], Girls in Action, for girls nine to 17. About that time, I made the decision to follow Jesus and [accepted] my missionary calling," shared Marli, who grew to become the executive director of Brazil WMU.

Despite the influence of the gospel on Brazilians, Christian women suffer from the impact of a sexist culture, Marli explained. Some Brazilians question women in leadership positions. However, women's ministry has experienced the most significant growth in the local church. Brazil WMU successfully reaches women for Christ by identifying four important life stages women experience and addressing their concerns and challenges. The four stages are Young, Singular, Mother, and Plena, meaning "complete."

The Young group consists of single women developing as professionals and beginning to position themselves in society. They need a solid Christian foundation to shine Jesus' light. The Singular group is for single, widowed, or divorced women and women who don't have children or who have adult children. Women in the Mother stage are first-time mothers and mothers of young children and teenagers. The Plena group includes senior or older women. Each group receives encouragement, training, and assistance as the women face challenges and serve as missionaries to their people groups.

CONNECTING WOMEN THROUGH TECHNOLOGY AND PUBLICATIONS

Marli is passionate about missions and evangelizing. Her spiritual and intellectual growth has helped her move from a limited understanding of "Christ on the Cross to understanding and experiencing the joy of God's grace, the Resurrection of Jesus Christ," she explained. She enthusiastically shares the gospel whenever the opportunity arises. After speaking at and participating in various Brazil WMU and denominational events and venues, she never hesitates to bond with women who attend the events, and she willingly disciples and walks alongside them after the events have ended.

"As the executive director [of Brazil WMU], I . . . visit the regional organizations and provide training and [teaching] in local [churches alongside] . . . the national leadership team. We also interact using a digital format through the Christian Women Today Club. Members of this club connect through video call meetings, [communication] through social media, and live events. We have literature published each trimester to make Christian missions [discipleship] available to different age groups," Marli added.

The organization has a live radio program addressing topics women face in their daily lives and in ministry. In addition, Brazil WMU publishes Internet-based training, quarterly studies, articles, programs, and books, as well as an annual devotional, *The Spring*.

"My mother read *The Spring* to us during our family worship time each night when I was a child. I am 72 years old now," Dione Vasconcelos, former interim executive assistant of Baptist World Alliance Women's Department, explained.

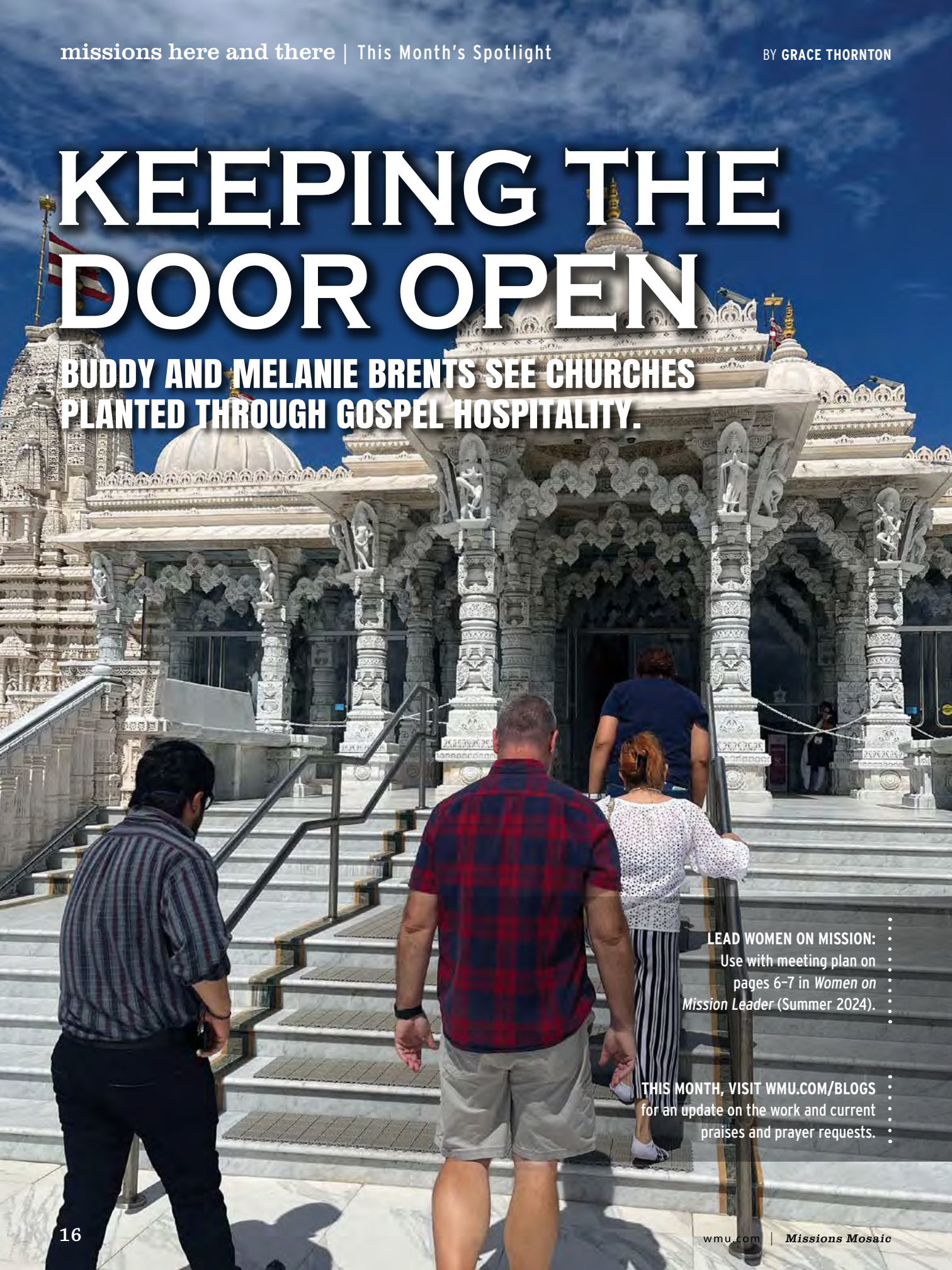
Brazil WMU's involvement in the evangelical movement has remained influential despite the challenges of the pandemic. Its greatest challenge has been financial. As such, Marli resigned from her position to reduce the financial burden on the organization but continues to work in the background and encourage the women of Brazil WMU. The organization presses forward to exalt the Word of the Lord as it helps people face economic and spiritual crises.

Marli's single prayer request is for a revival among Brazil's women. She and all the women of Brazil WMU are as passionate as the apostles about spreading the gospel to the ends of the earth.

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AUDREY HECTOR is a retired mental health therapist and engineer. She is a freelance writer and author of *Forgiving the Unforgivable* and *Counting My Blessings*. As a conference speaker and life coach, she inspires others to "taste and see that the Lord is good" (Psalm 34:8). Audrey resides in Texas.

KEEPING THE DOOR OPEN

BUDDY AND MELANIE BRENTS SEE CHURCHES PLANTED THROUGH GOSPEL HOSPITALITY.



LEAD WOMEN ON MISSION:
Use with meeting plan on
pages 6-7 in *Women on*
Mission Leader (Summer 2024).

THIS MONTH, VISIT WMU.COM/BLOGS
for an update on the work and current
praises and prayer requests.

When Melanie Brents and her husband, Buddy, heard of a teen boy from Iran who was living in difficult circumstances and needed a place to stay for a few nights, they said yes, and they opened the door of their Houston-area home.

“We talked about it and decided that we had an extra room, so why not have him come and stay with us,” she said. “After all, it would only be for a couple of days.”

But a week later, when the agency working with refugee placement called back with another place for Masuod to move to if needed, Melanie and Buddy had a feeling that the “couple of days” was about to get longer. “We prayed about it and felt the Lord was leading us to have him join our family and stay with us,” Melanie shared.

Masuod didn’t believe in Jesus when he arrived at Melanie and Buddy’s home, but after a few months, he placed his faith in Christ when Buddy explained the gospel to him.

“God is so good,” Melanie said. “We eventually officially adopted him when he turned 18, and now he is 26 and married and about to have our first grandson. We never know where small acts of hospitality will lead, but we are so thankful that this one led us to our wonderful son, Masuod.”

LIVES CHANGED THROUGH HOSPITALITY

An act of hospitality started Melanie’s life of missions involvement. “I had a teacher in seventh grade who invited me to go to a Girls in Action (GA) camp with her daughters, and it was there that I felt the Lord’s call to missions.”

As a GA, Melanie remembers thumbing through “the big missionary book” that had pictures of missionaries and where they served. She dreamed of one day being a missionary like them.

Years later, she and Buddy moved to Japan, where they served 16 years with the International Mission Board. While they were there, God showed her more about why hospitality matters—including on Saturday mornings in the early hours.

“I was ministering to a young mom named Yuki,” Melanie said. “She was a lady who lived in the neighborhood and whose children played with my kids. We had begun to meet for Bible study, and I spent much of the day one Friday discussing her fears and concerns about trusting Jesus as her Savior.”

Yuki was from a Buddhist family, and she had sworn to her father before he died that she would honor his

memory by keeping the Buddhist traditions. “She wanted to believe in Jesus but felt that she couldn’t,” Melanie explained. “After [we had] an exhausting day of speaking Japanese and what truly felt like a spiritual battle, she concluded that she could not become a believer. I was so sad but knew [I] had to trust her to the Lord.”

OVERCOMING SELFISHNESS

But very early the next morning, Yuki was back at Melanie’s house ringing the doorbell. “She had made it abundantly clear the day before that she was not interested in becoming a believer,” Melanie said. “It was our day off, and I wanted nothing more than to enjoy a few hours of rest and immerse myself in the English language with my husband and kids. I didn’t want to wrestle with Yuki in Japanese about her need for Jesus or her countless objections. I didn’t want to answer the door.”

But Melanie is thankful the Holy Spirit wouldn’t let her indulge in her selfishness for long. Still in her pajamas, she begrudgingly opened the door, let Yuki in, and started to make coffee—and Yuki started talking.

“She said that while she was sleeping, her father came to her in a dream and told her she must believe in Jesus. She said that she was ready to accept Christ and asked if I would pray with her,” Melanie shared. “I was elated! I couldn’t believe that I almost missed this opportunity because of my own selfishness. Yuki became a believer, and later her husband and son also accepted the Lord. Praise the Lord!”

REACHING IMMIGRANTS IN HOUSTON

When she and Buddy returned to the United States, they brought with them a continued commitment to hospitality. First, they served in Mobile, Alabama, as part of a partnership between the North American Mission Board (NAMB), the Alabama Baptist State Board of Missions, and Mobile Baptist Association. Buddy’s role there was to plant churches among the 66 nationalities of Mobile as well as to support existing language work.

“After starting a multiethnic church in Mobile, we sensed the Lord calling us to Houston to start multiethnic churches in the most diverse city in America,” Melanie said.

So in 2015, they moved to Texas as evangelism catalysts for NAMB and have been a part of starting four churches so far. They lead the Nations Church Planting Network in Houston, focusing on reaching the



Buddy and Melanie Brents

immigrant population. A large percentage of the city speaks Spanish—in Harris County, which includes Houston, nearly 35 percent of people speak Spanish as their first language. But the area is also very diverse—it's home to more than 350 ethnic groups.

“It is considered the most diverse city in America,” she said. “There are more than 145 languages spoken in Houston. More than one in four Houstonians was born outside America.”

The city is home to the second-largest Vietnamese population in the US, as well as the second-largest population of Pakistani people in the country. “In fact, 70 percent of the Muslims in Houston are Pakistani or Indian,” Melanie added. “It is common to see Buddhist shrines, mosques, and Hindu temples all over the city.”

“IMPORTANT TO GOD'S HEART”

There's a lot to do, but a big part of their ministry is hosting new friends in their home. “Everywhere we have served, our home has been a key part of our ministry. Hundreds of people have come through our home over the years for a meal and fellowship.”

She said as she has grown in her relationship with Christ through prayer and Bible study, she's seen that hospitality is “important to God's heart.” It's a requirement for elders in Titus 1:8 as well as true widows in need in 1 Timothy 5:10. The virtuous woman in Proverbs 31 was characterized by her hospitality, Melanie pointed out.

She also noted Matthew 25:42–45:

“For I was hungry and you gave me nothing to eat, I was thirsty and you gave me nothing to drink, I was a stranger and you did not invite me in, I needed clothes and you did not clothe me, I was sick and in prison and you did not look after me.” They also will answer, “Lord, when did we see you hungry or thirsty or a stranger or needing clothes or sick or in prison, and did not help you?” He will reply, “Truly I tell you, whatever you did not do for one of the least of these, you did not do for me.”

Melanie explained that praying teaches her how to be more hospitable because it helps her see others through God's eyes. “As I pray for others, He provides opportunities to better minister to [them]. It is easy to



say that we care about [people] with our words, but when we invite them into our homes, they cross the line from acquaintance to friend.” She added that the expression “people don’t care how much you know until they know how much you care” holds true.

“Hospitality allows us to build trust with those we minister to and let them know that we are real people with struggles just like them,” she said. “Prayer helps keep the heart attitude what it should be. It helps us to see that we are Christ’s hands and feet here on earth and [that] hospitality is a natural overflow of that mission and purpose.”

Hospitality is now the part of ministry Melanie loves the most. “Proverbs 11:25 says, ‘Whoever refreshes others will be refreshed.’ I know this to be true. [When we show] hospitality to others, the Lord uses it to refresh our spirits.”

She and Buddy try to model this kind of intentional hospitality as often as possible. “We also encourage others to open their homes and lives to others. Our homes don’t have to be perfectly tidy, and we don’t have to be gourmet chefs. The Lord takes our feeble efforts and uses them to show His love to others.”

JOINING THE WORK IN HOUSTON

That encouragement has definitely affected Buddy and Melanie’s daughter, who works with a group called Apartment Life that aims to host events and connect

people in apartment communities in order to love their neighbors as Christ did.

“I see her using her gifts in hospitality to minister to others in her apartment community,” Melanie shared. “It is a blessing to me to see the fruit of hospitality living on through her to the next generation.”

She said it would also be a “huge blessing” to have people come join her and Buddy in their efforts to show gospel hospitality in Houston. They’d welcome new team members and also groups that might want to bring teams to help with Backyard Bible Club, sports camps, prayerwalking, door-to-door surveying, apartment burger nights, and more.

Join in prayer for Melanie and Buddy’s ministry:

- Pray God would bring new leaders to serve at Nations Church.
- Pray Melanie and Buddy would have the joy of seeing new churches started and that those they’ve already started would continue to grow and make disciples.
- Pray Melanie and Buddy and the churches would be equipped to share Christ meaningfully with people from other religious backgrounds.
- Pray volunteer teams would come and serve to help them reach the nations in Houston.

For more information, contact buddybrents@gmail.com or melaniebrents@gmail.com or visit nationsofhouston.org. You can also write to them at 18510 Anderwood Forest Drive, Richmond, TX 77407.

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GRACE THORNTON is a former *Missions Mosaic* editor who loves hearing about how God is accomplishing His mission through women all over the world.

HOUSTON

... at a Glance

FAST FACTS

- Sam Houston led the fight with fellow settlers against Mexican forces for Texan independence. He was elected president of the Republic of Texas in 1836 and helped pave the way for Texas to be admitted to the United States in 1845.
- With a population of 2.3 million according to 2022 estimates from the US Census Bureau, Houston is the largest city in Texas and the fourth-largest city in the US.
- Houston offers a huge number of jobs: it's a port city and has a large industrial sector. People are also drawn to Houston by its many academic institutions.
- An estimated 400,000 people in Houston are not legal residents.
- Houston has a very young population due to the number of immigrants. In fact, more than 25 percent of Houston residents were born outside the United States.
- Houston is considered the most diverse US city, with more than 350 nationalities represented by people speaking more than 145 languages. Some of those languages are German, Vietnamese, Hindi, Chinese, Urdu, Arabic, Welsh, and Tagalog.
- Houston has more than 10,000 restaurants, and its residents go out to eat more than people in any other US city.
- The most popular foods are tamales, breakfast tacos, pho, and Viet-Cajun crawfish.
- Houston has a subtropical climate but gets more rain than Seattle, Washington. Many bayous and waterways run through the city.
- A network of tunnels exists 20 feet below street level, joining 95 blocks of downtown Houston. Pedestrians are able to access retail businesses and restaurants without ever crossing a street. The tunnel system was originally intended to connect movie theaters.



HOUSTON AND THE MOON



You may wonder why the name Houston is widely associated with lunar landings and outer space exploration. The connection comes from Hollywood and its depiction of the famous Apollo space missions. In the 1995 film *Apollo 13*, the actor who portrays commander Jim Lovell says, "Houston, we have a problem." Lovell's actual words were, "Houston, we've had a problem here."

On April 13, 1970, three astronauts were only 56 hours into their flight when they heard a bang. Some changes in instrumentation and an unusual crackle in the radio stream alerted the astronauts and support teams on earth that something was wrong. Apollo 13 aborted its mission of a lunar landing and eventually returned to earth.

But why were the astronauts talking to Houston? In fact, they were communicating with Mission Control at the Manned Spacecraft Center. Cape Canaveral, Florida, was home to the first control center, but Houston, Texas, was chosen as the new base of operations in 1961. By 1965, the center was fully operational beginning with the Gemini IV space mission, and it was later named the Johnson Space Center in 1973. Mission Control was the epicenter for tracking, monitoring, supporting, and communicating with the astronauts. Today the Johnson Space Center is one of the National Aeronautics and Space Administration's largest research and development facilities.

Before Apollo 13's nail-biting return to earth, Apollo 11 landed safely on the moon. Astronaut Neil Armstrong's first words to Mission Control were, "Houston, Tranquility Base here."

TEXAS BEST: Some people call it the best tradition in Texas—the Houston Livestock Show and Rodeo (the largest in the world). Over the course of 20 days, visitors can experience aspects of the Wild West at horse show competitions, roping events, and ranch sorting. You might want to set aside a day or two for the carnival, with the typical rides, cotton candy, games, and exhibits. Choose from a long lineup of country and Western singers, and enjoy live music. And don't miss out on the wide array of educational fun: learn, up close and personal, about miniature livestock breeds; observe animals being born at the birthing center, how they greet the world and how their mothers greet them; watch and learn how honeybees make honey; see live demonstrations of cows being milked; and much more!

BREAKFAST TACOS

INGREDIENTS

- 4 large eggs
- ¼ cup whole milk
- ½ teaspoon kosher salt
- ½ teaspoon black pepper
- 1 tablespoon unsalted butter
- 4 flour tortillas, warmed
- 1 cup refried beans, heated
- ½ cup salsa of choice
- 1 cup shredded longhorn cheddar
- 4 slices cooked bacon or 4 cooked sausage patties

Source: <https://www.homesicktexan.com/breaking-fast-with-tacos/>

INSTRUCTIONS

Whisk the eggs with the milk, salt, and pepper. Melt the butter in a large skillet on medium-low heat. Pour in the eggs, and scramble for about 3 minutes or until done to your liking. Take the 4 warm flour tortillas, and to each add ¼ cup of the refried beans in the center, ¼ of the scrambled eggs, ⅛ cup of salsa, ¼ cup of cheese, and either a slice of bacon or a sausage patty. Fold over the tortillas, and serve the tacos warm.

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MEGHAN BOWKER is the editor of *Missions Mosaic*.



Make It Right

HOW TO LIVE AT PEACE AND PURSUE FORGIVENESS EVEN WHEN IT'S DIFFICULT



The moment you said it, you knew. You saw the reaction in the person's face. With a sinking feeling in the pit of your stomach, you knew someone had been hurt.

We can experience many moments like this, whether on the receiving end or as the offender. Romans 12:18 says, "If it is possible, as far as it depends on you, live at peace with everyone." When you are the offender, it often means having to walk toward an uncomfortable conversation.

The essence of reconciliation begins with understanding the offense from the offended person's point of view. Approach your brother or sister in Christ, family member, or community member, and ask how your words made him or her feel. By putting yourself in this humble position, you allow healing to begin: the offended gets to have a voice. Asking how the person was impacted by your personal failure is difficult, but it's a critical part of the healing process.

At the same time, we must reject the impulse to defend ourselves and instead ask the Holy Spirit to give us eyes of compassion toward this individual. Wanting to overexplain why we did what we did is natural, validating ourselves and in turn invalidating the other

person's emotions. But living at peace requires pausing, listening, being curious, and asking questions about the feelings of the one who has been hurt. Only then can we understand and allow the truth of what the person shares to touch our hearts.

Once the person has shared, respond with what you heard him or her say, and ask for forgiveness. Humbling ourselves to genuinely ask for forgiveness is a critical step.

After the conversation has happened, be cautious in how you process with your broader community so as not to overshare and have a breach of trust in the repairing. Human nature is to take sides, but it's far better to ask the Holy Spirit to help you resist the urge to fight back and to humbly accept the consequences as you pursue reconciliation.

Peace is not always as easy as it sounds in this passage written by Paul, but it is God's call to us as followers of Jesus. We are to acknowledge our sins and the impact they have on other people and take steps toward healing and reconciliation. If you have been the offender, pray the Holy Spirit would give you the courage to make it right.

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ABI KHAVARI has lived and spent time in the Middle East and West Africa and has written articles about missions and following Christ for the last decade. Most days she can be found caring for her three young children and a dog in the sunshine of Arizona.



WHO IS THE GREATEST?

THE ONE WHO IS LIKE A CHILD

It's been said that those who continually ask questions end up learning the most.

One of the most probing questions asked in Scripture is found in Matthew 18:1: "Who, then, is the greatest in the kingdom of heaven?" From similar passages in Mark 9:33–37 and Luke 9:46–50, we know the disciples were filled with pride when they asked Jesus this question. They were seeking an answer that might elevate themselves in rank and perhaps special titles.

When I think about this account, my first impulse is disbelief; I really want to scold those disciples. But I remember that I battle the same pride Jesus had to address in them, which is one lesson we can learn from this passage. Let's look at how Jesus responded. Matthew 18:2–4 shows Jesus pointing the disciples' attention to the qualities of a child.

GREATNESS BELONGS TO GOD

Jesus reminded the disciples that conversion is only possible with a childlike posture before God. Like little children, we have nothing to offer anyone on our own. Like little children, we are totally dependent on someone greater for everything. And, like little children, we must be broken by our sin.

Have you ever seen a guilty child when caught doing something wrong? Oh, the sobbing because the child can't handle what he or she has done. And have you ever seen a parent first discipline and then embrace the child? Jesus is pointing us to such a relationship in this passage: a tender, saving relationship with humility and awe before the Father, who draws us to repent, then forgives and restores.

Just a moment later, Jesus brought the disciples back to their original question of who will be the greatest. He responded, "Therefore, whoever takes the lowly position of this child is the greatest in the kingdom of heaven" (v. 4).

LOOK FOR CHILDLIKE HUMILITY

Look for the Christian standing at a distance quietly performing an act of service for someone with lesser means. Look for the Christian loaded with gifts and talents, discreetly using them without fanfare. Look for the ones without a "title," constantly promoting missions, spending their time laboring for Jesus. Look for the believer who doesn't just say she'll pray but who prays fervently while loving the ones she prays for.

Now we get a picture of who's the greatest in the kingdom.

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SHEILA GOSNEY lives in Monroe City, Missouri. She loves teaching Sunday School and ministering to people through food.

LIVING WITH POST-TRAUMATIC STRESS DISORDER

PEACE IS POSSIBLE.

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The information shared in this article is not meant to diagnose or treat a mental health condition. We encourage you to follow up with your health-care provider and seek a mental health professional for individual consultation and care.

The rain pounded the car, the windshield wipers slapped back and forth, and tears streamed down my face. I begged God to end my life right there on the interstate. A car accident in the rain would be easy for my family to understand. I prayed God would provide an end to the constant fear and shame.

Then, almost as clearly as though someone sitting beside me had spoken, I heard, “Try counseling.” Again, not audibly but clearly, I heard, “Try counseling.” Indeed, it was not my voice. My prayer was for God to end my life. This voice urged me to do something I had never considered.

The day before, scrolling through social media, I saw the face that set this spiral into motion. His face was staring back at me, the boy, now an older man, who sexually assaulted me when I was 11. Immediately, my mind spiraled back to the day I was trapped in a house with a teenage boy with assault on his mind.

As a result of the assault, my mind stayed on high alert, ready for danger. Sounds, smells, and now pictures could catapult me back to that moment. Science says when we are in a life-threatening event, we are wired to fight, flee the situation, or freeze. Although more than 40 years had passed, the fear was real again, and I froze.

Gratefully, God did not allow the car wreck. With some help from friends, I was able to locate a Christian counselor with whom I began meeting once a week.

Therapy helped reveal many emotional moments I had experienced. At first, it was awkward and tense, but in time, trust grew between me and my counselor. Examining the painful moments from early childhood through my teens and twenties was excruciating but healing. However, I hesitated to talk about the assault. The secret was buried deeply for nearly 50 years, and sharing the story was difficult. It took a while, but once I shared the secret, the reason for my lifelong fear became clear.

Sexual assault victims often suffer from post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD) along with emotional health challenges. Since that day at age 11, my mind and body constantly expected harm. My mind and body waited to react in an instant with the natural fight, flight, or freeze response. This constant high alert led to a list of symptoms often related to PTSD, like constant worry, nightmares, flashbacks, trouble remembering, and depression, all

compounded by the shame associated with sexual assault. Through the years, I learned to cope by using drugs and alcohol, leading to an even longer list of issues.

PTSD is often associated with members of the military who experience trauma during service, but any terrifying event, such as a car accident or a significant unexpected loss, can lead to some level of trauma and stress. We all experience trauma at various points in our lives and may need help to deal with that trauma, though it may not result in a PTSD diagnosis. To be diagnosed with PTSD, a person will have experienced a qualifying traumatic event and then exhibited certain symptoms that last for more than a month. Those with PTSD often feel anxious and stressed even when there is no clear danger.

The good news is PTSD has effective treatments. With proper mental health care, including talk therapy and sometimes medication, coupled with the support of family and friends, people with PTSD can know relief. The treatment and level of healing is different for everyone.

In my case, a series of eye movement desensitization and reprocessing (EMDR) treatments helped me process the fear and lessen its effect. Today, when I am reminded of the events of the assault, my mind is calmer because I know I am safely within God’s care, and harm is not imminent. My mind and body learned the assault happened in the past and was not happening again.

Witnessing a loved one navigate the ups and downs of PTSD can leave many feeling helpless. Understanding another’s fear and stress can be difficult. People living with PTSD struggle to feel safe when fear does surface, but you can offer them prayer and your presence with patience and acceptance. In Philippians 4:6–7, Paul wrote, “Do not be anxious about anything, but in every situation, by prayer and petition, with thanksgiving, present your requests to God. And the peace of God, which transcends all understanding, will guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus.” Ask God for peace and understanding as you seek to love someone with PTSD well.

The events that led one to experience PTSD cannot be erased, but with God, fear can be conquered, and help is present. Isaiah 41:10 says, “So do not fear, for I am with you; do not be dismayed, for I am your God. I will strengthen you and help you; I will uphold you with my righteous right hand.” Pray your loved ones would know God’s presence when fear arises.

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TAMELA TURBEVILLE is a trauma survivor and writes about God’s redemptive love and healing grace and her experience as a childhood sexual assault survivor in her book, *A Rescued Life: A Story of Secrets and Shame, Hope and Healing*.

A Heart for Hospitality

THE SHUNAMMITE WOMAN BEFRIENDS ELISHA.

• LEAD WOMEN ON MISSION:

• Use with meeting plan on
• pages 6-7 in *Women on*
• *Mission Leader* (Summer 2024).
•



Dorothy's brisket. Grace's chicken and dumplings. Ila's coconut meringue pie. Throughout the past 30 years my husband has served as a pastor, my family has been blessed by the hospitality of church members with whom we have wonderful memories of sharing meals and our lives. Our work for the Lord has been sustained and encouraged by friendships built around the table.

The Shunammite woman in 2 Kings 4 is an example of one who practiced hospitality by opening her home to a prophet of the Lord and providing him with food, comfort, and friendship. We do not know her name. She is simply called the Shunammite. But we do know she was generous and showed compassion to Elisha through hospitality. Pray the Lord would give you a heart of hospitality as you learn about the Shunammite woman today.

THE SHUNAMMITE WOMAN SHOWED HOSPITALITY (2 KINGS 4:8-10)

One day, a wealthy woman from the town of Shunem saw Elisha passing through her village. She not only invited him to stay for a meal, but she urged him. This meal was not a "one and done" occasion. She provided meals for Elisha whenever he came by. The Shunammite woman realized Elisha was a "holy man of God" (v. 9) and wanted to do more for him, so she shared an idea with her husband. She wanted to make a small room where Elisha could rest whenever he came to town. She furnished the room with a bed, table, chair, and lamp. The Shunammite woman offered Elisha sustenance, comfort, rest, and friendship. By showing hospitality to Elisha, she made it easier for him to do God's work.

- How did the Shunammite woman show hospitality to Elisha? How can you, your family, and your church show hospitality to your pastor, church staff, missionaries, and visitors? How can you show hospitality to unchurched individuals?

ELISHA RESPONDED TO HER HOSPITALITY (2 KINGS 4:11-17)

In response to the Shunammite woman's hospitality, Elisha wanted to show his gratitude. He asked her, "What can be done for you?" (v. 13). Elisha suggested he could make a request to the king or commander of the army on her behalf. But the Shunammite woman politely declined, so Elisha asked his servant what could be done for her.

His servant revealed she had no son, and her husband was an old man. Elisha called her in and told her she would hold a son in her arms the next year. The Shunammite woman thought Elisha must be teasing her. But the next year, she gave birth to a son just as Elisha had said.

The Shunammite woman did not show hospitality to Elisha because she expected something in return. Yet Elisha wanted to show his appreciation. In the Old Testament world, the Shunammite woman would have endured shame and ridicule for not having a son. Although she had great wealth, she probably still endured private pain and disappointment. Elisha showed great compassion to her when he promised her a son.

Elsa was a fellow church member of mine who had cancer. Even through her pain, Elsa still showed hospitality to the women and children who attended our local Christian Women's Job Corps (CWJC) site. Several times a month, Elsa prepared homemade snacks for the women and children at CWJC. Her desire was to provide for their needs and make them feel welcome and loved.

- Why do you think the Shunammite woman did not ask Elisha for a son when he asked what he could do for her? Do you know someone who showed hospitality to others even through a time of personal pain, disappointment, or sorrow? How was that person able to love like that?

SEEK TO SHOW HOSPITALITY

Hospitality is a biblical command and responsibility for every Christian. The Apostle Paul said one of the marks of Christians is that they "practice hospitality" (Rom. 12:13). The Apostle Peter told believers to "offer hospitality to one another without grumbling" (1 Peter 4:9). Believers offer hospitality to others in response to God's love for us. We show our love for God by showing hospitality to others.

Biblical hospitality is more than being a good hostess or preparing a delicious meal, and it isn't based on a sparkling clean house, impeccable decor, or fancy table settings. When believers practice hospitality in our homes and churches, we provide for needs, offer the precious gifts of friendship, encouragement, and support, and point people to the self-giving love of God through Jesus Christ. Do you have a heart for hospitality?

- Read 2 Kings 4:18-37 and 8:1-6 to discover how God continued to show compassion to the Shunammite woman through Elisha.

.....
TRACEY GHOLSON is a pastor's wife from Nashville, Tennessee. She coleads Women on Mission at her church and enjoys facilitating the monthly Bible study.

LEAD WOMEN ON MISSION:
Use with meeting plan on
pages 6-7 in *Women on*
Mission Leader (Summer 2024).

Reaching the Lost through
**BIBLICAL
HOSPITALITY**

ENCOURAGEMENT FOR ALL CHRISTIANS AND WHERE TO BEGIN

What springs to your mind when someone mentions the word *hospitality*? Keeping your home immaculate and magazine ready? Having warm cookies perpetually coming out of the oven? Here's my current reality—my guest room is a storage unit for everything that doesn't have a designated resting place, and my dining room table is more of a mail-sorting station than a place to share a meal.

I can easily disqualify myself from hospitality all together. I want to do it perfectly or not at all. But is this the picture of hospitality we see in the Bible?

CULTURAL VERSUS BIBLICAL HOSPITALITY

In American culture, showing hospitality can be more of an opportunity to impress your guests than a way to make someone feel welcome in your life. In that way, it's more about you as the host than about those you are hosting. But in Scripture, God calls all Christians—male and female, rich and poor, excellent cooks and mediocre microwave users—to show hospitality.

Paul wrote these instructions to Christians in Romans: “Love must be sincere. Hate what is evil; cling to what is good. Be devoted to one another in love. Honor one another above yourselves. . . . Practice hospitality” (Rom. 12:9, 10, 13).

John told Gaius, regarding Christians sent out from the church, “We ought therefore to show hospitality to such people so that we may work together for the truth” (3 John 1:8).

Peter said, “The end of all things is near,” and he followed that statement with several directives, including, “Offer hospitality to one another without grumbling” (1 Peter 4:7, 9).

The Old Testament, too, includes a story where we see hospitality at work. In 2 Kings 4, a Shunammite woman provided for the needs of the prophet Elisha. She told her husband, “I know that this man who often comes our way is a holy man of God,” and planned to make a place for him to use whenever he needed it (vv. 9–10). The Shunammite woman is described as “well-to-do” (v. 8), and she did not need much by way of material possessions. She noticed Elisha's need and then used what she had to provide for what he lacked. For the rest of her story, finish reading chapter 4 and 2 Kings 8:1–6.

WHERE TO BEGIN

What can we learn from this example of the Shunammite woman, Elisha, and the New Testament writers' instructions to Christians? First, don't be discouraged if hospitality doesn't come naturally to you. Instead, pray you would grow in your desire to open your life to others and invite them in through hospitality.

Second, rely on the Holy Spirit to reveal the needs of others; in particular, ask how you can reach out to unsaved neighbors and casual acquaintances. The Bible verses mentioned previously are in the context of the church, and we can bring this same attitude to learning how to reach the unchurched through hospitality. We must see people as God sees them and take the time to get to know them so that their needs become more obvious to us. But relying on our strength and discernment will exhaust us. We must pray for God's help.

WELCOMING THE OUTSIDER

Not only are there no qualifiers, other than being a Christian, in Scripture for showing biblical hospitality, but also, there are no specific instructions for how we are supposed to show hospitality in every circumstance. The Shunammite woman provided for Elisha's needs with more traditional means of showing hospitality. Elisha provided for her needs in a more unexpected way. And yet both achieved a similar purpose—an outsider was welcomed and provided for, and ultimately, God received glory from their kindness.

Pray God would open your heart to being hospitable and reveal the needs of those around you, particularly those who are outside the family of God. Pray for creativity to be hospitable with the means God has given you and for open doors to share the gospel with the people you reach. I serve on the hospitality team at my church. A large part of what we do is pretty simple—we greet members and guests alike with a smile and words of welcome as they enter the worship gathering on Sunday mornings. Though we can easily get caught up in focusing on what we do or do not have to offer, instead, let us rest on Christ and all *He* has to offer. He has provided all we need to enter into His rest. So, when He opens the door for someone else, we are to be people standing with arms outstretched and smiles on our faces (and sometimes a warm batch of cookies), ready to say, “Welcome home.”

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MANDY HEWITT works in communications for a ministry focused on serving and equipping the church to make disciples around the world. She loves reading, writing, and thinking deeply about God and His Word. Mandy lives in Birmingham, Alabama, and is a member of Christ Fellowship Church.

COMPASSION THROUGH HOSPITALITY

LOOKING AT THE IMPORTANCE OF HOSPITALITY AS A CHRIST FOLLOWER

Prayer Patterns is a monthly devotional guide highlighting prayer for missionaries on their birthdays.

This month, we will look at showing compassion through hospitality. When we talk about hospitality today, many associate it with hotels, restaurants, and entertainment. All three of these areas welcome guests and strangers into an environment to be made comfortable, fed, and satisfied. For believers, simply showing another person he or she is welcome in our presence—in our homes, in our churches, in our communities—is the first step in displaying Christ’s love and opening doors for gospel conversations.

We find many examples of hospitality in the Old and New Testaments, including many examples where hospitality was shown to Jesus and His followers. We’ll explore hospitality in the Bible from Abraham to the members of the early church. We will also look at a few contemporary women who are impacting and being impacted by compassion through hospitality. How can we see God leading us as Christ followers to show compassion to others through hospitality?

Prayer Calendar Idea

If you lead Women on Mission or another missions group, then try this idea to encourage women in your group to pray for missions this month. Visit wmu.com/thismonth and select the “Adults” tab to find a graphic of a welcome mat with a Bible verse, and copy the image for each participant. Add the names of missionaries celebrating birthdays. If you make your own welcome mat graphics, include Romans 12:9-13 or 1 Peter 4:7-9 on each welcome mat, alongside the missionary name and his or her area of service.

SATURDAY, JUNE 1

PASSAGE: GENESIS 18:1-8

FOCUS: GENESIS 18:2

This week, we are going to look at Abraham’s reaction to the three men who visited him and Sarah.

Abraham was sitting by his tent during the day. He lived in a part of the world where the sun shines down harshly in the middle of the day with temperatures at their hottest. Strangers were probably the furthest thought from Abraham’s mind, but he looked up to see three men—who he eventually realized were heavenly representatives—standing in front of him. Even though Abraham was surprised by their visit, he rushed to meet the men at the door of his tent. He not only rushed to them, but he “bowed low to the ground” (v. 2).

When people come to your door, do you rush to see who is there and welcome them inside to get out of the elements? Pray God would give you and missionaries around the world an urgency to meet strangers at our doors.

Prayer Focus—Deaf Peoples: Pray for a Jewish woman in Southeast Asia who is seeking the truth. She met a believer at a Deaf school where she volunteers. Pray she would remember her conversations with the believer about the gospel and that she would find and understand the truth.

PRAY FOR

NORTH AMERICAN MISSION BOARD

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- INDIANA:** Benjamin Hurt
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missionary of the week

SUNDAY, JUNE 2

SAM AND JOANNA CHOI

MINNEAPOLIS, MINNESOTA

PASSAGES: GENESIS 18:1-8;

HEBREWS 13:2

FOCUS: HEBREWS 13:2



The Twin Cities area has large Somali, Hmong, and Hispanic populations. Despite the large numbers of ethnicities in Minneapolis, Minnesota, these people groups live in different places and often don't interact with one another.

The Chois are intentionally planting a church that tries to reach unchurched people from different backgrounds and bring them together. To help reach new people with the gospel, the Chois and All Nations Church share Christ at the Mall of America and host regular meals at a park.

The church meets just blocks from the site of George Floyd's death. The Chois are praying All Nations Church would be a truly multiethnic church with a challenging and powerful witness at that unique location.

THE COOPERATIVE PROGRAM takes the gospel to the nations and the neighborhoods. Your financial support through the Cooperative Program helps churches like All Nations Church share Jesus in some of the most diverse places in North America.

PRAY All Nations Church would be faithful to reach the nations who live in Minneapolis.

PRAY FOR

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Nancy Ryals, William Swank

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Bev Vaughn

MONDAY, JUNE 3

PASSAGE: GENESIS 18:1-8

FOCUS: GENESIS 18:4-5

My nephews play a lot of basketball. Many times I have asked them to put their shoes outside, throw their socks in the clothes hamper, and go wash their stinky feet. In Abraham's time, people wore sandals and walked most places, so washing their feet often was necessary and important.

After rushing to the visitors, Abraham offered water to wash their feet and a little shade under a tree for them to rest. Abraham's decision to wash the feet of his angelic visitors was a cultural showing of service. We see the idea of foot washing with Jesus and His disciples in the New Testament as a sign of servanthood. Abraham presented the

idea of hospitality by serving the men and cleaning their feet.

I have not physically washed my nephews' feet or the feet of strangers; however, I pray God would show me a person He wants me to serve through hospitality. Pray God would open your eyes to those needing hospitality in your life. Pray God would help missionaries humble themselves to be willing to even wash the feet of those Jesus brings to them.

Prayer Focus—Sub-Saharan African Peoples: Villages in Botswana are often spread out and difficult to get to. Church-planting efforts started in the remote village of Ditshegwane, and after a successful church plant, missionaries wanted to reach the village of Dutlwe. Now 20 believers meet there under a tree to study God's Word weekly. Pray the Lord would continue to make His name known in every village throughout Botswana.

PRAY FOR

NORTH AMERICAN MISSION BOARD

ALABAMA: Katie Asplund

ARIZONA: Ramiz Saleem

MASSACHUSETTS: Scott Cope

NORTH CAROLINA: Samantha Davis,

Travis Triplett

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TUESDAY, JUNE 4

PASSAGE: GENESIS 18:1-8

FOCUS: GENESIS 18:6

Abraham was so excited about his and Sarah's guests that he ran into the tent to let Sarah know. He told her to make cakes. When I make bread by using a bread maker, it is about a three- or four-hour process. Bread is a process of waiting, kneading, and letting the dough rise. However, in verse 6, Abraham said, "Quick!" These cakes of bread would

have been similar to naan, thin bread that would cook quickly for their guests.

When we get ready for expected visitors, we are able to plan ahead and prepare food. Unexpected visitors can be nerve-racking. A few years ago, I was visiting a friend in Southeast Asia. She shared with me some items she kept in her house for impromptu visits. She always had tea and a small cake with nuts should the occasion arise to visit with local women.

Pray God would prepare your heart, mind, and resources to be hospitable to planned and unplanned guests. Pray God would help missionaries manage the challenge of responding to often unexpected experiences on the missions field.

Prayer Focus—Sub-Saharan African Peoples: Pray for the large group of American volunteers going to work with churches in Cape Town, South Africa, as part of the Send Relief Serve Tour this month. Pray people around the city would understand the love of Christ as volunteers share the gospel and serve the various communities alongside their South African brothers and sisters. Pray for a harvest in Cape Town!

PRAY FOR
NORTH AMERICAN MISSION BOARD

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OREGON: Noe Flores, Frank Wood

PENNSYLVANIA: Reginald Johnson

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PEOPLES: HA, MS

SOUTH ASIAN PEOPLES: JM

SUB-SAHARAN AFRICAN PEOPLES:

Daniel Lowry

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Winston Collins, PD, Claren Dease,
George Faile, Shirley Farley,
Jan Huckaby, Bruce Muskrat,
Norma Nichols, Phil Templin, LW,
Vicki Williamson, Buddy Woodson

WEDNESDAY, JUNE 5

PASSAGE: GENESIS 18:1-8

FOCUS: GENESIS 18:7-8

Genesis records that Abraham “ran” to the herd to find a calf to kill for his guests (v. 7). He also gathered curds and milk. Abraham was looking for his best and wasn’t worried about whether he would have enough to eat next week or next month. Abraham’s only concern was to make his guests feel welcome by feeding them.

When I come upon a stranger, my prayer is that I would follow Abraham’s example of tending to his guests and not his future. Pray God would keep you focused on the opportunity to show compassion through hospitality and not what may happen tomorrow or next week. Pray missionaries would have open hands, open hearts, and open homes to welcome those God has called them to serve.

Prayer Focus—Sub-Saharan African Peoples: A new African mission-sending agency launched in February. Missionaries have seen God do amazing things to unite churches from seven southern African nations to play their part in accomplishing the Great Commission. This missions organization exists to recruit, train, send, and support African missionaries to the nations. Pray God would call many Africans and that they would be obedient to go wherever He leads.

PRAY FOR
NORTH AMERICAN MISSION BOARD

CALIFORNIA: Josiah Espinoza

FLORIDA: Rafael Quinteros

HAWAII: Christopher Thomas

KANSAS: John Harms

KENTUCKY: Sheila Patterson

NEW MEXICO: Oscar Rocha

OHIO: Cory Wilson

OKLAHOMA: Alfred Biswas

INTERNATIONAL MISSION BOARD

ASIAN PACIFIC RIM PEOPLES:

Stephen Hagen

CENTRAL ASIAN PEOPLES: SB

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Richard Wilson

RETIRED IMB: BB, JB, Cile Borders,

Elton Gray, Jose Vasquez

THURSDAY, JUNE 6

PASSAGE: GENESIS 18:1-8

FOCUS: GENESIS 18:7-8

My friend Sarah R., who serves in South Asia, loves sharing her home with friends and others who may need to hear about God. She recently told me about the culture of hospitality where she serves: “South Asians are gifted in hospitality, and so many times I have been overwhelmed by their generosity, [such as] serving me fish when I know it costs them much of their weekly salary. I am humbled that they care so much they would sacrifice for me. Denying them the chance to serve me would be rude.” Just like Abraham, these South Asians want their guests to feel welcomed into their culture no matter the cost.

Pray God would help you show your guests they are welcome in your life no matter the cost. Pray He would strengthen missionaries to continue to give of themselves to the stranger at their doors.

Prayer Focus—Sub-Saharan African Peoples: Every few years, missionaries who serve in sub-Saharan Africa take a stateside assignment, or what used to be called *furlough*. Pray missionaries who are in the United States would be able to connect with churches and share with them how God is working in their place of service.

Pray they would also be able to enjoy time with family and rest while there.

PRAY FOR
NORTH AMERICAN MISSION BOARD

FLORIDA: Ferlain Hoover, Adam Smith

IDAHO: Randy Jackson

MAINE: Marilyn McClendon

MARYLAND: Luis Arce

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PEOPLES:** MC

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Morgan Wright

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Charles Orange, Connie Robbins,

Richard Rolfe

FRIDAY, JUNE 7

PASSAGE: GENESIS 18:1-10

FOCUS: GENESIS 18:9-10

When Abraham saw the men walking toward his tent, he did not respond hospitably because he hoped to be blessed. He expected nothing in return from these men, and later in the passage, we see he realized the visitors were sent from God Himself. After the act of hospitality, one of the men (who was in fact God incarnate) wanted to bless Abraham and Sarah with a child. Abraham and Sarah were advanced in age and far past the time to have a child. Sarah did not believe what she heard and even laughed at the statement.

Pray your heart would be in the right place. Pray you would not practice hospitality for what you may get out of the situation. Having an expectation of return will often leave you disappointed. I challenge you to enter into hospitality with the

intention of not receiving anything for your actions. Most of the time, your act of hospitality will not be returned. Pray missionaries would use hospitality selflessly and that many nonbelievers would hear and respond to the message of salvation as a result.

Prayer Focus—Sub-Saharan African Peoples: Pray for regional Africa Baptist Theological Education Network meetings that will be taking place from June to August. Every other year, several schools and theological educators from the region gather together to discuss different topics, pray together, and plan for the future. Pray God would increase the sound theological education footprint in sub-Saharan Africa.

PRAY FOR
NORTH AMERICAN MISSION BOARD

MAINE: Courtland Holloway

NORTH CAROLINA: William Ferrell

OHIO: Josh Rosentreter

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Kittipong Wattanawongsawang

CENTRAL ASIAN PEOPLES: CW

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PEOPLES:** JP

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RETIRED IMB: Orman Gwynn,

Phillip Hunt, SS, Betty Spiegel,

Susan Stokeld, Toby Tobias,

Peggy Wallace, Sheila Wang,

Karen Wright

SATURDAY, JUNE 8

PASSAGE: LEVITICUS 19:33-34

FOCUS: LEVITICUS 19:34

God's Word commands believers to show hospitality. Consider these verses: Romans 12:13–16 and 1 Peter 4:8–11. We read in the Old Testament how the Israelites were reminded to especially show hospitality to foreigners, as they themselves knew what living as strangers in a strange land was like.

Many people today have to leave their homelands for specific reasons. We know these people as refugees, people who are forced to leave their countries to escape war, persecution, or natural disaster. I have a friend who works with refugees in the United States. She helps them learn English and better navigate their new country.

Pray those working with refugees would have the resources needed as they help unsettled people settle in their new homes. Pray that as refugees enter these sanctuaries, they would hear about and respond to the source of all refuge, Jesus.

Prayer Focus—Sub-Saharan African Peoples: As missionaries in sub-Saharan Africa engage in the missionary task in hard places, they sometimes see heavy things. Pray they would give Jesus all their burdens, trust Him, and learn biblically healthy coping strategies. Pray they would have wisdom to know when to help and the best way to do that.

PRAY FOR
NORTH AMERICAN MISSION BOARD

CALIFORNIA: Mark Spansel

COLORADO: Joseph Ricks

FLORIDA: Javed Massey

GEORGIA: Carlos Guevara

KENTUCKY: Sarah Wood

MISSOURI: Philip Dooley

NORTH CAROLINA: Matthew Taft

WASHINGTON: Richmond Hutchins

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Hiromi Price, JV, VW

EUROPEAN PEOPLES: Carrie Borden,

Hannah Morrero

**NORTHERN AFRICAN AND MIDDLE EASTERN
PEOPLES:** JG, AJ

SOUTH ASIAN PEOPLES: DR

SUB-SAHARAN AFRICAN PEOPLES:

Erin Rowan

CHAPLAINS • VOLUNTEERS

STATE CONVENTION MISSIONARIES

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Norman Ford, Wallace Parham,

Lorna Sims, Fonda Stout

RETIRED IMB: Donna Beard,

June Caplinger, KK, Tim Mahoney,

Elizabeth Merritt, Joe Turman

missionary of the week

SUNDAY, JUNE 9

CALEB AND CARINA BEATY
EUROPEAN PEOPLES

PASSAGE: MATTHEW 25:28-43

FOCUS: MATTHEW 25:40

On Easter Sunday in 2020, Caleb and Carina Beaty stood by their apartment window and played worship music that echoed through the central courtyard of their apartment complex in Madrid, Spain.

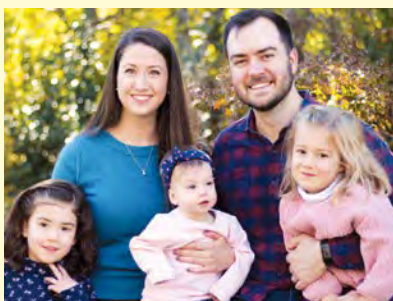
While their concert led to conversations with neighbors, new friends, and invitations to neighbors' houses, the Beatys said the most substantial result happened because of an International Mission Board story that featured their work and was posted online with a video. Not long after the story was posted, a woman messaged Carina to say she watched the video and explained she had a Spanish exchange student named Maria living with her in the United States. She asked whether she could connect them. The exchange student had become a Christian and wanted to be discipled.

After Maria returned to Spain, she kick-started the Beatys' ministry. Maria invited her family and friends to their small group. She brought a friend to church and frequently shares her faith with those around her.

Carina said this connection was "not because of anything that we've done. It's the Lord working, and it just happened that [Maria's] host mom saw our video and got in touch with me."

THE COOPERATIVE PROGRAM takes the gospel to the nations and the neighborhoods. Your financial support through the Cooperative Program enables missionaries to show God's love to those around them and share the gospel.

PRAY God would use social media to reach many people who need to hear the good news of Jesus.



meet his physical needs. As Elijah came upon the city gate, he met a widow who was willing to bring him water. But when he requested a piece of bread, she responded that she had none—only enough flour and olive oil to make bread one final time. Elijah said her flour and oil would not run dry until the Lord sent rain. God provided for the widow and her household as she served Elijah.

What a step of faith for the widow! Pray your faith would be strong enough to show hospitality even when your resources seem unable to meet the need at hand. Pray God would be the never-ending supply of oil to missionaries everywhere as they serve sacrificially.

Prayer Focus—Arizona: Marshall and Kali Morris are planting A Prayer Away Church in Phoenix, Arizona. "Sometimes we struggle with believing what God has told us. Pray the words of Mark 9:24 for us, 'I do believe; help me overcome my unbelief!'"

PRAY FOR **NORTH AMERICAN MISSION BOARD**

GEORGIA: Jeremy Sin

MICHIGAN: Ryan Cabildo

TEXAS: Vincent Enyioke

VERMONT: Timothy Owens

INTERNATIONAL MISSION BOARD

CENTRAL ASIAN PEOPLES: RW

EUROPEAN PEOPLES: RL

NORTHERN AFRICAN AND MIDDLE EASTERN

PEOPLES: JB, NB, MK, ER, MT

SOUTH ASIAN PEOPLES: ER, JR

SUB-SAHARAN AFRICAN PEOPLES:

Gen Bartlett

CHAPLAINS • VOLUNTEERS

STATE CONVENTION MISSIONARIES

RETIRED NAMB: Eugene Bragg,

Robert Tremaine

RETIRED IMB: Connie Anthony,

Ida Davis, Hunter Hammett,

Brenda Murry, Sue Whitten

TUESDAY, JUNE 11

PASSAGE: 2 KINGS 4:8-17

FOCUS: 2 KINGS 4:9-10

Just as the Shunammite woman provided for Elisha, you have opportunities to show hospitality to

PRAY FOR

NORTH AMERICAN MISSION BOARD

CALIFORNIA: Daniel Funderburk,

David Rangel-Diaz

COLORADO: Brian Zebarth

KENTUCKY: Ethan Kiteck,

Cameron Mitchell

MASSACHUSETTS: Samuel Schwanke

OKLAHOMA: Guillermo Alegria

WYOMING: Andrew Reeves

INTERNATIONAL MISSION BOARD

ASIAN PACIFIC RIM PEOPLES: David Busby,

BC, Melissa Scott

CENTRAL ASIAN PEOPLES: LB, ER

NORTHERN AFRICAN AND MIDDLE EASTERN

PEOPLES: JK

SOUTH ASIAN PEOPLES: JR

CHAPLAINS • VOLUNTEERS

STATE CONVENTION MISSIONARIES

RETIRED NAMB: Betty Braden,

James Deguire, Kenneth McCune,

Ruby Williams, Anne Woo

RETIRED IMB: Phillip Brewster,

Lisa Howell, Sherry Pegues,

Darlene Sorley

MONDAY, JUNE 10

PASSAGE: 1 KINGS 17:7-16

FOCUS: 1 KINGS 17:13-16

Another great example of hospitality is the story of the widow of Zarephath. Elijah was called by God to deliver a message to Ahab that a drought was coming. Once Elijah's water source dried up from no rain, God told him to move on to Zarephath, where a widow would

fellow believers. Consider how you could offer hospitality and open your home to someone in ministry at your church or a stateside missionary in your area. Could you provide a meal? Could you welcome someone into your home for a time of fellowship over coffee and genuine conversation?

Pray God would open your eyes to opportunities to bless others by meeting physical needs and providing friendship along the journey. Pray God would supply supporters to missionaries who need places of rest and rejuvenation.

Prayer Focus—Florida: Bryan Lingle is a corporate chaplain serving PGT Innovations in Venice, Florida. “My 24-year-old daughter, Morgan, has been diagnosed with Ewing’s sarcoma. She is preparing for seven months of chemotherapy. Pray for healing and support during her treatment.”

PRAY FOR

NORTH AMERICAN MISSION BOARD

COLORADO: Tizitaw Kassa

FLORIDA: Jonathan Dixon,

Jean Louissaint

NEBRASKA: Ryan Lovie

NORTH CAROLINA: Arthur Bien

OHIO: Timothy Binns

TEXAS: Thomas Cheevers

VIRGINIA: Joshua Turner

PUERTO RICO: Diego Adrianzen,

Hector Candelaria Fernandez

INTERNATIONAL MISSION BOARD

ASIAN PACIFIC RIM PEOPLES: JD, PH, CK,

Tony Lee, SR, TW

CENTRAL ASIAN PEOPLES: JB, JK

NORTHERN AFRICAN AND MIDDLE EASTERN

PEOPLES: TR

CHAPLAINS • VOLUNTEERS

STATE CONVENTION MISSIONARIES

RETIRED NAMB: Norman Bell,

Robert Farrell, Zachariah Fugate,

Virginia McKay, Tuan Nguyen

RETIRED IMB: CD, Donna Enge,

Mavis Hardy, Lynne Johnson,

Martha Moore, DP, Charles Ruede,

JS, Nadine Waddle

WEDNESDAY, JUNE 12

PASSAGE: PHILIPPIANS 2:1-5

FOCUS: PHILIPPIANS 2:5

This week, Southern Baptist church leaders have gathered together in Indianapolis, Indiana, to conduct the business of the Southern Baptist Convention (SBC). For a few days each year, leaders discuss, make recommendations, and vote. Each SBC church gets the opportunity to be represented by its messengers.

These messengers are church leaders and members, much like you and me. The SBC has been described as the world’s largest business meeting and as a family reunion. It is both. The business section helps the work of the Convention continue practically. But there is also a special time where missionaries are committed to their fields of service. As they go, we send our prayers with them, and we renew our commitment to be on mission.

Today, pray for the more than 50,000 churches that make up the SBC. Pray these churches would cooperate together to take the gospel of Jesus Christ to every neighborhood and every nation. Together, we accomplish much. As the meeting in Indianapolis closes today and each messenger travels home, the work of the SBC begins anew. We rededicate ourselves to share with the lost and show hospitality as cooperating churches. In this way, we show that we have the same mindset as Christ. Pray today for all those who make up the Southern Baptist Convention.

Prayer Focus—Texas: Chris Millar is lead pastor for The Well Community Church in San Marcos, Texas. His sending church is University Heights Baptist Church in Huntsville, Texas. “The Well Community Church is planting its first church this year! Pray for Josh and Amanda Clark as they plant The Vine Community Church in Buda, Texas. Pray for favor for them in the

city and financial provision, and pray our church would support them well.”

PRAY FOR

NORTH AMERICAN MISSION BOARD

CALIFORNIA: Ramdan Tjahjadja

ILLINOIS: Jose Nunez

KENTUCKY: Wilma Simmons

NEW YORK: Elias Gomez

SOUTH CAROLINA: Timothy Cross

TEXAS: James Sercey

INTERNATIONAL MISSION BOARD

AMERICAN PEOPLES: RE

ASIAN PACIFIC RIM PEOPLES: Yae Hite, KJ,

Justin Knippers, PW

CENTRAL ASIAN PEOPLES: BB, AS

EUROPEAN PEOPLES: MS, Luke Tolbert

NORTHERN AFRICAN AND MIDDLE EASTERN

PEOPLES: MM

SOUTH ASIAN PEOPLES: RN

SUB-SAHARAN AFRICAN PEOPLES: DM,

Ross Riley, JS

CHAPLAINS • VOLUNTEERS

STATE CONVENTION MISSIONARIES

RETIRED IMB: Mary Jo Cooke, JD,

James Erickson, Jeanine Horne, MJ,

KK, Jack Ollis, William Perkins,

Lya Santhon, Don Snell,

Connie Taylor, David Wyman

THURSDAY, JUNE 13

PASSAGE: 1 CORINTHIANS 16:17-18

FOCUS: 1 CORINTHIANS 16:18

Over the past few days, we’ve seen Old Testament examples of hospitality when physical needs were met by people who were not expecting their guest and may not have had enough resources. The hospitality they exhibited points to God’s compassion. He uses acts of hospitality to show who He is as a provider and how He cares for everyone.

A great mentor and friend of mine walked through a journey of foster care. Another foster parent advised my friend to encourage the caseworkers by offering a soda, bottle of water, coffee, or snack bag as they left their home visit. Through this small act of hospitality, the caseworker, whose job is a difficult one, was encouraged and felt welcomed.

With what small act of hospitality can you encourage someone around

you? Pray God would open your eyes to what you have to offer.

Prayer Focus—Illinois: Jay Simala is the lead church planter for The Gathering Network in Gurnee, Illinois. “We are starting a training program for 16 church planters. We hope to plant our first two churches in the fall. Pray for the men in the program and that God would give me wisdom as I lead the program.”

PRAY FOR
NORTH AMERICAN MISSION BOARD

- CALIFORNIA:** Jofri Frigillana, G’Joe Joseph
- GEORGIA:** Amy Waddell
- KANSAS:** Jered Williams
- MASSACHUSETTS:** Antonio Delazerda
- OKLAHOMA:** Eudomar Rivera
- PUERTO RICO:** Rubén Rodríguez

INTERNATIONAL MISSION BOARD

- AMERICAN PEOPLES:** JM, Marjorie Potter
- ASIAN PACIFIC RIM PEOPLES:** KG
- CENTRAL ASIAN PEOPLES:** SA
- EUROPEAN PEOPLES:** Kendra Clarke, Anne Purvis

- NORTHERN AFRICAN AND MIDDLE EASTERN PEOPLES:** JD
- SOUTH ASIAN PEOPLES:** AH
- SUB-SAHARAN AFRICAN PEOPLES:** Suzanne Mauritzen

- CHAPLAINS • VOLUNTEERS**
- STATE CONVENTION MISSIONARIES**
- RETIRED NAMB:** Allen Elston, William Nutt, Manuel Salinas
- RETIRED IMB:** Dene Greer, Ron Langston, Kathryn Malthaner, BP, Kathy Reeves, Jeff Swanson, Marsha Woods

FRIDAY, JUNE 14

- PASSAGES:** MATTHEW 9:9-13; MARK 2:13-17; LUKE 5:27-32
- FOCUS:** MATTHEW 9:12

As we move into the New Testament, we find examples of compassion through hospitality by Jesus Christ Himself. In today’s passage, we see Jesus sharing a meal with the tax collector Matthew, other tax collectors, and others labeled as sinners. The Pharisees questioned why someone like Jesus would eat with these kinds of men. Jesus replied, “It is not the healthy who need a doctor, but the sick” (Matt. 9:12).

Jesus made it clear He came to save people who were sinners and needed a Savior. His offer of compassion is for all. Jesus wants everyone to be at the table with Him. As we host people at our tables, we should be willing to invite and show hospitality to those who do not look or act like us. Pray God would open your heart to invite someone to your table who is different from you.

Prayer Focus—Florida: Andres Reyes is a residency church planter for Celebration Baptist Church in Tallahassee, Florida. “Pray for my church, for leaders, for integrity, and for more Hispanic planters in Tallahassee.”

PRAY FOR
NORTH AMERICAN MISSION BOARD

- IOWA:** Luke Snowden
- NORTH CAROLINA:** Brad Knox
- OKLAHOMA:** Tyler Barnes

INTERNATIONAL MISSION BOARD

- ASIAN PACIFIC RIM PEOPLES:** Joseph Blandeburgo
- CENTRAL ASIAN PEOPLES:** MA, WA, DH, JS
- EUROPEAN PEOPLES:** Jason Davis, TW
- NORTHERN AFRICAN AND MIDDLE EASTERN PEOPLES:** JB, AJ

- SUB-SAHARAN AFRICAN PEOPLES:** LW
- CHAPLAINS • VOLUNTEERS**
- STATE CONVENTION MISSIONARIES**
- RETIRED NAMB:** Stephen Faith, Zilia Gonzalez, Adrian Hall, Mary Stack, Sharon Whitaker, Yun Yong
- RETIRED IMB:** John Laramore, KM, Tom Suiter

SATURDAY, JUNE 15

- PASSAGES:** MATTHEW 8:14-15; MARK 1:29-31; LUKE 4:38-39; 1 JOHN 4:19
- FOCUS:** 1 JOHN 4:19

Jesus stayed at Peter’s house while He preached at synagogues in Judea. During this visit, many heard about Jesus healing those with illnesses and demons. Well into the night, many people brought those who needed to be healed to Jesus at Peter’s house. One of the first healed was Peter’s mother-in-law, who had a high fever. Peter showed hospitality not only to

Jesus but to many who needed healing and forgiveness.

As a Christ follower, you can show His love to the guests in your home. Through your example, people can begin to see the love God has for them. In opening your home to others, you can deepen a relationship with them that leads to sharing the gospel message. When we offer hospitality, we have the opportunity to share about Jesus. Pray God would guide you to show His love and tell others about Him as you offer hospitality.

Prayer Focus—Missouri: Chad Glover is the lead church planter of Abundant Life Crossroads in Kansas City, Missouri. His sending church is Abundant Life in Lee’s Summit, Missouri. “Pray for the healing of my daughter, Lydia. She is 12 and has a chronic bone inflammation disease. Pray the church would display holiness in the heart of our city. Pray God would give us the heart of the heartland so we can reach the heart of the nation for Him.”

PRAY FOR
NORTH AMERICAN MISSION BOARD

- ARKANSAS:** Chanson Newborn
- CALIFORNIA:** Nevin Marmion
- GEORGIA:** Lawrence Rule
- ILLINOIS:** Kim Dang, Dustin Haile
- KENTUCKY:** Natasha Nail
- MISSOURI:** Eddy Elivo
- NORTH CAROLINA:** Alan-Michael Sprinkle
- OHIO:** Grant Rohlfer
- TEXAS:** Justin Smith
- WEST VIRGINIA:** Brandon Rohrbacher

INTERNATIONAL MISSION BOARD

- ASIAN PACIFIC RIM PEOPLES:** LC, MC, JK, AL
- CENTRAL ASIAN PEOPLES:** KC, KG, SH
- EUROPEAN PEOPLES:** Elizabeth Boss, CM
- NORTHERN AFRICAN AND MIDDLE EASTERN PEOPLES:** SL, MM, RW
- SUB-SAHARAN AFRICAN PEOPLES:** BS, Josh Storey

- CHAPLAINS • VOLUNTEERS**
- STATE CONVENTION MISSIONARIES**
- RETIRED NAMB:** Leesa Overstreet, Don Reed
- RETIRED IMB:** PB, Jerome Ethredge, Jack Frost, Jill Harvell, Sharon McPherson, Janet Rohde

missionary of the week

SUNDAY, JUNE 16

MATT AND AMANDA HADDEN
PORCUPINE, SOUTH DAKOTA

PASSAGE: LUKE 7:36-50
FOCUS: LUKE 7:44-48

Matt Hadden planned to become an international missionary before he visited the Pine Ridge Reservation in South Dakota on a short-term missions trip. While there, he saw the tremendous needs around him. Matt realized God was calling him and his family to serve the people there long term.

Less than 3 percent of the Oglala Lakota people claim to know Jesus. Matt and his wife, Amanda, hope to change that statistic and help them experience the hope of the gospel.

The Haddens lead Chankú Wašté (*ch-ahn-kooh wash-tay*) Ranch, a Send Relief ministry center on the reservation. They share Christ through a three-pronged approach: a summer camp, providing free home repair, and offering medical services through a new clinic.

THE COOPERATIVE PROGRAM takes the gospel to the nations and the neighborhoods. Your financial support through the Cooperative Program helps missionaries and church plants be intentional in a gospel reach to their communities.

PRAY the Lord would give the Haddens wisdom as they minister to the many physical and spiritual needs of the Oglala Lakota people.



She broke it open and poured the oil over Jesus' head.

When we invite those without a relationship with Christ into our homes and lives, they may feel uneasy about it. They may wonder whether we will openly welcome them. They may worry we will try to convert them or condemn them. If they are open to the gospel, they may feel embarrassed at their lack of knowledge and be reluctant to ask questions.

Jesus received this woman, relieved her anxiety, and would not allow her to remain a spectacle at the dinner. We can learn from His actions to show hospitality as we seek to share about Him. Pray God would help you show compassion and hospitality rather than judgment. Pray missionaries would have the opportunity to show hospitality to the lost as a way to introduce them to the Savior who is ready to welcome them.

Prayer Focus—American Peoples: Pray for the Wiwa (*WEE-wah*) of Colombia. A worker wrote, "A member of our team has shared the gospel multiple times over the past couple of years with Timothy, a young man who desires to learn more about the gospel but also seeks information from other groups that do not teach the true gospel. Pray Timothy would respond to the true gospel with repentance and faith."

PRAY FOR
NORTH AMERICAN MISSION BOARD
CALIFORNIA: Aleksei Kharlamov
GEORGIA: Matt Baxter
MARYLAND: Mario Lleonart Barroso
NORTH CAROLINA: Michael Tiekou
OKLAHOMA: Wesley Robertson
UTAH: Leonardo Lopez
INTERNATIONAL MISSION BOARD
AMERICAN PEOPLES: Dianna Bizzell
ASIAN PACIFIC RIM PEOPLES: TH, RM
CENTRAL ASIAN PEOPLES: BS
DEAF PEOPLES: FM
EUROPEAN PEOPLES: Rylie Cooper,
Martin Douglas
SUB-SAHARAN AFRICAN PEOPLES: JF, RW

PRAY FOR

NORTH AMERICAN MISSION BOARD

MISSOURI: Nathan Franks

NEVADA: Jennifer Kane

NEW HAMPSHIRE: Aaron Cockrum

TEXAS: Aaron Terrazas

ONTARIO: Sudhir Basumatary,
Aliakbar Fallahi

INTERNATIONAL MISSION BOARD

ASIAN PACIFIC RIM PEOPLES: DH, RM

CENTRAL ASIAN PEOPLES: HE, LW

EUROPEAN PEOPLES: Hannah Hill

NORTHERN AFRICAN AND MIDDLE EASTERN PEOPLES: ZD

SOUTH ASIAN PEOPLES: MH

CHAPLAINS • VOLUNTEERS

STATE CONVENTION MISSIONARIES

RETIRED NAMB: Dorothy Hutson,
Robert Warren

RETIRED IMB: TA, Melissa Frady,
Betty Jo Hall, Clarence Hartley,
Carol Jacks, Liz Johnston,
Ben Kirby, LL, Ward Nicholson, CS,
Jerri Younkman

MONDAY, JUNE 17

PASSAGE: LUKE 7:36-50

FOCUS: LUKE 7:47-48

I wonder how the woman with the alabaster jar was welcomed into Simon's home. Was she greeted as a friend? Was she begrudgingly admitted in? Did she sneak in, desperate to be with Jesus? What must she have felt as she made her way to Simon's home? Perhaps she worried she would be refused because of her past. Maybe she felt nervous about offering this gift. After all, this was an intimate act. What would the people at Simon's house think? Would Jesus receive her? We are not told. Scripture picks up as Jesus was reclining at a table with His disciples. We read that a woman came to Him with a container of expensive ointment.

**CHAPLAINS • VOLUNTEERS
STATE CONVENTION MISSIONARIES**

RETIRED NAMB: John Rogers,
John Simmons

RETIRED IMB: Gregory Alexander,
Phyllis Baker, Nancy Carley,
Don Courtney, Dona Fitzgerald, PG,
Sarah Haun, Braxton Humphries,
June Mason, Mary Frances Morphis

TUESDAY, JUNE 18

PASSAGE: LUKE 10:25-37

FOCUS: LUKE 10:27

A lawyer approached Jesus with a question, “What must I do to inherit eternal life?” (v. 25). Jesus prompted the man to answer the question himself, which he did: “Love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your strength and with all your mind”; and, ‘Love your neighbor as yourself’” (v. 27). The lawyer asked who his neighbor was. In response, Jesus told a parable about a man who had been robbed and was lying injured on the side of the road. Two religious leaders passed the man by, while a Samaritan man stopped to check on him. He then tended to the man and took him to an inn where the Samaritan paid for the innkeeper to take care of him and let him stay.

We are to love our neighbors as we love ourselves. And who are our neighbors? Everyone we engage with and have the opportunity to offer compassion and hospitality. How far are you willing to go to love others and show them the hospitality of Jesus? Pray God would open your eyes to see your neighbors and how you can love them. Pray for missionaries who have intentionally reached out to new communities, cities, countries, and people groups in order to be a neighbor to them. **Prayer Focus—Asian Pacific Rim Peoples: Missionaries in Seoul, South Korea, host a**

fun and informal monthly event for women to build relationships and have gospel conversations. As these women make pizzas, paint pumpkins, and enjoy other activities, pray believing women who come would share their testimonies boldly. Pray the nonbelieving women who attend would come to understand the gospel and accept Jesus as their Savior.

**PRAY FOR
NORTH AMERICAN MISSION BOARD**

FLORIDA: Lucas Fernandez Paz

KENTUCKY: Neil Bassett

MARYLAND: Tyler Silvey

NEBRASKA: Rick Lechner

OREGON: Mark Ford

INTERNATIONAL MISSION BOARD

ASIAN PACIFIC RIM PEOPLES: HP,

Claire Whittle, SY

CENTRAL ASIAN PEOPLES: JN, AP, MS

EUROPEAN PEOPLES: KP, Terry Willett, LY

SUB-SAHARAN AFRICAN PEOPLES:

Kurt Holiday, KW

CHAPLAINS • VOLUNTEERS

STATE CONVENTION MISSIONARIES

RETIRED NAMB: William Affolter,

Richard Carlson, William Kaufman,

Raul Vazquez

RETIRED IMB: Melissa Childers,

Steve Cooke,

Sharon Hawthorne, MR

WEDNESDAY, JUNE 19

PASSAGE: LUKE 10:38-42

FOCUS: LUKE 10:41-42

When I was asked to write about compassion shown through hospitality, the story of Mary and Martha was the first to come to mind. Martha opened her home to Jesus. Her sister was also in attendance; however, Mary chose to sit at Jesus’ feet to listen to His teachings. Martha became frustrated with her, because she wanted Mary to help her serve all the guests. Jesus reminded Martha that she was distracted from what was most important.

When you serve others, do you tend to dwell on what they are not doing based on your expectations? I have a tendency to have a “Martha” distraction when I am serving. Over the years, I have learned to pray

before I start serving and to pray while serving. This helps me focus on the real reason I am serving others—to be like Christ and to be obedient to His teachings.

How do you keep your focus while loving others through hospitality? What can you do to keep Christ the center of why you show compassion through hospitality? Pray God would help you choose what is better as you serve. Pray missionaries would not neglect sitting at the feet of Jesus as they engage in their ministries and acts of service.

Prayer Focus—Central Asian Peoples: A Muslim man who is seeking truth has been reading through the Book of Matthew with a group of believers. They asked him what he thinks about the things he has been hearing. “Spending time with Christians makes me think a lot!” he said. Pray he would have the faith to believe.

**PRAY FOR
NORTH AMERICAN MISSION BOARD**

ARKANSAS: Robby Tingle

GEORGIA: Stephen Heller

MICHIGAN: Tial Bik

OHIO: Robert Walz

OKLAHOMA: Angel Melendez

WISCONSIN: Greg Alles

INTERNATIONAL MISSION BOARD

AMERICAN PEOPLES: Cameron Davis, JM

DEAF PEOPLES: AW

EUROPEAN PEOPLES: MW

NORTHERN AFRICAN AND MIDDLE EASTERN

PEOPLES: AM, SM

SOUTH ASIAN PEOPLES: MR, DS

SUB-SAHARAN AFRICAN PEOPLES:

Shalyn Woodward

CHAPLAINS • VOLUNTEERS

STATE CONVENTION MISSIONARIES

RETIRED NAMB: Doris Coleman,

Alina Lopez, Loy Reed,

Jack Robbins, Josephine Villarreal

RETIRED IMB: Nancy Bridges, HG, TG,

Donald Gardner, Lindy Howard,

Asbury Martin, Shirley Randall,

Alexandra Valencia

THURSDAY, JUNE 20

PASSAGE: LUKE 19:1-10

FOCUS: LUKE 19:9

Many of us grew up singing about Jesus visiting Zacchaeus. Jesus was entering Jericho and invited himself over to Zacchaeus's house—and Zacchaeus's life was changed from that day forward.

As a Christ follower, I always pray that hospitality in my life would lead to conversations about God and how He has changed my life. While living in Little Rock, Arkansas, I had many opportunities to sit around a table with international students who were curious about Americans. Because of what started as simple hospitality, relationships formed, conversation grew, and the gospel was shared. While I didn't always see lives changed like Zacchaeus's, my prayer is that God would use my testimony and continue working in those students' lives. I challenge you to remember that hospitality does not stop with sharing food or a room—it's all about God's name and sharing Him with others.

Pray that what God may start in you as a simple act of hospitality and welcome would grow to include intentional gospel conversations. Pray missionaries, especially those in places where sharing the gospel is dangerous, would be sensitive to the Holy Spirit's promptings as they steer friendly conversations to the message of hope.

Prayer Focus—European Peoples: Many refugees from Ukraine remain in Poland, struggling with finding sufficient housing and employment. Grief and loss are still an everyday reality. There is also hope: many new churches have been formed, and people are being saved and baptized. Pray for those who are still displaced from their homes. Pray for churches and individuals who are working to help.

PRAY FOR

NORTH AMERICAN MISSION BOARD

CALIFORNIA: Kyung Lee

FLORIDA: Arthur Goncalves,

Andy Saint Remy

OKLAHOMA: Brooks Deatherage

TEXAS: Stephen Watson

VIRGINIA: Philip Amofah,

Andreas Combos, Evariste Kapinga

INTERNATIONAL MISSION BOARD

EUROPEAN PEOPLES: DJ, JM, Dena Odom,

Robby Ridgeway

NORTHERN AFRICAN AND MIDDLE EASTERN

PEOPLES: KB, JS

SUB-SAHARAN AFRICAN PEOPLES: MM

GLOBAL: MH

CHAPLAINS • VOLUNTEERS

STATE CONVENTION MISSIONARIES

RETIRED NAMB: Eugene Bryant,

Donald Childress, Elma Perez

RETIRED IMB: Michael Adams,

Milton Allred, Nancy Calvert,

Jesse Hoyer, Dennis McCall,

Kaye Morrison, Linda Rice,

Jeri Smith

FRIDAY, JUNE 21

PASSAGES: MATTHEW 10:5-15;

MARK 6:10; LUKE 9:4

FOCUS: MATTHEW 10:11-12

Jesus had 12 disciples He sent out to share about the kingdom of heaven. He instructed His disciples very specifically about entering towns and homes as they were sharing.

Missionaries around the United States and the world experience hospitality in different cultures. My friend Debbie Moore shared her experience in West Africa: "My Liberian friends were always quick to share hospitality with other missionaries and with me. From the first time I stepped onto Liberian soil until the day I left (due to the Liberian civil wars), friends like Albertha, Charlesetta, Ma Mary, Ester, and others displayed their love and care for me through their cooking, their conversations, and their compassion. Hospitality comes naturally for the majority of West Africans. I was blessed and comforted by the strong faith and

perseverance of Liberian sisters in Christ."

Debbie challenged believers to "pray missionaries would learn from the people they are called to serve. Pray compassion through hospitality would come more naturally to missionaries."

Prayer Focus—Northern African and Middle Eastern Peoples: Many Arab women struggle with loneliness. Wives rarely leave their homes, yet most husbands are out of the house during the day. Pray Arab women would turn to Jesus, looking to Him to be their comfort and closest companion. Pray these women would know the truth of Psalm 23:4, "For you are with me; your rod and your staff, they comfort me."

PRAY FOR

NORTH AMERICAN MISSION BOARD

COLORADO: Tim Hawkins

FLORIDA: Sammy Nelson

VIRGINIA: Ryan Ferro

INTERNATIONAL MISSION BOARD

ASIAN PACIFIC RIM PEOPLES: Russell Borg,

Hannah Long, OP

NORTHERN AFRICAN AND MIDDLE EASTERN

PEOPLES: AP

SUB-SAHARAN AFRICAN PEOPLES: ES

CHAPLAINS • VOLUNTEERS

STATE CONVENTION MISSIONARIES

RETIRED NAMB: John Davis,

Diana Lewis

RETIRED IMB: Donna Hagewood, KK,

June Wardlaw

SATURDAY, JUNE 22

PASSAGE: ACTS 10:30-33, 44-48

FOCUS: ACTS 10:44

As Cornelius was praying, God told him to send for Peter, who was staying with Simon in Joppa. Peter had traveled to Joppa, and he discovered the importance of hospitality. Peter shared about God's love and disciplined new believers but was far from his home. Because many wanted Peter to stay and disciple them, Peter needed a place to live and food to eat. He did not have to worry about his needs because believers stepped in and shared with their brother in Christ.

Traveling pastors aren't especially common today, but for many years, churches and their members would open their doors to provide support as the pastors shared about Jesus. How are we today willing to open our doors to meet the needs of church staff and missionaries? How can you encourage your church staff and missionaries? Pray today for your pastor, church staff, and any ministry workers you know. Pray missionaries would be encouraged and well supported by other local Christians, their local churches, and their sending churches.

Prayer Focus—South Asian Peoples: Join harvest laborers in South India in asking the Lord for an Urdu-language fellowship to emerge. Some groups are forming that

include Muslim seekers as well as former Muslims who are now believers. Pray more Urdu-speaking people in South India would trust in the Lord and that these groups would grow in faith and become a church.

PRAY FOR
NORTH AMERICAN MISSION BOARD
CALIFORNIA: Ken Castellanos
MINNESOTA: Jonathan Parnell
NEW YORK: Louis Abreu
INTERNATIONAL MISSION BOARD
ASIAN PACIFIC RIM PEOPLES:
 Ryan Tankersley
CENTRAL ASIAN PEOPLES: KB, MH
SOUTH ASIAN PEOPLES: JB, SE
SUB-SAHARAN AFRICAN PEOPLES:
 Mary Margaret Adair
CHAPLAINS • VOLUNTEERS
STATE CONVENTION MISSIONARIES
RETIRED NAMB: Sharon Brest
RETIRED IMB: Frank Coy,
 Robert Crockett, Brett Freemon,
 Clara Huff, Steve McCord

PRAY FOR
NORTH AMERICAN MISSION BOARD
MISSOURI: Darron Goodrich
NEW JERSEY: Octavio Gaitan,
 Roldan Manlapig
OHIO: Christopher Warszawski
OREGON: Dustin Payne
INTERNATIONAL MISSION BOARD
ASIAN PACIFIC RIM PEOPLES: JB, JW
CENTRAL ASIAN PEOPLES: GD
NORTHERN AFRICAN AND MIDDLE EASTERN PEOPLES: TH
SUB-SAHARAN AFRICAN PEOPLES:
 Jeff Singerman
CHAPLAINS • VOLUNTEERS
STATE CONVENTION MISSIONARIES
RETIRED NAMB: David Baldwin,
 W. Carpenter, Marjorie Jackson,
 Robert Mills
RETIRED IMB: Edith Fox, June Goodwin,
 Michael Hampton

missionary of the week

SUNDAY, JUNE 23

SARAH MITCHELL

DEAF PEOPLES

PASSAGE: 1 PETER 4:7-11

FOCUS: 1 PETER 4:9

When Sarah Mitchell first moved to Bangkok, Thailand, to serve as a Journeyman to the Deaf with the International Mission Board, it was the first time she'd lived anywhere besides the house where she grew up.

Sarah was quickly immersed not only in Thailand's culture but also in Deaf culture. "It's been amazing to see, despite challenges, how faithful God is every single day," she said. "Meeting Deaf people in a city of 15 million is not easy. But the Lord has taken me, an ordinary person, and put me in the right places at the right times."

On the way to a meeting with friends, she noticed a fruit vendor with a sign indicating she was Deaf. Sarah began signing to her in Thai Sign Language. The woman, named Kamala, was excited to meet someone she could communicate with.

Sarah learned Kamala was a believer and had been praying for God to send her a Christian friend who could teach her the Bible. They've met several times, and each time Kamala comes ready to study the Word. Though their time is limited, she relishes the Bible stories Sarah shares with her in Thai Sign Language.

THE COOPERATIVE PROGRAM takes the gospel to the nations and the neighborhoods. Your financial support through the Cooperative Program allows missionaries to fulfill the Great Commission call God has placed on their lives.

PRAY God would continue to speak to the Deaf and remind them they are not alone in Christ.



IMB PHOTO

MONDAY, JUNE 24

PASSAGE: ACTS 21:17-19

FOCUS: ACTS 21:17

Paul traveled to see James and was received well. This account is similar to how people who serve around the world encourage one another. This story I share with you is from my friend Katie who serves overseas with the International Mission Board:

"Janet left her family in Texas and landed in the city I serve in January 2023. She had committed to serving the Lord. Days after arriving on the field, Janet got news from home that her sister was in the hospital. Janet immediately called me and said, 'I know we just met, but can I please come to your house and stay with you? I don't want to be alone. I'm so afraid for my sister.' With an open heart, I welcomed her into my home. I spent the next hours listening to my new teammate as she processed and questioned whether she had truly heard God's voice to come across the world. I prayed over her, cooked her a meal, offered her a safe space to share her heart, and then made her a bed to sleep in for the night."

Pray for workers like Janet who face difficult family situations while living far away. Pray for workers like Katie who love, serve, and minister to their teammates and coworkers in difficult situations through hospitality.

Prayer Focus—American Peoples: Missionaries wrote, "Our new teammate recently arrived in South America. Pray she would continue learning the language and culture with joy and that she would have supernatural courage and patience as she walks in the Holy Spirit. Also, pray she would develop good relationships with local people and ministry partners."

PRAY FOR
NORTH AMERICAN MISSION BOARD

CALIFORNIA: Evan Dahl

COLORADO: Jamie Roe

FLORIDA: Wesner Charles,
Joseph Joachim, Ronald Rentz

INDIANA: Cesar Quito Rojas

LOUISIANA: Ronnie Mabile

OKLAHOMA: Jaime Kliewer

PENNSYLVANIA: Brady Rennix

INTERNATIONAL MISSION BOARD

ASIAN PACIFIC RIM PEOPLES: JG, KH,
Terri Ng, JP, SS

CENTRAL ASIAN PEOPLES: JH

EUROPEAN PEOPLES: Caryn Bishop, GR

**NORTHERN AFRICAN AND MIDDLE EASTERN
PEOPLES:** NM

SOUTH ASIAN PEOPLES: JC, MH, ET

CHAPLAINS • VOLUNTEERS

STATE CONVENTION MISSIONARIES

RETIRED NAMB: Jack Comer,
Dolores Hall

RETIRED IMB: Charles Alexander,
Carolyn Jackson, Patricia McClenny,
Hunjoo Park, CY

TUESDAY, JUNE 25

PASSAGE: ACTS 16:11-15

FOCUS: ACTS 16:15

The change in Lydia led her to open her home to Paul and his companions. One of the ministries that is closest to my heart is Baptist Friendship House in New Orleans, Louisiana. While there, women experience hospitality through Bible study, meals, showers, and other physical needs being met. As a relationship formed through Bible

study, one woman felt comfortable to open up about being trafficked for nearly 12 years. Because trust had been established through open doors and a welcoming environment, a worker there was able to get the woman and her 13-year-old child to a place of safety where they are able to thrive.

Pray for the people who enter the doors of Baptist Friendship House. It is never an accident when someone arrives—it's a mercy from God. Pray the women there would continue to heal.

Prayer Focus—Sub-Saharan African Peoples: Missionaries in sub-Saharan Africa wrote, "Pray for team members in Tanzania as we show God's love through serving cake and juice to women who sell their precious bodies. They are some of the most vulnerable people in the city, and God loves them. Pray God would draw them to faith in Him."

PRAY FOR
NORTH AMERICAN MISSION BOARD

FLORIDA: Greg Love

MASSACHUSETTS: Simon Sim

NEVADA: Adrian Quintana

NORTH CAROLINA: John Morrison

OHIO: Adam Hunt

TEXAS: Robert Welch

INTERNATIONAL MISSION BOARD

AMERICAN PEOPLES: Bruce Mikel

CENTRAL ASIAN PEOPLES: SE, SH

EUROPEAN PEOPLES: CL

SOUTH ASIAN PEOPLES: WM

CHAPLAINS • VOLUNTEERS

STATE CONVENTION MISSIONARIES

RETIRED NAMB: Anna Kasa,
Zenia Kovalchuk, Billy Moore

RETIRED IMB: Hayward Armstrong,
Sherri Buntain, Lyle Dease,
Mary Dickey, Tammy Llorens, GP,
Diane Wagstaff

WEDNESDAY, JUNE 26

PASSAGE: ACTS 16:25-40

FOCUS: ACTS 16:32-34

The Philippian jailer had just experienced something traumatic—first an earthquake and then the realization that all his prisoners were in a position to escape. Once he learned the prisoners had not fled and all was well because of the God who caused the earthquake, the jailer opened his heart to God and his home to Paul and Silas.

Disaster relief is a great ministry of the Southern Baptist Convention. Many states have several teams that travel far and wide to assist people when disaster hits. I experienced the hospitality of disaster relief after Hurricane Katrina in 2005. Men and women loved on people who had just experienced the trauma of a devastating natural disaster, including the loss of most of their homes. During every disaster-relief project, men and women share God's love by doing the hard work of cleaning, repairing, construction, meal preparation, and more. In every home touched by disaster relief, people hear God's love through words and actions. Lives are changed.

Pray for disaster-relief teams as they are deployed with sometimes very little notice. Pray their efforts would bear fruit for the kingdom of God.

Prayer Focus—Asian Pacific Rim Peoples: After months of joining weekly worship sessions at her university campus in Southeast Asia, Alice chose to follow Jesus and be baptized. Her family does not approve of her decision to leave the majority religion. Pray for Alice as she grows in her faith, and pray her family would believe.

PRAY FOR

NORTH AMERICAN MISSION BOARD

ARIZONA: Zachariah Hsu
ARKANSAS: Dave McClung
CALIFORNIA: Louis Abubakkar
FLORIDA: Fabio Goncalves,
Larry Mouton, Kenneth Ortiz,
Oscar Rojas

LOUISIANA: Isaac Woodward

OHIO: Jorge Altieri

OKLAHOMA: Michael Wilson

ALBERTA: Melvin Rodil

PUERTO RICO: Reinaldo Reyes

QUEBEC: Jacques Avakian

INTERNATIONAL MISSION BOARD

AMERICAN PEOPLES: Eric Spano

ASIAN PACIFIC RIM PEOPLES:

Jessica Wagner

CENTRAL ASIAN PEOPLES: ES

EUROPEAN PEOPLES: MD, Carson Turner

SOUTH ASIAN PEOPLES: KT

GLOBAL: LC

CHAPLAINS • VOLUNTEERS

STATE CONVENTION MISSIONARIES

RETIRED NAMB: Wynona Elder,

Paul Garcia, Esther Soria

RETIRED IMB: AB, SB, Troy Donahoe,
MF, Carol Hylden, TM, Kathy McNair

THURSDAY, JUNE 27

PASSAGE: ACTS 18:1-4

FOCUS: ACTS 18:3-4

We see Paul staying with Aquila and his wife, Priscilla, in Corinth. Paul did not know Aquila and Priscilla before he arrived in that city, but he did have something in common with them: they were all tentmakers. I am sure this made for some great conversations among them. Just think about the conversations and inside jokes you have with people you work with on a consistent basis.

Aquila and Priscilla opened their home to a fellow tentmaker. This gave Paul an opportunity to visit the synagogue every Sabbath and tell Jews and Greeks about God. God used a humble home to spread the gospel.

How do you see God working through hospitality? How can you join His work in progress? Pray God would use you to spread the gospel through hospitality. Pray for

missionaries who use hospitality as a way to open doors to the gospel.

Prayer Focus—Sub-Saharan African Peoples: Pray for the Basotho (*BAH-soo-too*) of Lesotho and South Africa. Many adults leave their children behind in Lesotho when they search for jobs in other countries and never return home, just as their parents did. Pray missionaries, pastors, and care center workers would share the hope they have with hurting people. Pray for a new generation of parents to stay and love their children, raising them according to God’s Word.

PRAY FOR

NORTH AMERICAN MISSION BOARD

COLORADO: Douglas Hixson

FLORIDA: Kevyn Bryant

MISSOURI: Jody Kilburn

OHIO: Andy Lowe, Will Massaro

PENNSYLVANIA: Derrick Canty

SOUTH CAROLINA: Leslie Brown

INTERNATIONAL MISSION BOARD

AMERICAN PEOPLES: Iracema Kunkel

ASIAN PACIFIC RIM PEOPLES: BM

CENTRAL ASIAN PEOPLES: AS

NORTHERN AFRICAN AND MIDDLE EASTERN

PEOPLES: NC, JM, RM

SOUTH ASIAN PEOPLES: KF

SUB-SAHARAN AFRICAN PEOPLES:

Aimee Phillips

CHAPLAINS • VOLUNTEERS

STATE CONVENTION MISSIONARIES

RETIRED NAMB: E. Cagle,

Barbara Chadwick, Lura Southard

RETIRED IMB: Yumi Cho,

Charlie Daniels, Mark Edworthy,

Woody Fletcher, Gary Hunter,

DeLena Jones, Bruce Oliver,

June Pike, LS, Hilda Winchester

FRIDAY, JUNE 28

PASSAGE: ROMANS 12:9-21

FOCUS: ROMANS 12:13

In Romans 12, Paul wrote about being a living sacrifice. One specific way Paul reminded believers to live is in verse 13: “Share with the Lord’s people who are in need. Practice hospitality.” Paul encouraged Christ followers to help with the needs of fellow brothers and sisters in Christ. John 13:35 says the lost will know who we are (in Christ) by our love. When we, as Christ followers, show

love and hospitality to others, it open doors for sharing the gospel with nonbelievers so they can respond to Christ.

Paul said we are to seek ways to show hospitality, including to people of “low position” (Rom. 12:16). The author of Hebrews also instructed believers to show hospitality to strangers and guests (Heb. 13:2). Jesus told His disciples to go and spread the gospel to all nations. If our actions do not go along with our words, will anyone believe what we have to say? Paul emphasized how our words and actions need to line up so others will listen and hear the gospel clearly.

Pray God would reveal any areas in your life where your words and actions do not line up with His teachings. Pray missionaries would clearly live what they share.

Prayer Focus—All Missionaries: Lift up summer missionaries serving stateside and overseas. Pray God would empower these young adults to be bold witnesses for Him. Pray they would express servant hearts and desire to be learners.

PRAY FOR

NORTH AMERICAN MISSION BOARD

CALIFORNIA: Michael Jimenez

FLORIDA: Michael Kirby

GEORGIA: Sanghun Lee

NEW MEXICO: Francisco Serrano

NEW YORK: Emmanuel Amani,

Zach Van Veldhuizen

TEXAS: Buddy Brents

VIRGINIA: Kelvin Washington

INTERNATIONAL MISSION BOARD

ASIAN PACIFIC RIM PEOPLES: KJ

CENTRAL ASIAN PEOPLES: HM

NORTHERN AFRICAN AND MIDDLE EASTERN

PEOPLES: JC, MK, CM

SUB-SAHARAN AFRICAN PEOPLES: MP, JW

CHAPLAINS • VOLUNTEERS

STATE CONVENTION MISSIONARIES

RETIRED NAMB: Evelyn Epps

RETIRED IMB: Pat Coursey,

Cynthia Cunyningham, Susan Evans,

Sharon Johnston, KN,

David Shepherd

SATURDAY, JUNE 29

PASSAGE: ACTS 2:42-47

FOCUS: ACTS 2:45

Here is a picture of the early church. Believers had come together to learn from Peter and other teachers. They broke bread and prayed together. The part that stands out to me is how they sold their possessions and pooled their money together. When a need arose, they used the communal money. Before becoming Christians, they may have been strangers to one another. However, after they spent time listening to sermons, worshipping together, and having conversations around the table, the transforming power of the Spirit worked in them, and I believe they felt more like family.

In America, people think you are different if you give everything to meet the needs of strangers. However, as Christ followers, we are called to be different. Maybe you see a single mom in need, a lonely international student, or a woman struggling with homelessness. How has God blessed you so that you could meet the need and watch God show His love? Pray for such opportunities and such willingness.

Prayer Focus—In Your Church: Lift up missions teams going out from churches all over our nation. Pray God would prepare each team member and those receiving them.

PRAY FOR

NORTH AMERICAN MISSION BOARD

- ARKANSAS: Courtney Miller
 - FLORIDA: Jared Owens, Hector Valdivia Valle
 - GEORGIA: Jeffrey Odgers, Joel Vancil
 - ILLINOIS: Vivian Milton
 - MAINE: Daniel Coleman
 - MISSOURI: Stephen Daniel
 - OKLAHOMA: Esvi Aguilar
 - RHODE ISLAND: Keith Cabral
 - WASHINGTON: Patrick Mugwanja
- INTERNATIONAL MISSION BOARD**
- ASIAN PACIFIC RIM PEOPLES: M.J., Shirley Mackin, AS, SW

- CENTRAL ASIAN PEOPLES: MB, LC, AW
 - EUROPEAN PEOPLES: Rachel Wallace
 - NORTHERN AFRICAN AND MIDDLE EASTERN PEOPLES: AS, KS
 - SOUTH ASIAN PEOPLES: LL, ML
 - SUB-SAHARAN AFRICAN PEOPLES: KH
- CHAPLAINS • VOLUNTEERS**
- STATE CONVENTION MISSIONARIES**

- RETIRED NAMB:** Joseph Davis, O. Jones, Rita Larsen, James McBride, Kenneth Neibel
- RETIRED IMB:** Gloria Gellerstedt, Glen Johnson, Deanie Nichols, Jerry Robertson, Randy Saleeby, Jon Sapp

missionary of the week

SUNDAY, JUNE 30

BRAD AND LINDSAY ORMONDE
CALIMESA, CALIFORNIA

PASSAGE: LUKE 10:25-37

FOCUS: LUKE 10:37

Calimesa began as a retirement community, but in recent years, it has developed into a new, thriving community with many first-time homebuyers. Brad and Lindsay Ormonde started Garden City Church to reach young families flocking to one of California's fastest-growing cities.

To build relationships with these young families, each summer the church hosts a back-to-school bash for all the students in the area. Garden City Church also welcomes people new to the neighborhood by helping them pay for their moving truck. Through this ministry, the church has shared the gospel and seen lives changed.

THE COOPERATIVE PROGRAM takes the gospel to the nations and the neighborhoods. Your financial support through the Cooperative Program gives missionaries the help and resources they need to reach their communities and make disciples.

PRAY God would meet Garden City Church's needs for a new building as the church shares the gospel and provides for people in Calimesa. Ask God to give the church not only a place to meet on Sundays but a hub of hope throughout the week.



PRAY FOR

NORTH AMERICAN MISSION BOARD

- CALIFORNIA: Jairo Dominguez Flores
 - FLORIDA: Lino Borquez
 - MICHIGAN: Kenneth Nether
 - NEW YORK: Sung Lee
 - NORTH CAROLINA: Edgardo Tablazon
 - OHIO: Dave Pound
 - ALBERTA: Ron Spidla
- INTERNATIONAL MISSION BOARD**
- AMERICAN PEOPLES: LR
 - ASIAN PACIFIC RIM PEOPLES: KJ, AW
 - EUROPEAN PEOPLES: RB, MM, Brittany Spinks, Jennifer Vanover

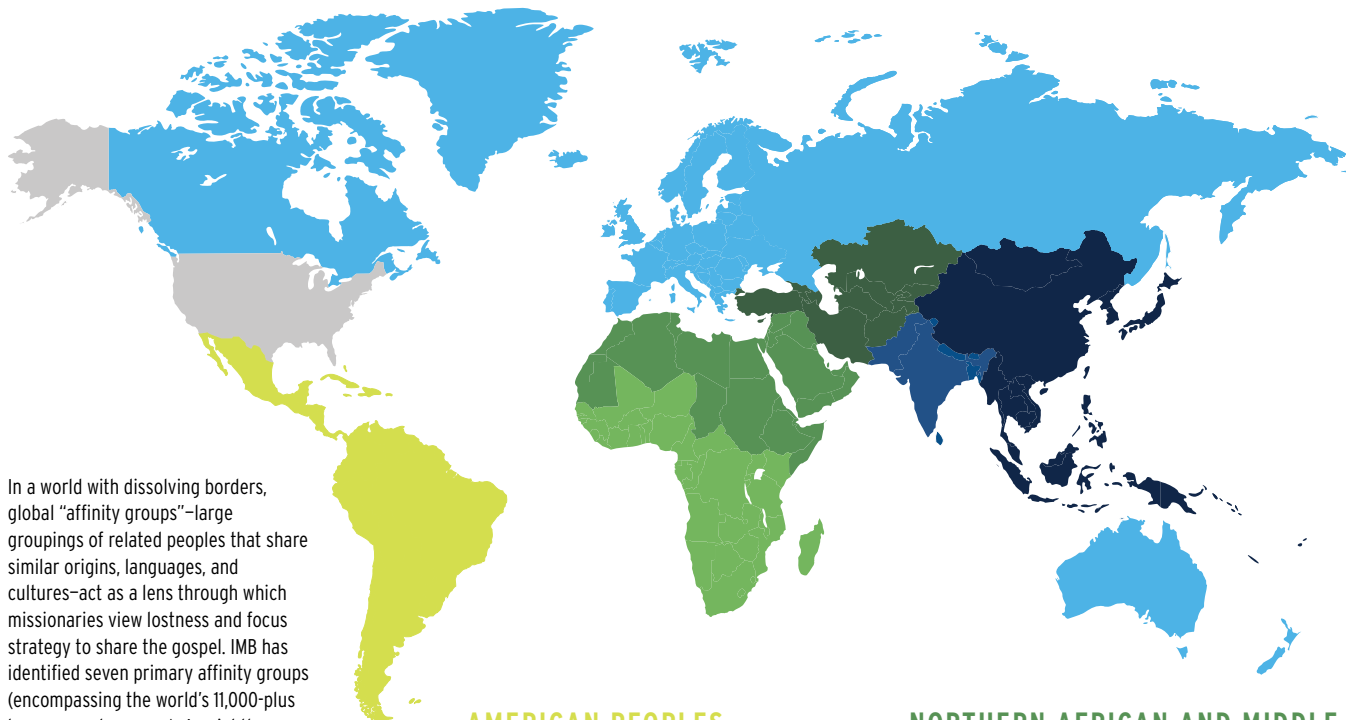
NORTHERN AFRICAN AND MIDDLE EASTERN PEOPLES: DT

SOUTH ASIAN PEOPLES: RJ, SR
SUB-SAHARAN AFRICAN PEOPLES: Ed Hill

CHAPLAINS • VOLUNTEERS
STATE CONVENTION MISSIONARIES

- RETIRED NAMB:** Robert Bailey, Alton Harpe, Marilyn Pope, Bobby Walker
- RETIRED IMB:** SC, AF, MR, LS, June Seat, Neil Treme, Brenda West

THE WORLD BY AFFINITY GROUP



In a world with dissolving borders, global “affinity groups”—large groupings of related peoples that share similar origins, languages, and cultures—act as a lens through which missionaries view lostness and focus strategy to share the gospel. IMB has identified seven primary affinity groups (encompassing the world’s 11,000-plus known people groups). An eighth affinity group uniquely targets the world’s culturally Deaf peoples.



AMERICAN PEOPLES

ASIAN PACIFIC RIM PEOPLES

CENTRAL ASIAN PEOPLES

EUROPEAN PEOPLES

NORTHERN AFRICAN AND MIDDLE EASTERN PEOPLES

SOUTH ASIAN PEOPLES

SUB-SAHARAN AFRICAN PEOPLES

DEAF PEOPLES

CHARITY GARDNER-TAYLOR has a master of divinity degree from New Orleans Baptist Theological Seminary. While working on her master’s degree, she spent time doing ministry in and outside of Baptist Friendship House. Over the past 15 years, she has worked with several churches in Arkansas on missions. Her favorite hospitality memories are serving at a local shelter during a holiday and cooking a Thanksgiving meal for young adults who did not have family close.

Prayer Calendar Information

- Southern Baptist missionaries and their spouses who are serving for more than two years are listed on their birthdays.
- **NATIONAL** personnel serve in roles related to developing strategy and providing training and support other NAMB-endorsed personnel.
- **GLOBAL** personnel serve in roles related to developing strategy and providing training and support other IMB-endorsed personnel.
- **CHAPLAINS** are endorsed by the SBC via NAMB but are not listed as they do not receive financial support through NAMB.
- **VOLUNTEERS** are individuals who are not funded through SBC mission boards; they are self-funded. They are not listed here because of the inability to compile a complete list of these people, but they do need your prayers daily. The exception to this policy is the listing of self-funded missionaries who are affiliated with NAMB.
- **STATE CONVENTION MISSIONARIES** are personnel not related to NAMB or IMB but who receive primary support through state conventions.

MISSIONARY FUNDING

Money given through the Cooperative Program, to the Lottie Moon Christmas Offering® for International Missions, and to the Annie Armstrong Easter Offering® for North American Missions helps support SBC missionaries.

International Mission Board: All IMB missionaries listed on the prayer calendar receive their financial support from the IMB.

North American Mission Board: NAMB missionaries listed on the prayer calendar may receive full or partial financial support from NAMB or are jointly funded through partnerships between NAMB and state conventions. In addition, missionaries affiliated with NAMB through the Mission Service Corps funding option raise their own support. Some may receive partial financial support for ministry projects.

CONTACT INFORMATION

The North American Mission Board and the International Mission Board provide missionary names and related information for the missionary prayer calendar. Should an error or omission be discovered, please address your concerns to NAMB at namb.net/contact or 1-800-634-2462 or IMB at imb.org/contact-us or 1-800-999-3113.



Sharing Christ with a KISS

BEING A GOSPEL WITNESS TO NONBELIEVING FAMILY MEMBERS

I asked, “How many?” They replied, “25, 40, 36, 24, 63.” These were the number of years fellow Christians had prayed for a family member to come to salvation. They reveal a dedication to never giving up on God. They reveal a determination for an answer like the widow who pleaded with the unjust judge in Luke 18:1–8.

When asked, most Christians say that witnessing to loved ones is more difficult and intimidating than sharing the gospel with strangers. Yet, as believers, we have the responsibility to share with those closest to us. Use this simple acrostic for encouragement:

KEEP PRAYING

Like my friends did, keep asking the Lord to move in the heart of your loved one. James 5:16 reminds us of the power of prayer, “The prayer of a righteous person is powerful and effective.” Pray Scriptures like Romans 10:1; Jeremiah 29:13; or Ezekiel 11:19–20, inserting your loved one’s name. Pray other people would pour Christ’s love into your loved one’s life. Ask the Lord to open his or her eyes and heart to see Him. Remember the promise of 2 Peter 3:9, which says, “The Lord is not slow in keeping his promise, as some understand slowness. Instead he is patient with you, not wanting anyone to perish, but everyone to come to repentance.”

INVEST TIME

Sharing Christ often takes more than one conversation. Spend time together, preferably one-on-one, doing

things you both enjoy. Listen for opportunities to turn a conversation to spiritual matters. Share your testimony using yourself as an example of the power of the gospel. Invite your family member to read and discuss books like *Mere Christianity* or *The Case for Christ*.

SPEAK BLESSINGS

Bless them with words of affirmation both spoken and in prayer using Philippians 1:9–11; Ephesians 3:14–20; and 3 John 1:2. Pray the Lord would open your loved one’s eyes to see the ways He blesses. While you may not agree on every issue, your family member’s lifestyle, or other things, heartfelt compliments instead of harsh words build bridges for gospel conversations. Affirmation can be as simple as commenting on a new outfit, a well-made dinner, or a job promotion.

SHARE TRUTH

Be prepared, knowing what needs to be said about sin, Christ’s deity, love and sacrifice, repentance, faith, eternal life, and the consequence of rejecting Jesus. Speak as you would in normal conversation, respectfully and lovingly. If needed, use tools like tracts or the North American Mission Board’s Life on Mission app.

KISSing loved ones pays off. With patience, petition, and persistence, after 40 years for one and 24 years for another, one son and one brother are believers. In that we rejoice!

.....

LYNN DURHAM is a Florida pastor’s wife and writer rejoicing in answered prayer.



Zachariah and his grandfather, Reverend Ed Seanor, experiencing the Creator through creation together

Missions camping holds a special place in my heart. Growing up as a Royal Ambassador, some of my earliest memories are connected to Camp Cordova and the Tristate Camporee in Memphis, Tennessee. Nature walks, map and compass, cooking on campfires, and nighttime devotions all have had a lasting impact on my life.

Camp was a place of fun and adventure, but it was also a place of great spiritual renewal. Away from all the distractions of modern life, I was able to focus on that still, small voice of God, ever present and continuously drawing me closer into a personal relationship with Jesus Christ. Camp is also where I first understood the significance of the missionary call.

One night at a fireside devotion, I heard the testimony of a missionary kid (MK) that changed my life forever. He and his father, Wade Watts, were seriously injured in a car accident while serving on the missions field in Peru. As this MK stood there on the stage, having just learned how to walk again after his traumatic accident, he told all of us campers about the importance of listening for and faithfully answering God’s call in our lives, no matter the cost. I was so young then, but I can still remember that moment like it happened yesterday.

Many of you may be able to share similar stories. Moments in time, surrounded by God’s creation at a beloved camp, where something changed. Maybe camp

was where you first met Jesus and accepted Him as your Lord and Savior. Maybe it was the first time you ever felt a sense of belonging and peace. Maybe it was where you first heard God’s call in your life. Or maybe it was all three! Whatever special moment the memory of camp brings you back to, know that these moments still happen in the lives of young people today at missions camps all across the United States.

The Missions Camping Endowment was created to offer scholarships for children and youth to attend overnight missions camps, provide missions training and leadership development to camp leaders, and help with expenses related to having volunteer staff at such camps, with priority given to overnight camps in areas of the country where Southern Baptist churches are less numerous.

To learn more about the Missions Camping Endowment and how you can make an eternal impact in the life of a future camper today, visit wmufoundation.com.

ZACHARIAH SEANOR is a father, husband, lifelong camper, and committed Christ follower who serves as the director of mission advancement for the WMU Foundation.

HOPE IN CHRIST FOR REFUGEES

Every year World Refugee Day is observed on June 20. The United Nations designates this date to honor refugees around the world and celebrate the strength and courage of people who have been forced to flee their home countries to escape conflict or persecution.

How can you and your church offer the hope we have in Christ while engaging in efforts to include refugees? WMU has multiple ways to raise awareness of the plight of refugees and support refugees around the world.

Refugees: The Church's Response: This self-guided minicourse provides an overview of the various factors impacting refugees and how you can support refugees through WMU Compassion Ministries. Resources include training materials designed to lead others through the church's response to the refugee crisis.

Seeking Refuge: A Refugee Simulation: Host this simulation that offers a glimpse into some of the turmoil and upheaval refugees face as they're forced to flee. Designed for students and adults, *Seeking Refuge* guides participants to better understand refugees' critical needs and how they can pray for and serve refugees around the world.

Displaced: Seeking Home: Host this simulation that offers a glimpse into some of the difficult decisions and struggles refugees and displaced people in the United States experience as they go through the arduous resettlement process. Designed for students and adults, *Displaced: Seeking Home* provides participants with a deeper understanding of life as a refugee and displaced person in the United States.

Refugees: Forced to Flee Bible Study and Teaching Guide: This digital download is a collection of 12 Bible studies centered on refugees in both the Old and New Testaments complete with commentary, questions, ways to be involved, prayer ideas, and vignettes of those who interact with the displaced.

WorldCrafts: Shop WorldCrafts products handmade by refugee artisans. Refugee Sewing Society in Clarkston, Georgia, teaches viable skills to vulnerable refugee women who receive payment for the products they sell. The women also have access to resources such as English as a second language and citizenship classes.

Visit wmu.com/refugees to learn more about the unique responsibility believers have to offer a compassionate response to the physical and emotional needs of refugees while pointing them to find their ultimate satisfaction in the hope we have in Christ.



.....

REAGAN JACKSON is managing editor for adult resources at WMU.

on the *journey*



Sandy

Sandy Wisdom-Martin
executive director/treasurer
WMU

.....
**FATHER,
GIVE US COURAGE
AND BOLDNESS TO
MAKE DISCIPLES.
IN JESUS' NAME,
AMEN**
.....

An Army of Disciplers

Forty years ago, I finished up United States Army basic training in South Carolina. I joined the Illinois Army National Guard because it paid for four years of tuition to any state college or university in Illinois I chose to attend. This enabled me to go to college. Four decades later, I am amazed at the random information taught in basic training I remember. I am delighted to tell you I can still fit in my uniform—at least the boots, dog tags, and hat.

God has laid on my heart a passion to build a different kind of army, one that marches in step with the cadence call of the Spirit of God. I frequently say, “We are failing at the one thing Jesus told us we must do, and that is to make disciples.” My friends Ron and Marsha Harvell have created a resource for discipling new believers. It is called *50 Steps with Jesus: Learning to Walk Daily with the Lord*. It is designed for a shepherd to guide a new believer, a believer who wants to grow, or someone who wants to learn about the Christian faith through a 50-day journey with God. And now there is a WMU edition available. We have testimonies of people coming to faith after completing *50 Steps with Jesus: Learning to Walk Daily with the Lord*.

Along with the new believer’s guide, a companion guide is designed for the shepherd to work side by side with the person he or she leads for 50 days. It comes together in one large workbook. As I write this article, I am in the midst of discipling my tenth person. My daily investment of Bible study has been about 20 minutes, and then the person I am discipling and I meet together once a week, which lasts about an hour.

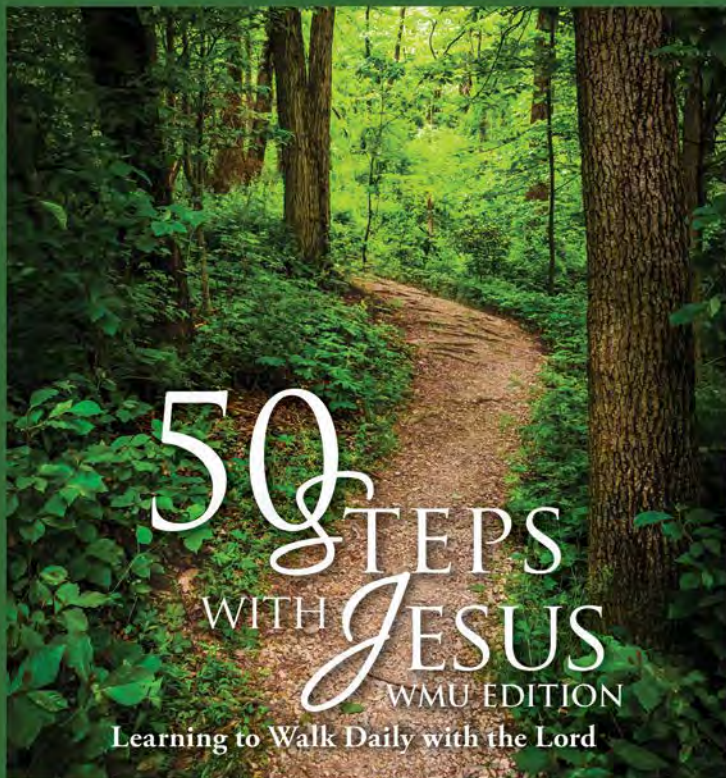
What if WMU had an army of 1,000 disciplers at the ready to invest in new believers in their communities? What if campus ministers, church planters, and everyday disciplers were leading people to Christ wherever they are? Just think of the significant impact we could make. Distance is not a barrier with today’s video call capabilities. Who could you shepherd?

- Your child or grandchild
- A young adult at your church
- A colleague
- A neighbor
- A relative or friend who lives elsewhere

The opportunities are endless. Those you disciple may become disciplers as well. Would you join this army? You can purchase *50 Steps with Jesus: Learning to Walk Daily with the Lord, Believer’s Guide and Shepherd’s Guide*, WMU edition at wmustore.com. Seeing Christ followers take their place in God’s plan is a joy. You can touch eternity with your kingdom investment today.

Take a Step of OBEDIENCE

DR. RON HARVELL Brigadier General, USAF (Ret.)
& MARSHA HARVELL with Wendy K. Walters



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wmustore.com

New classes added

A Gospel for All Cultures

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