

MISSIONS mosaic

in your home | in your church | in your world

AUGUST 2023

THE *Alaskan Frontier*

JAE AND CAROLE MCKEE BUILD BIBLICAL COMMUNITY
AMID VOLCANOES, EARTHQUAKES, AND BEARS.

Friendships FOR FAITH AND LIFE

DEVELOPING RELATIONSHIPS WITH YOUR NEIGHBORS THROUGH FUN EVENTS



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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.

THIS MONTH'S MISSIONARIES

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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 2023*. To purchase an annual subscription or the digital edition of the summer issue, visit wmustore.com.

a word from us

This summer, *Missions Mosaic* articles have woven through several aspects of being compassionate. The common thread is simple: people need Jesus. He told us *who* our neighbor is (the person we may not want it to be); He showed us ultimate compassion by dying for us when we were His enemies; and He desires that all people would know Him.

There's a two-pronged response to this month's quest: *How do I love my neighbor?* The Living on Mission article (p. 5) is full of great ways to engage with those who live in your neighborhood. The Prayer article (p. 28) will compel you to listen and obey when God speaks through His Word and circumstances.

But these articles also touch on the other aspect of *how*: we love our neighbors *by sharing the good news with them*. In Global Partners (p. 8), you'll read the exciting story of a tribe in the Philippines that is evangelizing another tribe, and the kingdom is growing!

Have you ever explained the way of salvation to a nonbeliever? Pray God would reveal someone in your life who needs to know Him. Then ask Him to lay the foundation for a conversation or series of conversations that would lead to you sharing your testimony and, most importantly, the testimony of Christ, our Savior.

Every day, we have opportunities to be the hands and feet of Jesus. In brief conversations at the grocery store, while waiting in line at the bank, while receiving technical support . . . we have countless occasions to smile genuinely and interject words of thanksgiving for the little things. Notice people; use the clerk's name if he or she is wearing a name tag; remember that Jesus (as far as we can tell) was never in a rush. Pray the Holy Spirit would guide you.

In short, loving our neighbor begins with noticing our neighbor. We can create space for that by being less hurried: We can leave our houses for errands with a little extra time. We can be willing to be interrupted. We can expect that being the hands and feet of Jesus will often lead to unexpected situations . . . but they will be situations of God's design and plan.



A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Meghan".

Meghan Bowker, Editor
mbowker@wmu.org

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PILLOWS FOR PEDIATRICS

Recently, a nurse who works in the pediatric surgery department at a local hospital made a request: pillows for children who come in for surgery. These pillows provide comfort, give the children something to take home, and maybe relieve some of their fears by providing something else to think about. The Women on Mission group at Rocky Point Baptist Church in Russellville, Tennessee, set about buying material with children’s patterns for both boys and girls and made 74 pillows. We expect this to be a recurring project for our group.

–Rocky Point Baptist Church, Tennessee

WORKING TOGETHER FOR PURE WATER, PURE LOVE

The Helping Hands Women on Mission group of 12 senior women from Berry’s Grove Baptist Church in Timberlake, North Carolina, raised money for Pure Water, Pure Love with the help of the church’s Vacation Bible School (VBS) director. She challenged the boys and girls to see who could raise the most money. The chairman of deacons presented the idea the church budget be used to match every dollar Helping Hands and VBS could raise. In the end, Helping Hands raised \$2,500.20; VBS boys raised \$1,029.74; and VBS girls raised \$1,137.93, for a total of \$4,667.87. With the church matching the donations, that increased the total to \$9,335.74. In all, the entire church raised a grand total of \$14,003.61. Great things can be done for missions and the Lord when all share the same goal.

–Doris Hawkins, North Carolina



CHRISTMAS IN AUGUST

Women on Mission, Children in Action, and Mission Friends of Andrews First Baptist Church of Andrews, North Carolina, led the church in Christmas in August collections for North American Mission Board (NAMB) missionaries. Items requested

by two NAMB missionaries were printed on Christmas tags and placed on a Christmas tree. Church members were encouraged to take one or more tags in support of the chosen missionaries. We then separated the donated items according to requested needs and shipped five boxes to the NAMB missionaries. It was a wonderful way to teach children and adults about missions and how to be a part of helping others with simple, basic needs.

–Helen Wilson, North Carolina

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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Friendships FOR FAITH AND LIFE

DEVELOPING RELATIONSHIPS WITH YOUR NEIGHBORS THROUGH FUN EVENTS



Many people today live in large neighborhoods but do not even know their neighbors' names. They lift the garage door and leave for work, church, ball games, and grocery shopping. Coming home, they go inside without ever talking to those living closest to them. Neighbors can be some of the best opportunities for both ministry and meaningful relationships, but how do we reach those living next door? How do we build relationships with those we don't know?

FORM CONNECTIONS

Despite social media and ever-increasing connectivity through technology, people are lonelier than ever. Many are desperate for a group to belong to and to know someone cares. Become that person in your neighborhood.

Think about the makeup of your neighborhood, and brainstorm activities that would connect those living around you. Ideas could include a swim party, a barbecue, a community yard sale, or a game night. You can try a variety of activities to reach different ages and personalities.

HOLIDAY PARTY PLANNER

The holidays make for easy opportunities to engage your neighbors. Plan a holiday party for your neighborhood. Consider the following ideas:

- Christmas cookie exchange
- Christmas crafting event
- Valentine's Day card-marking party
- Easter egg hunt
- Fourth of July cookout
- Trunk or treat event
- Chili cook-off
- Friendsgiving pre-Thanksgiving meal

Consider parties that would be good for the whole family and those of all ages. Some people in your

neighborhood may not have anyone to celebrate the holidays with without your efforts. And remember, inviting someone into your home isn't about having the perfect entertaining space that's been beautifully decorated; it's about sharing your life and creating a warm environment of welcome.

PARTY-PLANNING TEAM

Those who work and serve together get to know one another in a special way. Invite interested neighbors to form a committee or team to put together your neighborhood event. Host the meeting at your home, neighborhood clubhouse, or community meeting space. Provide coffee, tea, and a small treat.

Encourage those who attend to share their ideas, listen to them, and incorporate those ideas into your overall plan. Let them know their opinions matter to you. This will encourage them to open up more to you and your group. Give each person a part to play, and set up a task plan. Following are four party-planning examples for different times of the year and a list of team responsibilities.

FALL CHILI COOK-OFF

- Invite neighbors to the event through social media.
- Create informational posters, and place them around the neighborhood in public places, such as the clubhouse, mailbox kiosk, or playground area.
- Make available an online event registration through email, Facebook, or another platform.
- Put together a team to judge the friendly competition.
- Select prizes for the first-, second-, and third-place winners.
- Purchase or collect donations of plastic bowls, spoons, and cups.
- Prepare a soda, tea, and water station for the event.
- Set up tables and chairs.

- Welcome participants, and get everyone placed for the event.
- Enjoy the chili, and engage with the group while the selected judges taste and judge the options.
- Clean up the area after the event.
- Send a thank-you email or card to everyone who made chili and participated.

WINTER CHRISTMAS CRAFTING EVENT

- Invite neighbors to the event through social media.
- Create informational posters, and place them around the neighborhood in public places, such as the clubhouse, mailbox kiosk, or playground area.
- Collect donations of art supplies.
- Purchase or collect items for a craft for children and/or adults.
- Prepare a coffee and hot chocolate bar for the event.
- Set up crafting tables and chairs.
- Help children with their crafts.
- Clean up the area after the event.
- Thank everyone who participated on social media, and post pictures from your event.

SPRING EASTER EGG HUNT

- Invite neighbors to the event through social media.
- Create informational posters, and place them around the neighborhood in public places, such as the clubhouse, mailbox kiosk, or playground area.
- Collect plastic egg and candy donations for the egg hunt.
- Prepare and fill the eggs for the event.
- Hide eggs, and set up the area.
- Welcome participants, and divide them into age groups, if needed, for the hunt.
- Clean up the area after the event.
- Thank everyone who participated on social media, and post pictures from your event.

SUMMER COOKOUT

- Invite neighbors to the event through social media.
- Create informational posters, and place them around the neighborhood in public places, such as the clubhouse, mailbox kiosk, or playground area.
- Plan a menu for the cookout.

- Make available an online event registration through email, Facebook, or another platform so participants can sign up to bring menu items.
- Provide family-friendly games, such as cornhole and giant Jenga, for all ages to enjoy during the event.
- Set up tables, chairs, and game components on the day.
- Welcome neighbors, and help them put out their menu items.
- Clean up the area after the event.
- Send a thank-you email or card to everyone who brought food and participated.

INCORPORATE YOUR FAITH

While none of these activities and events are spiritual in nature, find subtle ways to incorporate your faith. Offer to pray before meals. Include a nativity craft in your Christmas crafting event. Invite neighbors to stay after your craft to hear the Christmas story. Place Bible verses in the eggs you prepare for the Easter egg hunt. Invite neighbors to stay after the hunt for a short Easter devotion. Be creative, and find natural ways to share your faith with those around you.

DEVELOP FRIENDSHIPS FOR FAITH AND LIFE

Continue developing the relationships you formed during your neighborhood event or activity. Ask neighbors out to lunch or dinner. Have them over for a game night. Invite them to take a walk with you in the neighborhood. Send birthday cards. Drop off a care basket when they are sick. Offer to watch their children if they have an important errand to do or a special night out to attend. Plan another event together!

Once you have developed friendships, you can naturally share your faith even more with your neighbors. Invite them to a church service, women's group meeting, or family event. Offer to listen, and then pray with them when they are going through tough times. Share your personal struggles and testimony of salvation and faith.

Developing friendships with neighbors can lead to relationships for years to come. You and your neighbors will have someone to share with, have fun with, and lean upon when needed. Don't just close your garage door on your neighbors. Don't let the business of life keep you from even knowing their names. God placed you in your neighborhood for a purpose. Develop lasting friendships with your neighbors for faith and life today!

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LACI POST writes historical fiction and articles from Dallas, Georgia. Her author website is thewarsonseries.com.



WARRIORS TO MISSIONARIES



Bugkalot tribe members celebrate with a traditional dance at a recent gathering of churches. The Bugkalot tribe, once feared as violent hunters, is sending its own missionaries to unreached tribes in the Philippines.

Only a few decades ago, the Bugkalot people were one of the fiercest tribes in the Philippines, known for beheading their enemies. No outsider who contacted the tribe survived, and the people around them lived in fear.

Then, in the 1950s, the gospel slowly took root after some of the leaders met believers and became Christians. The first believers established churches that grew and multiplied as more and more Bugkalot people chose to follow Christ.

My family and I were among the missionaries who moved to the Philippines to disciple and train Bugkalot believers. I grew up in a tribal village as the church among the Bugkalot began to multiply.

Later, when my husband and I joined the International Mission Board (IMB) and moved to the Philippines in 2005 to work with the Agta, another unreached tribe, God planted the idea in our hearts that the best people to reach the Agta would be other tribal people. We immediately thought of the Bugkalot, and as soon as we could, we hiked back to the village I grew up in to speak with many of the men my dad had discipled.

God used that conversation as the catalyst for Bugkalot believers catching a vision to take the gospel beyond their tribal borders. Over the next several years, we worked together with other partnering missionaries to help the Bugkalot establish their own sending organization. Thus far, they have sent more than 20 believers to serve as missionaries among the Agta.

It's been amazing to watch gospel transformation come full circle. A tribe of people who used to bring death wherever they went became a passionate partner in the gospel.

For a family-centered people group that is isolated from the rest of the Philippines, it is a big sacrifice to leave tribal territory, learn a new language and culture, and be separated from loved ones. God used the sacrifice of the Bugkalot believers in powerful ways. More than 20 churches have been planted among the Agta.

As the church among the Bugkalot grew in its burden for the unreached, God inspired its members to reach the lost and neglected in their community. For example, everyone thought a village had been completely wiped out by infighting within the tribe decades earlier, but church leaders heard a few survivors relocated.

Though the survivors had since passed away, the church sent a delegation to their children and grandchildren. The delegation apologized for the violence and tragedy decades earlier and shared the gospel.

It's been wonderful to see how the church among the Bugkalot has been strengthened as it focuses on the unreached, even though it has sent out some of its best leaders.

Now that work among the Agta is more established, work is being done to expand the model of tribal people reaching other tribal people to more groups in the Philippines. It's been a privilege to be involved in the partnership God has used to build His church in the Philippines and to have a front-row seat to the Bugkalot's story over the decades.

For so long, the definition of "finishing the task" has been when the local church can stand on its own. But the task is not truly finished until its members can come alongside and actually be part of reaching other peoples with the gospel. It's been really exciting to watch the Bugkalot catch that vision.

JEN HAGEN serves as an IMB missionary to the Philippines.



IT'S NOT "JUST" MISSIONS—IT'S A LIFESTYLE

For Send Relief's Laredo ministry coordinator Vanessa Lerma, the journey to full-time ministry began when she was just a toddler.

While Vanessa's father served as an altar boy at a Catholic church growing up, faith was not part of his adulthood until, after being married for several years, he and his wife decided they wanted to raise their family in a grounded, faith-filled environment. Soon after they made this decision, Vanessa's parents attended what they thought was simply a free family fun night at a local church, but God intended a life-changing experience. After watching several evangelism-based films there, they both dedicated their hearts to the Lord, and service quickly became a lifestyle for Vanessa's family.

"We didn't go on mission trips," Vanessa said. "We lived our lives on mission, helping single-parent families and friends living in poverty along the border every week. Many migrants were missing their families and the rest of their communities who lived over the border, so my mom became a mom for everyone, and my dad became a deacon. Family didn't have anything to do with blood relations. Family was the people around us, and family meant sharing the blessings you were given."

Though she didn't know it at the time, this servant-hearted way of living was equipping Vanessa for her life to come. "My family didn't call it 'missions,' but [this lifestyle was] preparing me all along to become a consultant for WMU, where I saw lives changed through [Girls in Action]. I was prepared to pour into others because of how much was poured into me."

After serving on a youth ministry leadership team and receiving confirmation from her peers that God was calling her to full-time compassion work, Vanessa worked alongside Texas Baptists River Ministry, where she discovered she was especially suited to working with families on the border.

Today Vanessa uses her skill sets to help run one of Send Relief's newest ministry centers in Laredo, Texas. She and her husband, Osvaldo, build relationships with migrants, local churches, foster care agencies, and refugee ministries to provide a respite for families who are facing a difficult road ahead.



Vanessa Lerma

This work is emotionally demanding, so, to stay centered, Vanessa leans on her life verse, Psalm 37:4: "Take delight in the LORD, and he will give you the desires of your heart."

She shared her other avenues of support, stating, "My church family's prayers have kept us strong. Knowing someone is praying for you or someone has paved the way ahead of you as a missions leader is a huge blessing. On hard days, there are times that I do need to pull away and go for a walk or hug my family, and those moments remind me that God is in control. He loves immigrant families more than I could ever love them. He loves Laredo more than I could ever love it. He's taking care of us in ways we can't always see, but releasing control is releasing results and learning to trust."

Pray Vanessa and Osvaldo would have wisdom and clarity as they continue to build relationships in Laredo. Pray for patience as the foundation is laid and that the local church would feel refreshed as the hands and feet of Jesus. Visit sendrelief.org/projects/laredo-ministry-center to learn more about Vanessa's work and the ministries being created along the Texas border.

NATALIE SARRETT writes for Send Relief.



FIGHT HUNGER AND SHARE THE HOPE OF CHRIST



According to statistics from Global Hunger Relief (GHR), more than 800 million people around the world do not have enough food. One in nine people worldwide goes to bed hungry every night. Your church can help combat hunger by observing Global Hunger Sunday. Through your prayers and gifts to GHR, your church can help relieve physical needs in underserved communities around the world and demonstrate the compassion of Jesus Christ.

WHAT IS IT?

Global Hunger Sunday is August 27, 2023. It is a day when Southern Baptist churches

- raise awareness about world hunger needs;
• share about the work of Global Hunger Relief;
• pray for communities struggling with food insecurity; and
• collect an offering to bring hope to hungry people around the world.

GHR is an initiative of the Southern Baptist Convention dedicated to fighting hunger and sharing the hope of Jesus. All donations go directly to meeting hunger needs: 80 percent of funds meet needs internationally, while 20 percent of funds meet needs in North America.

PREPARE

Leading up to Global Hunger Sunday, you'll want to begin planning. First, meet with your pastor and the

WMU leadership team to plan how your church will observe Global Hunger Sunday. Set an offering goal. Visit globalhungerrelief.org/resources to order resources you'll need for Global Hunger Sunday, including offering envelopes to place in pew racks to encourage giving and GHR prayer guides.

You can also find a social media guide and graphics at globalhungerrelief.org/resources. Use the guide and graphics to promote Global Hunger Sunday through your church's social media accounts.

PARTICIPATE

Consider organizing a Bread of Life Bake Sale to raise money for GHR. Enlist church members to bake various types of bread. During the bake sale, explain donations will help GHR feed people around the world and share Jesus, the Bread of life.

To personalize the work and the impact, be sure to share stories found at globalhungerrelief.org/stories about how GHR is changing lives. You can show these during a worship service, Women on Mission meeting, or other event to raise awareness and promote this special offering.

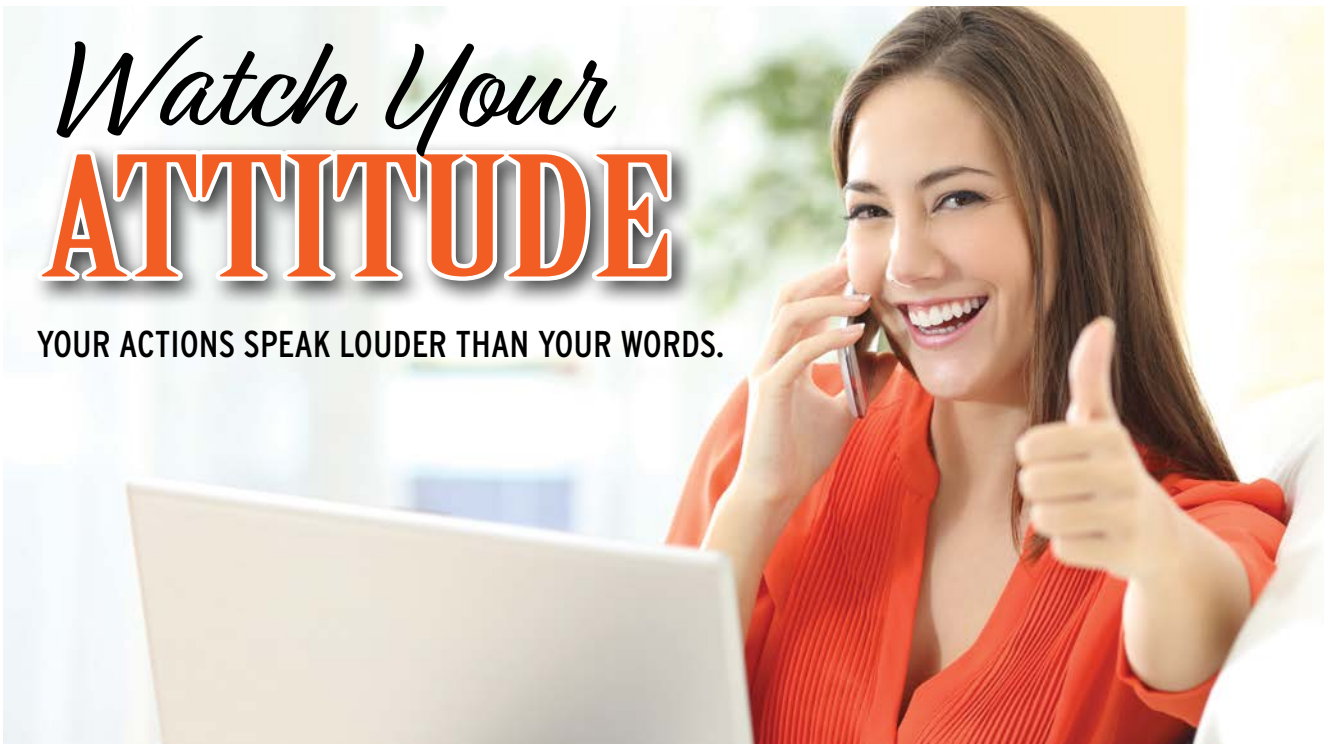
And don't stop with one Sunday. After Global Hunger Sunday, meet hunger needs in your community by collecting food for a food pantry or homeless shelter.

GLOBAL HUNGER SUNDAY IS AUGUST 27, 2023

TRACEY GHOLSON is a pastor's wife and Women on Mission leader from Nashville, Tennessee. She served as state coordinator of Tennessee Christian Women's Job Corps for many years.

Watch Your ATTITUDE

YOUR ACTIONS SPEAK LOUDER THAN YOUR WORDS.



Have you ever heard that, when talking on the phone, in order to portray a positive and friendly tone, you should smile—even though the person you are talking to can't see you? By changing your face, you change your tone, which impacts the message you send. Similarly, a leader must lead with a positive attitude in order to maximize influence. Philippians 4:8 says we should think about things that are right, admirable, and lovely. If we approach every circumstance with a positive outlook, we will be stronger and more effective leaders.

Leaders face challenges group members may not see. The challenges may be due to financial constraints, time restrictions, or unfair expectations. At one time I faced a large cut in funding, but my group was expected to perform as though there had been no cut. "Do the same things with less money!" Maintaining a positive attitude in that situation was paramount for a successful event.

You may lead in your neighborhood by enlisting volunteers to participate in a recycling project. Sometimes a community leader may face uncooperative business owners who refuse to help with downtown beautification efforts. Personality differences in a church can diminish effective outreach. Whatever the scenario, leaders who can assess the value, impact, and advisability

of a venture are needed. When the questions begin, negative thoughts may be close behind!

Why is a leader's attitude so important? First, good leaders are examples. If a leader's attitude is negative, his or her team may get the reputation of being difficult to work with.

Second, people are more willing to join a group when they see the leader is positive. Difficulties and issues will always arise, but a strong leader needs to exhibit a good attitude in every situation.

A third benefit is that healthy relationships foster positive interactions. No one wants to associate with a person who is caustic or negative.

Few people will follow a leader with a poor attitude. Energy and time spent in diffusing misunderstandings take away from engaging in worthwhile projects. Guard against being negative as you talk about your group and its activities.

Consider an honest evaluation of your attitude as a leader. Are you often irritated and frustrated with others in your group? Is your attitude positive as you work with and speak to others about your group's activities? Consider the full impact your attitude has on the group at large—the results can be positive or negative.

LINDA CLARK loves the four seasons of southern Indiana and enjoys exploring the countryside.



The Alaska Baptist Resource Network building sits on a hillside in south Anchorage, ringed by mountain ranges and Cook Inlet.

CALLING ALL WOMEN

CELEBRATING WMU IN ALASKA



A woman in Portland, Oregon, was only 26 years old when she received a surprising phone call: Would she serve as WMU director in Alaska? She responded, “Where is Alaska, and what does a WMU director do?” Judy Rice was willing to be transplanted. That same year, 1968, she moved to Anchorage.

Alaska WMU had been formed 11 years earlier in 1957 (two years before Alaska became a state). As its first director, Judy had a hand in shaping the organization. Having been involved with Baptist Young Women, she organized a retreat for Baptist young women and leaders. She emphasized the fact that everyone has a part to play in missions. Because she knew this truth in her life, she told the women, “His plans are tailor made for each of you.” She urged them to “trust God with the results” of following those plans and “get excited about what those results can be.”

Judy Zach, who served as Alaska WMU president from 1994 to 1999 and 2014 to 2018, said, “Judy Rice was the backbone of Alaska WMU. She has an unwavering love for missions and missions support.

“I first met Judy when I served as Baptist women’s director for the Tanana Valley Baptist Association in the mid-1980s. She helped me learn how to preside at women’s events and how to organize. She knew how to delegate and organize well. When I served as Alaska WMU president, she was patient and supportive, and we worked well together. She became a great friend. I have a great love and respect for Judy Rice, who was a model of missions in my life. And I always liked her colorful socks!”

Judy Zach also remembers her friend as an enthusiastic proponent of training: she encouraged Alaska Baptist women to attend WMU Week in Glorieta, New Mexico, each year. The women who attended grew as leaders, and, in turn, Alaska WMU grew. Judy Rice modeled going on mission with trips to Russia and Portland, Oregon, and she supported outreach to Alaska Native peoples across the state. In those far-flung villages, she became well known and loved.

A HOUSE PARTY CELEBRATION

The retreat Judy Rice started in her early days of leading Alaska WMU became the annual Baptist Young Women House Party held every April. In 1981, its name changed to the Women on Mission Celebration.

The celebration is a highly anticipated occasion, when women from distant villages and towns across the state gather for encouraging worship, Bible teaching, and missionary testimonies. It has a multicultural flair as women from Filipino, Alaska Native, African American, European, and Samoan heritages attend faithfully. They take up the offering, assist in registration, and lead in congregational worship through song and dance.

The celebration is held at the Alaska Baptist Resource Network building in Anchorage, the state’s largest city. Free time means shopping opportunities, an added bonus most attendees appreciate.

But the highlight, of course, is missions: local, national, and global. Every year, missionaries from the North American Mission Board and International Mission Board speak at the celebration. For the women who live in and near Anchorage, refugees are a missions opportunity. The city welcomes refugees from Ukraine, Afghanistan, and Somalia, among other countries. Like residents in many other US cities that receive refugees, Alaskans can minister to internationals without leaving their state.

A PLACE FOR ALL WOMEN

God used Judy Rice to unite the Baptist women of Alaska around missions, and that desire is with her yet: she serves on the Alaska WMU leadership team as co-representative of the Chugach (*CHOO-gatch*) Association.

Alaska WMU’s current president, Angela Jones, wants women to know WMU is for young women too. Her leadership team includes some who fit that demographic. Shannon Laird, who serves as the youth consultant, is encouraged to see that younger women are “welcomed and even focused on” by WMU.

A young mother of three, Shannon grew up in Girls in Action. As an Acteen, she experienced hands-on missions, traveling with her youth group to the island of Kodiak every summer. She now serves as an Acteens leader, and her husband, a former Royal Ambassador (RA), works with RAs.

Shannon enjoys the yearly celebration and is glad for the on-mission culture in her church and state. As her children’s needs ebb and flow with their growth, she knows God will enable her to maintain a missional lifestyle. Like Judy Rice once said, His plans are tailor made for every woman willing to be used by Him. And every woman, of every age, has a place in WMU.

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MEGHAN BOWKER is the editor of *Missions Mosaic* and lives in Wasilla, Alaska, where she leads Women on Mission.



Members of the Panama WMU executive committee meet with Dr. Raquel Contreras, who served as the speaker at the First Is First workshop in October 2022.



Women represent Panama WMU at the Unión Femenil Bautista de América Latina (UFBAL) Conference, held in Brazil in November 2022. UFBAL is one of the continental unions of Baptist World Alliance Women.

PANAMA WMU

GROWING THE GOSPEL THROUGH THE GENERATIONS

Members of the Panama WMU executive committee along with Panama's continental representative at the Latin American Baptist Women's Union booth at the Panama Baptist Convention Annual Meeting in 2022.



On April 13, 1960, at exactly 8:45 a.m., a group of women founded La Unión Femenil Bautista Misionera Helen Stuart (Panama WMU), named after the beloved missionary who faithfully served Panama in the 1900s.

More than 60 years later, the organization continues its purpose of helping churches promote and sustain missions. Current president Rosa Martinez Shaw first experienced WMU as a child, when she watched her mother faithfully participate with great joy.

“At first, I didn’t understand what the women were doing or why it was so important, but I was fascinated by their passion for this work,” said Rosa. “As I grew older, I understood that their joy came from sharing the gospel. That joy was contagious for me, and I’m still taking it in.”

Now Rosa leads Panama WMU, which includes ten associations and more than 800 participants of all ages and continues to grow. “We recently held a WMU retreat, and we nearly ran out of room with well over 100 women!” Rosa said.



Graduates of Sunbeams, Girls in Action, Royal Ambassadors, and Achteens at Margarita Baptist Church in Colón, Panama.

FACTS ABOUT PANAMA

- Panama became an independent country in 1903.
- An estimated 4.5 million people live in Panama.
- Approximately 50 percent of the population is Catholic.

NEW METHOD, SAME MESSAGE

The younger generation is not only learning about missions, but these women are also creating new ways to reach people with the gospel. At the onset of the COVID-19 pandemic, Panama WMU—like the rest of the world—wanted to stay connected and further the organization.

Neila Joao, a woman in her early 20s, had been praying about how God could use her in ministry. Neila, along with Saby Gutierrez, the young ladies' representative, and María Ramos, the continental representative, desired to create a new project that would appeal to younger women. After meeting with a local WMU group and presenting the project to the Latin American Baptist Women's Union, Neila and other Panamanian representatives created a program called Digital Voices, where they could use technology to reach more women their age.

Through Digital Voices, a young woman from each association communicates ideas to local groups about different missions initiatives they could begin in their areas. One example was a missions project that partnered with other WMU organizations to travel to an Indigenous community and share the gospel. The theme was "Jesus the Light of the World," based on John 8:12. The new program allowed women to connect and share ideas so their WMU groups could expand the ways they work and serve.

"It is a blessing to do ministry with women who have worked from generation to generation," Rosa said. "The passion only continues to grow and build up."

MISSIONS IN EVERYDAY LIFE

In addition to outreach events, Panama WMU helps women learn how to share the gospel with friends, family members, coworkers, and people they interact with throughout their day.

"The main religion is Catholicism, but there are so many other religions too," Rosa said. "People are skeptical if you jump right into a conversation about

religion. We try to get to know them first, show we care, and ask if we can pray for them."

A LEGACY OF GIVING

A key part of missions education and engagement is learning to support missionaries. In 2020, Panama WMU donated \$1,180.88 to the Lottie Moon Christmas Offering (LMCO). Despite the uncertainty and financial struggles of 2020, the women worked together to give.

Rosa explained one of the reasons the LMCO is so important is because of Lottie Moon's history as a pioneering missionary.

"She was a wealthy woman who left everything for the work of God and to help others," Rosa said. "We want to live with that kind of humility, and we know that many countries have so much need right now. Lottie Moon left us a legacy, and we want to continue it to provide that aid to the missionaries."

The one who plants and the one who waters have one purpose, and they will each be rewarded according to their own labor. For we are co-workers in God's service; you are God's field, God's building. —1 Corinthians 3:8–9 (emphasis added)

LOOKING BACK AND LOOKING AHEAD

Rosa believes missions is a generational effort. Her aunt, Edid Martinez de Gonzalez, was a WMU leader who modeled how to lead with a servant's heart. "She was faithful, very loving, and dedicated to WMU," Rosa shared. "Aunt Edid inspired me to always seek to learn more. She has been a great blessing to me."

Now, Rosa's 18-year-old daughter, Sharis, is learning and leading as well.

"In my daughter, I see that same passion to know the Lord, to grow, and to serve," Rosa said. "She loves to be around the older women and learn about the WMU meetings, bylaws, and responsibilities."

Rosa asked that people pray God would continue moving the hearts of women toward missions. "It's thrilling to think of all that we can do when we, as women of all ages in the church, work together for God's kingdom and impact generations."

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RACHEL SINCLAIR is a writer who loves to share stories and help people grow deeper in their walk with Christ. Connect with her at rachelsinclair.net and on Instagram at [@rachelsinclairwrites](https://www.instagram.com/rachelsinclairwrites).

THE Alaskan Frontier

JAE AND CAROLE MCKEE BUILD BIBLICAL COMMUNITY AMID VOLCANOES, EARTHQUAKES, AND BEARS.

LEAD WOMEN ON MISSION:

Use with meeting plan on pages 14-15 in Women on Mission Leader (Summer 2023).

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



The McKee family

Imagine worshipping while the sounds of seagulls, geese, eagles, sea ducks, and puffins fill the air. The wind swirls. You smell salt water and tundra from the moss and lichen that cover the rolling hills. The soil beneath your feet is a gritty mixture of sand and silt, and you can see mountains and volcanoes in the near distance. You

are immensely aware of God’s creation and power.

This describes the setting of the Aleutian Island communities in Alaska where missionaries Jae and Carole McKee serve. Jae is the director of missions and church planting for the Alaska Baptist Resource Network in Anchorage. As state missionaries, he and Carole travel from Anchorage and other hub locations to villages and communities only accessible by plane or boat.

COLD BAY COMMUNITY CHAPEL

One such community is Cold Bay, the last community on the Alaska Peninsula before the Aleutian Islands begin. Those islands, which form an archipelago, are referred to as the birthplace of the wind.

Getting to Cold Bay is not easy. The average cost of a round-trip airline ticket from Anchorage is \$1,200, and the Valeria Sherard State Mission Offering helps enable Jae and Carole to make the trip. The offering also provides resources and opportunities for ministry in the area that would not be available otherwise.

In 1942, not long after Cold Bay was founded as a secret World War II base, Cold Bay Chapel was formed by a chaplain working with an Alabama National Guard troop. The McKees initially responded to a call from the city itself as it looked to reestablish a church at Cold Bay Chapel. That led to the McKees traveling once a month to stay for about ten days. During each trip, they ministered to the community and held worship services in the parsonage and community center as Cold Bay Community Chapel church. Due to the significant costs, Jae and Carole currently travel to Cold Bay once a quarter, and weekly services are held with the help of

technology. The church is seeking a pastor who would be able to live in the community, but its remote location and the church’s limited funds pose a challenge.

BIBLICAL COMMUNITY

The area also has a great need for biblical community. “The expressed need for a local faith community is what we responded to initially in Cold Bay,” said Jae. He and Carole have been working for more than three years in Cold Bay to meet “the need to gather and worship [and] pray and learn together as friends, family, and the family of God.”

They helped reconstitute the chapel, elect officers, and develop a budget. Church members worked together to remodel the parsonage and make other improvements where needed. Local leaders were trained and disciplined to serve as Vacation Bible School (VBS) directors, worship leaders, Sunday School teachers, and Bible study leaders.

Today church members serve together on a regular basis. They reach out to neighboring communities by distributing Easter baskets, Christmas gifts, and Bibles. They also provided vital food boxes during the COVID-19 pandemic. Community potlucks help them engage their entire community and open doors to sharing the gospel.

ENGAGING ALL AGES

One group Cold Bay Community Chapel is reaching is children. “Our church is full of children,” Jae said. Sunday School and children’s church are structured times for church leaders to engage children with the gospel. Currently, their Sunday School teachers are walking through each book of the Bible to teach the children “God made them special” and “He loves them and has a special plan for each of them.” The children are also included in the worship service and help by taking up the offering. This teaches them stewardship and what it means to give cheerfully to God.

Jae and Carole seek to reach children within the communities they serve through VBS, Backyard Bible Clubs, Royal Ambassadors, Girls in Action, and Mission Friends. Cold Bay Community Chapel has hosted VBS for two years and plans to continue with the women of the church taking on leadership roles. The distribution of Easter baskets and Christmas packages in the community also helps the church reach children and their families. The baskets and packages include Bibles,



gospel tracts, and other educational materials to continue to engage children and their families with God's Word.

Adults are also being reached and experiencing life change. "Three key leaders in the [Cold Bay] community committed to sobriety of their own accord and have been strengthened and empowered by the gospel . . . to replace their dependency on alcohol with a dependency on the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit," Jae said. These leaders' decisions are helping others as they have a great amount of influence in the community, local government, and surrounding area. The leaders also help validate the McKees' work as they are "the gatekeepers and source of acceptance" for what is being done in the area.

A couple within Cold Bay Community Chapel is answering God's call on their lives to serve in a leadership position within the church. The husband is now a Bible study and teaching leader, and his wife leads worship and Sunday School for the children. Their story is a true testimony to God's work in their lives as they were reluctant to even come to church two years ago.

OUTREACH AND BEYOND

The church and the McKees continue to spread the gospel in both word and deed. They regularly reach out to the surrounding Aleutian Island communities of False Pass, Nelson Lagoon, King Cove, Adak, and other

locations in the Aleutian East Borough. Cold Bay Community Chapel ministers in these areas with community service, Bible studies for men and women, worship services, tutoring, school support, and by hosting weddings and funerals. Recently, families in the church collected hats and gloves to send to families in the village of Akutan. They have learned you cannot out-give God. "Demonstrating love by meeting needs and caring for others has been critical in the building of trust and acceptance of changed lives," Jae said.

As the church grows, church members and community members have seen the need for a dedicated church facility. The church is seeking partners in ministry to help build a new facility in the coming years. Jae said the building will "serve both the community of faith and the community of Cold Bay [as well as] the eastern Aleutian region as a lighthouse for the gospel."

CHALLENGES

While the work is exciting, it can also be unpredictable and challenging. "We have had earthquakes, volcanoes, and bears disrupt our services and ministry opportunities at various times," Jae said. The Pavlof and Shishaldin volcanoes are in the near distance and are often seen smoking and at times glowing with orange lava flow against the snowy mountainside. Earthquakes are common. In the summer of 2020, a 7.8 magnitude

The Schaack, Nielsen, and Fonati families celebrate Easter Sunday in Cold Bay.



earthquake shook the area and caused evacuations for fear of a possible tsunami. Transportation to Cold Bay and other remote surrounding areas is difficult and expensive, and diesel oil generators work constantly to supply electric power to residents. Serving in Alaska is different from anywhere else in the world!

But serving in Alaska does share a quality similar to serving anywhere else in the world—working with people can be difficult and testing at times. One of the McKees’ neighbors, who struggles with substance abuse, stole from their home to get cash for drugs. “We prayed that we would be forgiving and loving despite feeling used and taken advantage of,” Jae said. “We prayed that the neighbor would turn to God as the source of strength and dependency.” Knowing God had saved them from their sins helped Jae and Carole have compassion on their neighbor. They shared forgiveness, meals, and love with the neighbor instead of anger. As a result, they were able to invite the person to church and watch God begin a work of redemption in that person’s life.

PRAYER NEEDS

Jae and Carole asked believers to pray for partners in ministry to help with the building of the new facility in

Cold Bay and in providing a local pastor. They also request prayer for the salvation of those who do not know Christ in Cold Bay and for continued opportunities to share the gospel in False Pass, Nelson Lagoon, and King Cove. Lastly, they ask for prayer that their church members would continue to be dedicated to growing in the grace and knowledge of Jesus Christ.

The McKees are excited about what God is doing in Cold Bay. The community is growing to accept the church, and baptisms are taking place. Local leadership is being developed for long-term sustainability. Pray also for Russell and Ricki Ruta and Matt and Candace Nielsen, missionaries who work alongside Jae and Carole.

Cold Bay, Alaska, and the surrounding area is a beautiful, awe-inspiring, remote place full of wonderful people needing biblical community and a relationship with God. The McKees are glad to be a part of what God is doing there. “People have committed to sobriety, walking in Christ, and sharing the gift of salvation through Christ [with] their families and community members as well as surrounding communities,” Jae said. Join their work in Alaska today through prayer and support.

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LACI POST writes historical fiction and articles from Dallas, Georgia. She went to Alaska for the first time in July 2022 and loved it!



- Alaska is more than twice the size of Texas, but at approximately 740,000 people, its population is just under that of Seattle's.
- Only 12 numbered highways exist in Alaska, and about half of all public roads aren't paved. Alaskans call the highways by name rather than number. I live near the Parks (A-3) and Glenn (A-1) highways.
- You can't drive to the capital city of Juneau from any other town or village in Alaska; you have to fly or take a boat. Only 20 percent of the state is accessible by road.
- Alaska is home to several Indigenous peoples: the Athabascan Indians hunt caribou in interior Alaska; the Inupiaqs (or Inuit) live along the north coast and Canada (the term Eskimo once referred to them but is now considered a pejorative); the Yupiks are famous for their maritime hunting abilities in Southwest Alaska; the Aleuts paddle their skin-covered kayaks long distances among the Aleutian Islands; and the Tlingit, Haida, and Tsimshian Indians live in Southeast Alaska, and the iconic totem pole comes from their cultures.
- Salmon fisheries are a major part of the Alaskan economy, so much so that elementary school curricula include the life cycle of the salmon.
- Alaska was purchased by the US from Russia in 1867 and became the 49th state in 1959. It was called Seward's Folly or Seward's Icebox until the Klondike Gold Strike of 1896.
- The Iditarod commemorates the 1925 effort to bring diphtheria serum to Nome by dogsled. This 1,049-mile race takes place each March as mushers and their teams of dogs retrace the approximate trail, from Willow to Nome.
- The southern half of Alaska can be divided into three areas: Southwest, including the great swath of the Aleutian Islands; Southcentral, where most Alaskans live; and Southeast, which is also called the Panhandle. Traveling by ferry from village to village in the Inner Passage is a popular cruise tour.
- The other two parts of Alaska are the Interior, home of the Yukon River and Denali, and the Far North, where the sun truly does shine at midnight for part of every summer.
- Alaska is home to polar bears, black bears, grizzly bears, and brown bears. The last two are actually the same. Bears are called "grizzlies" if they live in the Interior and "brown" if they live along the coast or rivers. Grizzlies are a subspecies of brown bear, *Ursus arctos horribilis*.

Alaskan TERMS

Alaskans refer to the contiguous United States as the Lower 48. Hawaii is a popular vacation destination for its climate and proximity: it's about a six-hour direct flight. With layovers, travel to most places in the Lower 48 takes 10-12 hours. Anytime Alaskans leave the state, they refer to it as going "outside."

Most Alaskans live in Southcentral Alaska. The state's largest city, Anchorage, has a population of about 290,000 and is an hour's drive south of the Mat-Su Valley. The Matanuska-Susitna Valley, named for two rivers, has a population of about 110,000. In half a day, you can drive south to the fishing towns of Seward or Homer or north to the geographic center of the state to see Denali, also known as Mount McKinley, the tallest peak in North America.

Mountains might be Alaska's most well-known geographic feature. The Mat-Su Valley is surrounded by four ranges: the Chugach (*CHOO-gatch*), Kenai (*KEE-nigh*), Alaska, and Talkeetna (*tal-KEET-nah*). Denali is in the Alaska range.



In deepest winter, I can't see to the end of my driveway until about 9:30 a.m. The sun officially rises at 10:13 a.m. and sets at 3:41 p.m. On particularly cold nights, you can sometimes see the green, purple, and pink aurora borealis, also called the northern lights, dancing in the sky.

During the glorious summer months, the sun barely goes down. If you go outside at midnight, you won't see any stars, because the western sky still faintly glows with the sun's parting rays. Sunrise is at 4:20 a.m., and sunset is at 11:42 p.m. on June 21, making the longest day in Anchorage 19 hours, 22 minutes long. Alaskans make a big deal of the summer solstice. Some local festivals lean rather pagan, to that end. Only in the Arctic Circle will you experience the true polar extremes of daylight. In the winter months, there

are 90 days during which the sun never comes above the horizon. Conversely, in May, June, and July, there are 90 days when the sun never drops out of view.

Though the days are long and it's never too late to play outside (except you might wake the neighbors), summers in the Mat-Su Valley are not always warm. On cloudy or rainy days, the air can feel downright chilly (low 60s). On the hottest days (80s are rare), the shade is pleasant since Alaska has very low humidity.

Winter temperatures fluctuate, but zero to 20 degrees in Southcentral Alaska is normal. Where I live, we usually have a stretch of 20 to 30 below, and after such times, zero degrees doesn't feel too bad!

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MEGHAN BOWKER is the editor of *Missions Mosaic* and lives in Wasilla, Alaska.



Let It Go

FIND FREEDOM IN FORGIVENESS.

When I was young, I often attended Alcoholics Anonymous meetings with my parents on nights when family members were encouraged to attend. I remember reciting the Serenity Prayer. It has been beneficial throughout my life as I have dealt with stressful, hurtful, or disappointing events. Its words are familiar to many: “God, grant me the serenity to accept the things I cannot change, courage to change the things I can, and wisdom to know the difference.”

FAILURE

My failure to forgive, tendency to be resentful, and feelings of having been wrongfully treated have left a dark smudge on my Christian witness, grieving the Spirit and violating God’s Word. In Leviticus 19:18, we are charged, “Do not seek revenge or bear a grudge against anyone among your people, but love your neighbor as yourself. I am the LORD.” Jesus clarified in the New Testament that our forgiveness must be limitless: “Then Peter came to Jesus and asked, ‘Lord, how many times shall I forgive my brother or sister who sins against me? Up to seven times?’ Jesus answered, ‘I tell you, not seven times, but seventy-seven times’” (Matt. 18:21–22).

FREEDOM

Forgiveness releases us from the control of someone who has hurt us. Forgiveness does not excuse sin or “sweep it under the rug” as though it never happened. Forgiveness must be voluntary, not demanded or manipulated. God lifts our burden when we return to Him His right over vengeance or restitution. Forgiveness is part of the ongoing healing process, relying on God to see that justice is done. Jesus said, “For if you forgive other people when they sin against you, your heavenly Father will also forgive you. But if you do not forgive others their sins, your Father will not forgive your sins” (Matt. 6:14–15).

FORGIVE AND FORGET

Though it is a common phrase, “forgive and forget” is not in the Bible. When God shared about the new covenant (Jesus) with the Israelites and said, “I will . . . remember their sins no more” (Jer. 31:34), He meant He would no longer hold His people’s sins against them. When we accept Jesus, we are covered by His complete forgiveness. In the flesh, we do not have the power to forgive on our own. Through the power of the Holy Spirit working in us, God helps us forgive others, even when we may never be able to truly forget the wrong done while we live on this earth.

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TERRI STAINES writes from Ray City, Georgia. She said, “I learned firsthand how resentment steals your joy and hobbles your ability to worship and participate in ministry. It felt like a giant wrecking ball was hanging directly overhead, threatening to crush me. Forgiveness—not retribution—reduced that burden to the size of a BB only because I never wanted to forget where a grudge took me.”



TRANSFORMATION

WALKING THE PATH TO PURITY

The fire blazed as the liquid metal was poured into the mold. Intense heat radiated off the molten mass. Once it cooled and the mold was removed, the iron figure gleamed in the sunlight. The ironworkers described the process as purifying the metal. The fire removed the dirt and impurities that caused the metal to be weak and of poor quality. When the process was complete, the result was a strong, pure metal.

Purity is an almost forgotten concept today. We see the blemishes of sin on our world everywhere. We often think about purity in the context of sex and marriage, but it means so much more. Psalm 119:9 says, “How can a young person stay on the path of purity? By living according to your word.” The word translated *purity* actually means being clean or without blemish. When we allow God to transform our lives, we become strong and pure.

PURE HEART

What does a pure heart look like? A person with a pure heart commits to obeying God and walking in His path. Purity of heart is not a natural occurrence. The heart is full of evil (Jer. 17:9). We can only be pure because of the transforming work of the Holy Spirit. When Jesus

changes our lives through salvation, He immediately covers the impurities and begins the work of sanctification to make us holy.

PURE MIND

To have the same mindset as Christ (Phil. 2:5) means transformation has taken place in our thoughts. What does that look like? A pure mind is set on the things of God. This happens as we read the Bible daily and spend time in prayer. We begin to notice a shift in our thinking as we spend time meditating on the transforming Word of God and dwelling in His presence.

PURE BODY

When our lives are changed by salvation and our minds are set on following God, the amazing result is a life lived out in purity. Our actions should reflect the transition of our hearts and minds from a life of sin and rebellion to one obedient to Christ.

Walking the path of purity in a world full of decay is not an easy task. In the desire to remain pure, you will encounter resistance, even persecution, from the world. But, when the fire comes, you can be assured God will use these circumstances to strengthen you for the future.

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OBSESSIONS AND COMPULSIONS

WHAT IS OBSESSIVE-COMPULSIVE DISORDER?

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.

Obsessive-compulsive disorder (OCD) is characterized by recurring unwanted thoughts, ideas, or sensations (obsessions). To get rid of the thoughts, people living with this disorder feel driven to do something repetitively (compulsions). They don't enjoy or want to perform these compulsive behaviors, but they believe the behaviors will quell their anxiety. The repetitive behaviors, such as cleaning or checking on things, can significantly interfere with a person's daily activities and social interaction.

Many people without OCD have distressing thoughts or repetitive behaviors. However, these do not typically disrupt daily life. For people with OCD, these thoughts are persistent and intrusive, and behaviors are rigid. Not performing and completing the behaviors commonly causes great distress, often attached to a specific fear of dire consequences to self or loved ones.

Many people with OCD know or suspect their obsessive thoughts are not realistic. But even when

they know their thoughts are unrealistic, OCD greatly inhibits their ability to disengage from the obsessive thoughts or stop the compulsive actions.

Everyone experiences obsessions and compulsions at some point. For example, it's common to occasionally double-check that the stove is off and the door is locked. But OCD is extreme. It can consume hours of a person's day, getting in the way of normal life and activities. Symptoms often prevent a person from getting to school or work on time. Symptoms of OCD may come and go, ease over time, or worsen over time.

OCD can affect anyone. About 50 percent of people with OCD begin to have symptoms in childhood and adolescence. It's rare for someone to develop OCD after the age of 40. OCD affects slightly more women than men. Some people may have a number of OCD symptoms but not meet the full criteria for this disorder.

EXAMPLES OF OBSESSIONS

- Fear of coming in contact with perceived contaminated substances, such as germs or dirt
- Fear of causing harm to self or someone else by not being careful enough or for fear of acting on a violent impulse
- Fear of making a mistake
- Excessive concern with morality (right or wrong)
- Need for order, neatness, symmetry, or perfection
- Need for constant reassurance

EXAMPLES OF COMPULSIONS

- Arranging things in a specific way, such as items in one's pantry
- Bathing, cleaning, or washing hands over and over
- Collecting or hoarding items that have no personal or financial value
- Repeatedly checking things such as locks, switches, doors, and stoves
- Rituals related to numbers, such as counting, doing a task a specific number of times, or excessively preferring or avoiding certain numbers
- Saying certain words or prayers while doing unrelated tasks

CAUSING FACTORS

Researchers don't know exactly what causes OCD, but several factors contribute to its development:

- **Genetics:** Studies show people who have a biological family member with OCD are at a higher risk for developing the condition. The risk increases if the relative developed OCD as a child or teen.
- **Brain changes:** Imaging studies have shown differences in the frontal cortex and subcortical structures of the brain in people who have OCD.
- **PANDAS syndrome:** Pediatric autoimmune neuropsychiatric disorders associated with streptococcal infections (PANDAS) describes a group of conditions that can affect children who have had strep infections, such as strep throat or scarlet fever. OCD is one of these conditions.
- **Childhood trauma:** Some studies show an association between childhood trauma, such as abuse or neglect, and the development of OCD.

It's important to remember OCD is a mental health condition. Seeking help as soon as symptoms appear can help decrease the disruption to a person's life. The prognosis of OCD can vary. People with OCD who receive appropriate treatment often experience increased quality of life and improved social, school, and work functioning.

Maintaining a healthy lifestyle—including getting enough quality sleep, eating healthy food, exercising regularly, and spending time with loved ones—can help in coping with OCD. Friends and family members can be supportive by understanding the struggles of their loved one. They can encourage visits to a therapist trained in treating OCD and help with practicing self-care.

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NOW THAT'S THE *Spirit!*

LOVING OUR NEIGHBORS WITH THE RIGHT SPIRIT

ONE SUNDAY MORNING YEARS AGO, AN AMBULANCE PULLED UP TO MY CHURCH IN FLORIDA, AND THE MEDICS CARRIED A WOMAN ON A GURNEY INTO THE BUILDING. THE REASON? SHE HAD 30 YEARS OF PERFECT ATTENDANCE, PROVEN BY PINS, AND SHE WASN'T GOING TO LET A HOSPITAL STAY CAUSE HER TO MISS A SUNDAY NOW! SHE HAD COME FOR HER REWARD, AND SHE GOT IT. SOME APPLAUDED HER. HOWEVER, SHE WAS NOT ABLE TO STAY FOR SUNDAY SCHOOL.

LEAD WOMEN ON MISSION:
Use with meeting plan on
pages 14-15 in Women on
Mission Leader (Summer 2023).

INWARD AND OUTWARD

Throughout the Sermon on the Mount, Jesus contrasted external actions with internal motivations. His challenge presented an opportunity for a personal inventory. *Why am I helping my neighbor? Is it for my neighbor, is it for me, or is it for God? Why do I give to those in need? Is it because they need it, or do I need to be known as someone who would give the “shirt off my back”?* Having such a reputation is not wrong. However, when our donations, gifts, and good deeds are done to earn or keep that reputation, Jesus has a word for us.

- **Reflection:** Read Matthew 6:1–4. Did Jesus tell His disciples never to do good deeds in public? Or was He referring to doing good for public recognition? What is the difference? What will you get for doing good? What will you lose if you do good only to be seen?

Some Bible translations use other words to translate *righteousness* in verse 1. Some of the words are *charitable deeds*, *alms*, or *good deeds*. To some, alms indicates money for the poor. While giving alms is included, the better and most common translation is righteousness.

How do we express righteousness? There are endless ways, but practicing love for neighbors is critical, second only to obeying Jesus’ command to “Love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your strength and with all your mind” (Luke 10:27). Consider how you show you love God. Anyone can claim to love God, but, at the end of the day, what is the evidence? Scripture gives us a tangible way to prove our love for God. Loving our neighbor is the concrete demonstration of such love. Read Romans 13:8–10; James 2:8; and 1 John 4:20–21.

So how do we love our neighbors? This question could be answered in practical ways. Many of us are conditioned to taking casseroles, babysitting, visiting nursing homes, and the list goes on. These verses call us to consider with what spirit we are loving our neighbors and what our motivation is. To what end are we helping them?

A SPIRIT OF HUMILITY

There should be no show about helping someone in need. Our left hand does not need to know what our right hand is doing (Matt. 6:3). Humility also calls for no expectation of reward. You probably have been

taught all your life that “it is better to give *than* to receive.” This common phrase may have come from Acts 20:35, where Paul wrote, “It is more blessed to give than to receive.” But the absence of one small word can change that true phrase to a false one. Some read it to say, “It is better to give *to* receive.” God calls us to give with generosity and in humility, not in order to receive praise or a reward. Read Matthew 5:42 and 1 Corinthians 4:7.

A SPIRIT OF ENCOURAGEMENT

Often we have neighbors who need assistance because of poor choices they have made. We should find no pleasure in giving with the intent of correction or judgment. A spirit of arrogance is not only damaging; it has not been earned. We all make poor choices. Instead, we should help with the intention of support. Read Romans 15:2–5.

A SPIRIT OF CONFIDENTIALITY

Nothing hurts more than betrayal. Being in need can be a humiliating experience. If you help but then brag about it, or if you pray by name for the person you helped in the presence of others (spiritual gossip), you may do more damage than good. Read James 4:12; Psalm 101:5; and Proverbs 11:12.

A SPIRIT OF SACRIFICE

A love offering is the name we often give to a special collection of money or material goods for someone in need. Indeed, the gift should benefit the person in need. Even more, if we give as a sacrificial offering to our Father, we worship God (Heb. 13:16).

Read John 13:34–35. How did Christ love us? Sacrificially. When we do the same, we will be known as disciples of Jesus. Better still, Jesus will call us friend (John 15:14). What better reward could we ask for?

- **Reflection:** Read John 15:12–17. How does giving as an act of worship differ from being benevolent? As you love your neighbor in practical ways, practice seeing your gift as a sacrifice to God. Without expecting a reward from anyone, listen closely as God says to you, “Well done, good and faithful servant” (Matt. 25:23).

.....
DIANNE SWAIM writes from her home in North Little Rock, Arkansas. This article has caused her to do some deep soul-searching.



Yes, Lord!

**LOVING YOUR NEIGHBOR OPENS
YOUR HEART TO GOD'S LOVE.**

LEAD WOMEN ON MISSION: ∴
Use with meeting plan on ∴
pages 14-15 in Women on ∴
Mission Leader (Summer 2023). ∴

We are not, by nature, obedient creatures. In the parable of the two sons in Matthew 21:28–32, Jesus identified two types of responses when people are called to obey:

Sometimes people say yes but do not obey.

Sometimes people say no but later change their minds and obey.

Neither of these is the response God desires. God wants His children to say yes and obey immediately. In his book *Invitation to a Journey: A Road Map for Spiritual Formation*, Dr. M. Robert Mulholland Jr. writes, “Jesus inseparably joined loving God with loving others” when He spoke of God’s two greatest commandments (see Matthew 22:36–40). We can’t do one without doing the other. The Apostle John further clarified that our love for others is what proves our love for God (1 John 2:10–11).

Pray your love for God and willingness to serve Him would lead you to love your neighbors as yourself.

OBEYING GOD’S VOICE

On rare occasions, God’s Holy Spirit directly whispers a command to stop and help someone in need. Driving home from seminary one hot day in Zimbabwe, I was exhausted. I couldn’t wait to get home and rest for a few minutes before cooking dinner. The government hospital was near our home, and, as I drove by, I noticed a young girl with a broken leg on crutches who was standing and crying. Her parents seemed to be trying to encourage her to keep moving. The Holy Spirit spoke into my heart that I should pick them up and take them where they needed to go. That was the last thing I wanted to do, but I turned around and offered them a ride.

The family was trying to get to town to catch a bus to go home. As we drove, I casually asked about them and where they went to church. On hearing they worshipped with the Latter-Day Saints, I pulled the car off the road and spent a few minutes talking to them. I shared with them that God’s Word is the only truth, and I encouraged them to find a church that teaches the truth that Jesus is the Son of God and not a man who became a god.

We talked some more, then, pressed for time, I got them to their bus. I don’t know what happened to that precious family, but I was thankful God put them in my path and that I was obedient to pick them up. I pray

their spiritual eyes were opened and they did find a church that teaches God’s Word truthfully so they could come to salvation.

Pray that when you hear God’s voice give instruction, you would immediately act in obedience before losing the opportunity to love your neighbor in Jesus’ name.

OBEYING GOD’S WORD

God does not always speak to us directly every time He expects us to obey. He has given us His Word to show us what He expects. One of the greatest privileges and ways to obey God’s Word is to pray for our neighbors, whether local or global.

When God called Paul and Barnabas to ministry in Acts 13:1–3, we don’t know what Paul, Barnabas, and the other men in Antioch were praying, but in the midst of their concerted prayertime, God’s Holy Spirit broke through. The Lord initiated an amazing missions effort that resulted in much of the known world being reached with the gospel within a few years.

As you spend time in prayer for the expansion of God’s kingdom, God will open your spiritual eyes and ears to see and hear what He is doing and how you can join Him. He will create within you a heart of compassion. As God’s will is revealed, His power is released to fulfill His work through believers to a world full of neighbors in need of Him.

Pray that as God reveals from His Word how to love your neighbors, you would be obedient to do what He expects you to do.

OBEYING JOYFULLY

Paul taught the believers in Corinth that “God loves a cheerful giver” (2 Cor 9:7). While this verse refers to an offering, it is true of our obedience to love our neighbors as well. God does not desire us to serve others grudgingly or out of guilt. Neither does He want us to view it as a chore. He wants us to show compassion to others from an attitude of humble servitude and as an expression of gratitude for all He has done for us. As you are joyfully obedient, His love for others is revealed to others through you.

Pray you would be a joyful and obedient servant of the Most High God.

.....
DONNA FORT served in Zimbabwe for many years as a discipler and prayer advocate for her team. She now serves in South Africa.

LOVE THY NEIGHBOR

EXTENDING GOD'S LOVE BEYOND OUR COMFORT ZONES

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

From childhood, we are taught to love one another. It was easy to love my next-door neighbor, Delilah. We shared secrets, built forts, and played games together. But the girl down the street, Robin . . . she was mean, a real bully. She pushed my sister off her backyard slide, causing a concussion.

God does not give us the option of whom to love. His call is audacious, requiring us to love others as much as we love ourselves. To love means to share the blessings and burdens of others, forcing us to change and grow toward the goal of perfection.

How we show love puts our faith on display. Love doesn't come from our words alone; it also comes from our actions. Like my mama used to say, "Actions speak louder than words." What actions might we use to show neighborly love? Let's find out!

Prayer Calendar Idea

If you lead Women on Mission or another missions group, then try this idea to encourage group members to pray for missions this month. Purchase or make yellow stars, about five inches wide, one for each participant. Glue or use double-sided tape to adhere each star to the end of a craft stick. Instruct participants to write 2 Corinthians 9:7 and two ways they will give this month on one side of the star and, on the other side, the name of a missionary celebrating a birthday this month and his or her area of service.

TUESDAY, AUGUST 1

PASSAGE: LUKE 10:29-37

FOCUS: LUKE 10:36-37

Is it easy to love our neighbors when they have different ethnicities, customs, dress, or religious practices?

Through the actions of the good Samaritan, we learn we are to push aside judgmental barriers to show love and mercy.

The Samaritan, despised by Jews, is the one who showed compassion and mercy, rather than the priest or the Levite. The parable is not just about a good man; it is about building the kingdom of God. We are to exhibit the same characteristics as the good Samaritan.

Missionaries excel at this, but it can still be hard. Pray they would find new ways to show love and mercy that break cultural barriers.

Prayer Focus—Asian Pacific Rim Peoples: A woman in Taiwan said, "My mother-in-law would be very angry if I followed Jesus. She knows that would mean I would not burn money when she died so she could have good things in the afterlife." Pray God would break the pervasive stronghold of ancestor worship.

PRAY FOR NORTH AMERICAN MISSION BOARD

ARIZONA: Jordan Bowen
CALIFORNIA: James Pinkerton
MICHIGAN: David Clark

MISSOURI: Laura Dooley
MONTANA: Jeremy Bourne
TEXAS: Raid Al-Safadi
UTAH: Ben Neiser
WISCONSIN: Donald Bennett
INTERNATIONAL MISSION BOARD
ASIAN PACIFIC RIM PEOPLES: CG, AM, JW
CENTRAL ASIAN PEOPLES: BH
EUROPEAN PEOPLES: RF
NORTHERN AFRICAN AND MIDDLE EASTERN PEOPLES: AM
SUB-SAHARAN AFRICAN PEOPLES: Karla Jackson
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STATE CONVENTION MISSIONARIES
RETIRED IMB: Stan Dickard, Ruth Anna Driggers, Earnest Johnson, LR, PW

WEDNESDAY, AUGUST 2

PASSAGE: LUKE 6:27-36

FOCUS: LUKE 6:35-36

We tend to avoid our enemies. We prefer not to be in their presence and feel tension when they are around. We do not think of our enemies as neighbors, but according to the Bible, they are. Why would Jesus tell us to love our enemies? Scripture answers the question by reminding us we are children of God and we are to act as such. Jesus also said to do good to our enemies to the point of lending money without expecting repayment.

I once had a neighbor who complained about my dogs' barking. I felt as though she was overreacting, causing me to harbor resentment,

especially since we are responsible pet owners. The Lord convicted me to respond in love, so one spring day when she was working in her yard, I helped her move bags of bark. The tension melted.

Perhaps you harbor resentment toward a neighbor or someone you know. Pray God would open a door for you to respond in love.

Prayer Focus—Central Asian Peoples: Sandra and Sonia haven't seen their father since war broke out in Ukraine and their mother took them to safety across the border. After several weeks, they found a place to stay, and the girls enrolled in school. Pray for Sandra, Sonia, and others like them whose families are separated.

PRAY FOR
NORTH AMERICAN MISSION BOARD
MASSACHUSETTS: Joshua Rowley
INTERNATIONAL MISSION BOARD
AMERICAN PEOPLES: Jennifer Brungardt, David White
ASIAN PACIFIC RIM PEOPLES: NH, MS
CENTRAL ASIAN PEOPLES: KC
EUROPEAN PEOPLES: Amy Carpenter, JH, Kirstin Hesskew, Asa Watson, Ricky Wilhelm
SUB-SAHARAN AFRICAN PEOPLES: RS
CHAPLAINS • VOLUNTEERS
STATE CONVENTION MISSIONARIES
RETIRED IMB: Delos Brown, Jean Champion, Mitzi Golden, Linda Hinderer, Steven Jett, Kathy Joslin, Barbara Moseley, Pennie Lynn Olmstead, Charles Taylor, Suzanne Williams, Gerald Workman

THURSDAY, AUGUST 3

PASSAGE: LUKE 5:17-26

FOCUS: LUKE 5:26

Have you ever been in a situation where you felt helpless and a friend stepped in to save the day? Or maybe you intervened for someone else. The paralytic in Luke 5 was helped by several friends who showed love by carrying him on a mat to see Jesus. When they could not get him through the front door of the house where Jesus was, they got creative and went onto the roof,

lowering him down into the crowd where Jesus was teaching.

It is one thing to attract people to Jesus through the love we show, but we also need to help them understand who Jesus is. Jesus has the authority to forgive sins. He forgave the paralytic's sins first and then healed him.

Jesus honored the faith of the paralytic's friends, demonstrating that our faith can have a powerful impact on others. Love propels faith to take great risks. Pray God would instill courage in missionaries to take an added step of faith to show His love today.

Prayer Focus—Deaf Peoples: A worker in West Africa befriended and shared the gospel with a deaf woman who is Muslim and works as a teacher. Pray for more opportunities for this woman to see the gospel signed. Pray the Spirit would work in her heart and help her understand the truths of God's Word.

PRAY FOR
NORTH AMERICAN MISSION BOARD
OHIO: Josh Miller
INTERNATIONAL MISSION BOARD
ASIAN PACIFIC RIM PEOPLES: CJ, AR
CENTRAL ASIAN PEOPLES: CK, ES
EUROPEAN PEOPLES: Kenny Dubnick, SG, JK
NORTHERN AFRICAN AND MIDDLE EASTERN PEOPLES: EH
SOUTH ASIAN PEOPLES: HH, MH, JJ
CHAPLAINS • VOLUNTEERS
STATE CONVENTION MISSIONARIES
RETIRED IMB: Richard Beaudoin, Alita Blackmon, Don Dent, Ginger Johnson, JK, Paul Rohde, Joe Tarry

FRIDAY, AUGUST 4

PASSAGE: LUKE 3:7-16

FOCUS: LUKE 3:10-14

Clothing, food, and money are basic necessities of life. As Christians, we are called to demonstrate the compassion of Christ by extending His extravagant love to a hurting world.

In today's focus passage, John addressed new believers and explained

actions they should take to directly support the poor, the hungry, and the financially deprived. However, the actions are the same for a believer today, whether a new Christian or a longtime missionary. We must share what we have—clothing, food, and money—with those who need it. Maybe it's time to clean that closet, food pantry, or basement and donate to a local shelter or missions organization. Or do you have an extra room in your house going unused? Maybe it can be known in your church as a place that is available to those in need for a few days or weeks as they try to get back on their feet.

Sacrifices have been made by every missionary listed below. How many articles of warm clothing have been given away? How many meals have they provided and shared with hungry families? How much money has been placed into worn and calloused hands? Pray the sacrifices made by missionaries would strengthen their witness, allowing them to be the hands and feet of Jesus.

Prayer Focus—European Peoples: Ela and Alice attend a Bible study for young mothers in the Czech Republic. After the IMB representative who leads the group shared the parable of the wise and foolish builder (Matt. 7:24-27), they asked many great questions. Pray they would take the step of faith to follow Jesus.

PRAY FOR
NORTH AMERICAN MISSION BOARD
CALIFORNIA: Martin Chan
COLORADO: Kevin Hanly
FLORIDA: Sean Walker
OHIO: Vincent Dauer
PENNSYLVANIA: Wes Winebarger
INTERNATIONAL MISSION BOARD
ASIAN PACIFIC RIM PEOPLES: CC, JL
CENTRAL ASIAN PEOPLES: JS
EUROPEAN PEOPLES: JC
SUB-SAHARAN AFRICAN PEOPLES: Kathy Daniel, Steve Evans
CHAPLAINS • VOLUNTEERS
STATE CONVENTION MISSIONARIES

RETIRED IMB: Janice Capps,
Glenda Davis, Jim Gentry,
Jennifer Kapur, Glenda Miller, MW

SATURDAY, AUGUST 5

PASSAGE: MATTHEW 6:1-4

FOCUS: MATTHEW 6:2

A radio station held a contest every Christmas to offer a helping hand to people in need. It asked listeners to send in a letter stating a particular need, and the station would select a need to meet.

As a hospice volunteer, I became friends with the wife of a hospice patient I visited regularly. After the patient died, I continued to visit the wife for several years. She lived in a small, broken-down home with a tin roof, which had begun to leak. I decided to submit her name to the contest to have her roof replaced. To my surprise, she was selected among the many submissions.

The next time I visited her, she told me about her notification. She was perplexed as to how the radio station knew of her desperate need. I just smiled.

What joy it brought me to be able to help my friend. Pray the Lord would reveal to you a way to secretly bring joy to someone in need.

Prayer Focus—South Asian Peoples: A Muslim woman in India tearfully accepted a copy of the Book of Matthew and carefully placed it in her bag. She is nonliterate, but she and her daughter said they knew someone who could read it to them. Pray for this woman and her family.

PRAY FOR

NORTH AMERICAN MISSION BOARD

ALABAMA: John Shirley
ALASKA: Michelle Smith
ARIZONA: Kirstie James
IOWA: Tim Kimberley
MASSACHUSETTS: Franco Albano
TEXAS: Jose Lagunas, Manuel Martinez,
Hugo Tovar, Colby Wallace

INTERNATIONAL MISSION BOARD

ASIAN PACIFIC RIM PEOPLES: Robin Ebeyer
EUROPEAN PEOPLES: Katie Barnum

NORTHERN AFRICAN AND MIDDLE EASTERN PEOPLES: CH

SOUTH ASIAN PEOPLES: JD

SUB-SAHARAN AFRICAN PEOPLES: TH

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STATE CONVENTION MISSIONARIES

RETIRED IMB: Mark Caldwell, Paul Cline,
Virgil Cooper, Darrel Garner, SL,
Jimmy Maroney, Takahiro Oue,
Timothy Pelley, Dorothy Sledge

missionary of the week

SUNDAY, AUGUST 6

SHAUN AND JOY PRICE

EUROPEAN PEOPLES

PASSAGE: MATTHEW 25:34-40

FOCUS: MATTHEW 25:40

International Mission Board missionaries Shaun and Joy Price moved to the “castle capital of Europe” to share the hope of Christ with residents in a less than idyllic area to live in.

Then COVID-19 complicated everything. Although there were strict lockdowns and months of isolation, the Prices took every opportunity to reach out in love to the people in their city. They held Zoom sessions and Bible studies, helped with online church services, and prayed.

The Prices even reached out to their neighbors by making small gifts, including Joy’s typed testimony, tea bags, and chocolate, that would fit through the mail slot in the neighbors’ doors. “Now . . . we wait patiently,” Joy said.

THE COOPERATIVE PROGRAM takes the gospel to the nations and the neighborhoods. Your financial support through the Cooperative Program strengthens missionaries to share the gospel despite hardships that may occur.

PRAY for the Prices as they continue to reach their area with the gospel. Pray their acts of love would produce fruitful relationships.



PRAY FOR

NORTH AMERICAN MISSION BOARD

GEORGIA: Nicolas Carrillo Jr.
MICHIGAN: Robert Lodge
NEW YORK: Leonardo Hipolite
NORTH CAROLINA: Dewey Aiken
ALBERTA: Dustin Conner
INTERNATIONAL MISSION BOARD
AMERICAN PEOPLES: JB
ASIAN PACIFIC RIM PEOPLES: EL
CENTRAL ASIAN PEOPLES: AE, SS, JW
NORTHERN AFRICAN AND MIDDLE EASTERN PEOPLES: EC, RC
SUB-SAHARAN AFRICAN PEOPLES:
Kathie Davis

CHAPLAINS • VOLUNTEERS

STATE CONVENTION MISSIONARIES

RETIRED IMB: Pat Doyle, Phil Dunaway,
Thomas High, Debbie McFerron,
Wanda Stewart, LT

MONDAY, AUGUST 7

PASSAGE: PROVERBS 3:27-35

FOCUS: PROVERBS 3:27-28

As we shift gears to the Book of Proverbs this week, let’s consider several of these divine truths written by the wisest man who ever lived, King Solomon. Although God blessed him with great wisdom, riches, and honor, Solomon’s life ended in despair. How is that possible? He had it all, right? Not quite. Solomon lacked obedience. He knew God’s Word, but he did not apply it accordingly, which can be a temptation for us too. Pastor Ken Baugh writes, “Knowledge is knowing the right thing to do; wisdom is actually doing it.”

There is value in doing the right thing immediately. David and Shannon Brown became aware of a Moldovan community's vast physical and spiritual needs while ministering during short-term mission trips. Their hearts yearned to help the people with their immediate needs. They did not want to merely say they would return later, so they solved their dilemma by becoming missionaries and staying to serve full-time.

Other missionaries have had similar experiences. Pray missionaries would administer good today when it is within their power to help those they serve.

Prayer Focus—Sub-Saharan African Peoples: Missionaries in Madagascar are planning two trainings in story crafting next month. Missionaries from Madagascar and other countries along with leaders, theological educators, and church planters will attend to learn the story-crafting process together. Then they will pray to discern whether they might pursue a Story Together project in their area. Pray these efforts would lead to more Malagasy people hearing, understanding, and sharing God's Word in their dialects and communities.

PRAY FOR

NORTH AMERICAN MISSION BOARD

FLORIDA: Nathan Varnadore
LOUISIANA: Nathan Lloyd-Jones
OHIO: Joshua Hargis
SOUTH DAKOTA: Josh Brown
TEXAS: Jacob Willebeek-LeMair
ONTARIO: Beom Kim
QUEBEC: Cody John Simpson

INTERNATIONAL MISSION BOARD

CENTRAL ASIAN PEOPLES: NM, ES
DEAF PEOPLES: DR
EUROPEAN PEOPLES: Hannah Bustrum, Lucy Martin
NORTHERN AFRICAN AND MIDDLE EASTERN PEOPLES: JS

SOUTH ASIAN PEOPLES: JW

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STATE CONVENTION MISSIONARIES

RETIRED IMB: Phil Anderson, Jennifer Fischer, Jerry Joule, Ruth Stevens

TUESDAY, AUGUST 8

PASSAGE: PROVERBS 14:20-31

FOCUS: PROVERBS 14:31

The Book of Proverbs has numerous verses that highlight the needs of people experiencing poverty. How we treat those who are poor is important to God since they are close to His heart. Providing for the poor is a biblical command, not a suggestion.

Jesus often ministered to people who were poor, marginalized, and outcast. We are to follow His example. Those who are blessed with material goods should be generous to those lacking.

Proverbs 14:21 says you will be blessed if you help the poor. Verse 31 adds that you will also honor God. Conversely, those who oppress the poor insult God.

Missionaries encounter impoverished people every day. Self-sacrifice is a vital part of their ministry. Pray opportunities would arise for you and for missionaries to honor God by helping someone living in poverty today.

Prayer Focus—Sub-Saharan African Peoples: Many people in Senegal live in fear of illness and death. They wear amulets for protection and try to appease their ancestors and spirits. Believers say they used to be held prisoner by Satan, but when they accepted Jesus, they were set free. Pray for missionaries as they proclaim God's Word to a lost world so captives of Satan would be set free.

PRAY FOR

NORTH AMERICAN MISSION BOARD

COLORADO: Dennis McDaniel Jr.
CONNECTICUT: Joshua Boamah
DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA: Jeremy McClain
GEORGIA: Robert White
KENTUCKY: William Pruitt
NORTH CAROLINA: Eliezer M. Matos
OREGON: Nelson Castro
BRITISH COLUMBIA: Juhyun Park
ONTARIO: Robin Wasti

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AMERICAN PEOPLES:

Christopher Armstrong, Clifford Case, Dan Potter, Mark Robertson

CENTRAL ASIAN PEOPLES: JH

EUROPEAN PEOPLES: Rebecca McNiel

NORTHERN AFRICAN AND MIDDLE EASTERN

PEOPLES: DB, RL, ER, JS

SUB-SAHARAN AFRICAN PEOPLES:

Kristen Miller

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STATE CONVENTION MISSIONARIES

RETIRED IMB: KA, Bob Barbe,

Bob Blevins, Vern Hancock, Choon Pak, DR

WEDNESDAY, AUGUST 9

PASSAGE: PROVERBS 17:14-19

FOCUS: PROVERBS 17:17

The dark, deserted road in the mountains of Vietnam instills a sense of fear and worry in the driver and the guide. The van, discreetly loaded with 1,000 Bibles, is en route to a village 30 miles off the main highway. Upon arrival, 20 motorcycles are loaded in a rush. In the early-morning hours, the Bibles will be whisked away to nearby towns and communities, bringing hope and spiritual freedom.

Delivering, owning, and receiving a Bible in a hostile nation carries significant risk, but the loyalty and love to help a neighbor in need is greater.

Being stopped while driving a vehicle in a hostile country can potentially have devastating consequences. Missionaries have been threatened, attacked, and killed on desolate roads. Bold faith takes on a new meaning.

As you contemplate your environment—which most likely allows you to travel, worship, and live in safety—pray for the protection of missionaries whose safety isn't guaranteed and who face significant unknowns every day. Pray their bold faith would be used by God for the salvation of many.

Prayer Focus—Sub-Saharan African Peoples: Sharing the clear, biblical message of salvation is imperative in areas where many false gospel messages persist. The truth of repentance from sin and faith in Christ alone tends to get twisted into desiring blessings or power for self-serving purposes. Pray for the youth in Tete, Mozambique, as they learn to share the gospel. Pray they would be faithful to share the message with everyone they meet.

PRAY FOR
NORTH AMERICAN MISSION BOARD

- ARIZONA:** Mark Pratt
- FLORIDA:** Brandon Ellis
- NEW JERSEY:** Samuel Ventura
- NEW YORK:** Simon Ma
- OREGON:** Yalid Fuentes
- TEXAS:** Ayo Omopariola
- INTERNATIONAL MISSION BOARD**
- AMERICAN PEOPLES:** Jeffery Ginn, CM, Peggy Rutledge
- ASIAN PACIFIC RIM PEOPLES:** CJ, AP
- CENTRAL ASIAN PEOPLES:** CC, MC, GH, KH, KM, DW
- EUROPEAN PEOPLES:** Janice Seely
- NORTHERN AFRICAN AND MIDDLE EASTERN PEOPLES:** MR
- SOUTH ASIAN PEOPLES:** JC, RC, WL
- CHAPLAINS • VOLUNTEERS**
- STATE CONVENTION MISSIONARIES**
- RETIRED IMB:** PB, Claudia Brown, DC, Jerry Clower, Linda Gaddis, Dick Greenwood, Barry Hill, Donald Jones, Carl Lee, KM, JP

THURSDAY, AUGUST 10

PASSAGE: PROVERBS 19:16-23
FOCUS: PROVERBS 19:17

Who hasn't lent money to friends or family members at one time or another? Sometimes they pay you back; sometimes they don't. Today's focus passage says when we help someone who is poor, it is as though we are lending to the Lord.

We may not be aware of why someone is poor. Throughout Proverbs, we see numerous reasons. A person may be unemployed (this may or may not be by choice), love pleasure, disregard discipline, or partake in idle chatter (see Proverbs 21:17; 13:18; and 14:23). He or she may have made unwise

financial choices or been involved with injustices over which he or she had no control. Whatever the reason may be, we are called to show kindness to those in need, not ignore or oppress them, as we read in Proverbs 14:31 on Tuesday.

We are all made in the image of God, including those who are poor. Therefore, how we treat the poor points to how we treat God.

Reflect on that last statement as you pray about how you treat others. Pray God would guide your responses to those living in poverty. If we invest in the poor, we invest in God, and He will repay our investment many times over.

Prayer Focus—Sub-Saharan African Peoples: Students returned to Tanzania Baptist Theological Seminary during May and June. They worked diligently to complete their studies and were away from their families for six weeks as they committed their time to studying God's Word. Pray they would remain faithful to Scripture, preaching and teaching the truth accurately. Intercede for them as they minister in their churches and communities for His glory.

PRAY FOR
NORTH AMERICAN MISSION BOARD

- FLORIDA:** Jawaan Wilson
- GEORGIA:** Frantsner Samed
- KENTUCKY:** Audra Hatfield
- MARYLAND:** Cletous Penn
- OKLAHOMA:** James Bo Holland
- SOUTH CAROLINA:** Carol Stallings
- VERMONT:** Frank Rothe
- ONTARIO:** Seth Beebe
- INTERNATIONAL MISSION BOARD**
- AMERICAN PEOPLES:** Kurt Urbaneck
- ASIAN PACIFIC RIM PEOPLES:** Kimberly Ratliff
- CENTRAL ASIAN PEOPLES:** KE, DH, MH, MS
- NORTHERN AFRICAN AND MIDDLE EASTERN PEOPLES:** LF, ES
- SOUTH ASIAN PEOPLES:** RA
- CHAPLAINS • VOLUNTEERS**
- STATE CONVENTION MISSIONARIES**
- RETIRED IMB:** Ann Beighle, Richard DeLeon, LR, Larry Randolph, Nema Westmoreland

FRIDAY, AUGUST 11

PASSAGE: PROVERBS 22:1-16
FOCUS: PROVERBS 22:9

Jim and Linda Jones couldn't stand it anymore. They heard again and again and saw with their own eyes how food deprivation was impacting the international communities they served. Although their emphasis was on medical missions, they couldn't ignore the patients who came to them hungry.

When the Joneses arrived back home in Alabama after a medical mission trip to Kenya, they began to notice the plight of local school-children in rural areas who experienced food insecurity. According to the US Department of Agriculture, food insecurity is "the limited or uncertain availability of nutritionally adequate and safe foods." In response, Jim and Linda went to work. They asked grocery stores for food that was overstocked. They filled backpacks with food and Scripture cards and handed them out from their car trunk to children for the weekend. Their generosity eventually grew into a full-fledged ministry, Alabama Childhood Food Solutions.

When you sit down for your next meal, pray for hungry people around you and how you could be a part of the solution. Pray also for missionaries who encounter food-insecure children and families, that they would be able to assist them in meeting their physical needs as a connecting point to meeting their spiritual needs.

Prayer Focus—Sub-Saharan African Peoples: Pray Jesus, the Light of the world, would be at work in South Africans' lives. Pray Jesus would light up the darkness within their souls and around their minds. *Lord Jesus, reveal Your salvation to the people in South Africa so they can be transferred*

from the kingdom of darkness to the kingdom of light.

PRAY FOR
NORTH AMERICAN MISSION BOARD

FLORIDA: Samuel Delphin, Bruce Sabin
MINNESOTA: Jacob Hatfield

INTERNATIONAL MISSION BOARD

AMERICAN PEOPLES: Tisha Jones

ASIAN PACIFIC RIM PEOPLES:

Su-Jeong Kuykendall, PN,
Hyosik Song

CENTRAL ASIAN PEOPLES: JF

EUROPEAN PEOPLES: Kate Brosseau,

Jeremiah Brown, WJ, Sherri Watson

NORTHERN AFRICAN AND MIDDLE EASTERN PEOPLES: LH

SOUTH ASIAN PEOPLES: KA, SC, MD

CHAPLAINS • VOLUNTEERS

STATE CONVENTION MISSIONARIES

RETIRED IMB: Carol Bowers, JC,

Brad Chow, RD, Jerri Darnell,
Phala Echols, Roberta Hampton,
SM, Frances Ann Smith,
Eulene Smothers, John Terry

SATURDAY, AUGUST 12

PASSAGE: PROVERBS 31:1-9

FOCUS: PROVERBS 31:8-9

The Scripture passage today comes from the sayings of King Lemuel. He learned from the wise teachings of his mother. I bet you can recall a few wise teachings from your mother. I remember my mother saying, “If you can’t say anything nice, then don’t say anything at all.”

Lemuel’s mother told him not to be a womanizer since lacking self-control and disobeying God’s boundaries could bring him to ruin (v. 3). She also told him not to drink alcohol, which could impede his judgment (vv. 4–5). She encouraged him to speak up for the destitute and the helpless to ensure their rights were defended (vv. 8–9).

Every person deserves justice, but many do not always get it. What about the 12-year-old child bride in Sudan or the young son in India sold by his father for alcohol and worked to death? What about the victim of abuse or neglect who

might be in your very neighborhood?

To speak up for those who cannot speak for themselves and to defend the rights of the poor and needy is not just a wise saying. It is part of God’s character—who spoke up for us and defended our rights through His Son, Jesus—and we are to emulate that. Pray you would see and respond to needs around you. Pray missionaries would have wisdom to deal with difficult situations without harming their witness.

Prayer Focus—Sub-Saharan African Peoples: Revival has been taking place in some universities in the United States. Pray revival would take place in Durban, South Africa, and across the world and hearts would be turned to the Lord. Pray believers in Durban would turn from complacency in doing God’s

will and from attaching importance to the things of this world and that they would instead seek the kingdom of God.

PRAY FOR
NORTH AMERICAN MISSION BOARD

ARKANSAS: Matthew Duvall
FLORIDA: Marcos Emmanuel Oliveira

Andrade, Irvin Stallworth

MINNESOTA: Marshall Posey

TENNESSEE: Lee Harrison

VIRGINIA: Ludin Munoz Florián

BRITISH COLUMBIA: Marcel Mitchell

INTERNATIONAL MISSION BOARD

CENTRAL ASIAN PEOPLES: AC

EUROPEAN PEOPLES: Heather Bates,
CD, CT

NORTHERN AFRICAN AND MIDDLE EASTERN PEOPLES: RG, AI

SUB-SAHARAN AFRICAN PEOPLES:

Shelley Riggs

CHAPLAINS • VOLUNTEERS

STATE CONVENTION MISSIONARIES

RETIRED IMB: Allen Alexander,
Eleanor Verdery

missionary of the week

SUNDAY, AUGUST 13

PATRICK AND JENNIFER GRANT
PORTLAND, OREGON

PASSAGE: ZECHARIAH 7:8-13

FOCUS: ZECHARIAH 7:9-10

Researchers estimate more than 85 percent of those in Portland, Oregon, are lost. The city has only one Southern Baptist church for every 26,222 people. One of those churches is Woodstock Community Church, which was planted by Patrick and Jennifer Grant.

One of the ways the church ministers to the Portland community is through a ministry called Laundry Love. For two days every month, the church offers to do two loads of laundry for people. The church also reaches out to children by offering a children’s camp in the park, a soccer camp, and a back-to-school bash, where church members provide backpacks full of school supplies to children and teachers in the neighborhood.

Through these outreaches, the church has been able to build relationships and have numerous gospel conversations.

THE COOPERATIVE PROGRAM takes the gospel to the nations and the neighborhoods. Your financial support through the Cooperative Program helps missionaries reach their communities with the gospel in tangible ways.

PRAY God would use these outreach efforts to help the Grants and Woodstock Community Church build gospel-centered relationships within the community.



PRAY FOR

NORTH AMERICAN MISSION BOARD

ARKANSAS: Charles Simmons
FLORIDA: Robert Brown, Matthew Diaz
KENTUCKY: Harrell Riley
MINNESOTA: José Victor Ordoñez
PENNSYLVANIA: Christopher Cope

INTERNATIONAL MISSION BOARD

ASIAN PACIFIC RIM PEOPLES: AC,
Myoung Cho, GD, MM
CENTRAL ASIAN PEOPLES: LS
EUROPEAN PEOPLES: Hannah Benke,
Zeth Hill, Jenni Meredith,
Savannah Miller
NORTHERN AFRICAN AND MIDDLE EASTERN
PEOPLES: JV, LW
SOUTH ASIAN PEOPLES: JL
GLOBAL: CM

CHAPLAINS • VOLUNTEERS

STATE CONVENTION MISSIONARIES

RETIRED IMB: Orvell Bryant,
John Copple, Diane Ellis,
Kathy Politowski, John Ramsey, GS

MONDAY, AUGUST 14

PASSAGE: GENESIS 32:3-21; 33:1-4

FOCUS: GENESIS 33:3-4

As Christians, we are appointed as ambassadors for Christ. Though we are fallible, we should strive to manifest the character of God in our daily living. When showing love to our neighbor, one particular quality takes center stage: forgiveness. Without forgiveness, there is no love. First Corinthians 13:5 says love “keeps no record of wrongs.”

Two stories of forgiveness in Genesis come to mind. Both involve brothers. The first is about Joseph and his brothers. Because of Joseph’s unhindered arrogance and because he was their father’s favorite son, Joseph’s brothers sold him into slavery. Joseph later forgave them, saving them and many other people in the land from severe famine.

The second story is about Jacob and Esau. Jacob manipulated the birthright as well as his father’s blessing from his older brother. Years later, Esau showed forgiveness toward Jacob in a tearful embrace. Esau loved Jacob and had missed him dearly.

Is there someone you need to forgive? Pray God would give you the willingness to forgive and begin the process of restoration. Pray missionaries would forgive and display God’s restorative heart to those who have wronged them.

Prayer Focus—Ohio: Joshua Ashwill and his wife, Faith, are planting Salt and Light Church Columbus in Columbus, Ohio. “Pray God would send laborers who would be committed to serving long term in the inner city. Pray we would see people come to faith in Christ this year. Pray God would give us wisdom in how to unite people who are from two very different cultures. Pray leaders would be raised up and equipped, specifically from the inner-city community. Pray I would love and serve my family well. My family consists of my wife, Faith, and our three young children, Galilee, Gloria, and Moses.”

PRAY FOR

NORTH AMERICAN MISSION BOARD

COLORADO: Robby Pitt
FLORIDA: Jnmarc Molme
KENTUCKY: Sherri Stargel
MARYLAND: Daniel Chung
OHIO: Nicholas Abraham

INTERNATIONAL MISSION BOARD

ASIAN PACIFIC RIM PEOPLES: EC, JH, RO
CENTRAL ASIAN PEOPLES: KC
EUROPEAN PEOPLES: Jason Harris
NORTHERN AFRICAN AND MIDDLE EASTERN
PEOPLES: HG, JR
SUB-SAHARAN AFRICAN PEOPLES: JG

CHAPLAINS • VOLUNTEERS

STATE CONVENTION MISSIONARIES

RETIRED IMB: Edmund Brannen,
David Crane, Billie Dixon,
Richard Folkerth, SH,
LaVeta Sergeant, KW, Bert Yates

TUESDAY, AUGUST 15

PASSAGE: 1 TIMOTHY 2:1-10

FOCUS: 1 TIMOTHY 2:1

Like me, you have probably heard that one of the best gifts we can offer someone is prayer. Praying for others seeks God’s will in their lives and reinforces our faith.

Corrie ten Boom said, “We never know how God will answer our prayers, but we can expect that He will get us involved in His plan

for the answer. If we are true intercessors, we must be ready to take part in God’s work on behalf of the people for whom we pray.”

Former missionary Helen Hancock often prayed for the Cearleys in Mozambique, who were on her church’s prayer list. Tim Cearley asked Helen and her husband to bring a small group to Mozambique, so they did. While there, Helen prayerwalked, visited in homes, and shared her testimony. The Lord worked through her to bring at least two people to saving faith in Him. She comforted a grieving couple who had lost their child and participated in the first service of a new church.

Pray God would help you put your prayers to action—that He would reveal to you the ways He would have you be a part of the answer to your very prayers. Pray missionaries likewise would engage in prayer both in their hearts and in their actions.

Prayer Focus—Florida: Matide Pierre is the wife of church planter Herve Pierre. Together they are planting Antioch Baptist Church of Port Saint Lucie in Port Saint Lucie, Florida. “Pray for my family. I have two children in college who especially need prayer. Pray for our church, and pray also God would provide for the needs of my family.”

PRAY FOR

NORTH AMERICAN MISSION BOARD

ARIZONA: Ricardo Felix Miranda
ARKANSAS: Chad Graves
MONTANA: John Finley
TENNESSEE: Virgil Barton,
John Quintero

PUERTO RICO: Jorge Santiago-Reyes

INTERNATIONAL MISSION BOARD

AMERICAN PEOPLES: Laura Spiegel
ASIAN PACIFIC RIM PEOPLES: TH,
Jesse Jennings, SM, SS
SOUTH ASIAN PEOPLES: BM
SUB-SAHARAN AFRICAN PEOPLES:

Deborah Hoskins

CHAPLAINS • VOLUNTEERS

STATE CONVENTION MISSIONARIES

RETIRED IMB: Rebecca Epley,
Allison Holman, Phillip Kesler,
Leroy Seat, Brenda Tolosa

WEDNESDAY, AUGUST 16

PASSAGE: JOB 2:1-13
FOCUS: JOB 2:11-13

We are creatures who need to talk. We talk about our latest accomplishments, the beach vacation, the excellent restaurant we visited, and the problems we are experiencing. Women are known for talking as a means of connecting, but we need to ensure that what we say is worthwhile. We may have good intentions for offering advice, but as my husband reminds me, listening may be all I need to do.

Such was the case with Job's three friends. They traveled from their homes after hearing of Job's tragedy. They came to comfort and console him, yet they interjected faulty views and advice through lofty speeches. It would have been better had they departed after sitting on the ground with Job for a week and saying nothing.

Spending time with someone who is suffering by just listening and being present is noble. It's an act of love, conveying a sense of importance and value.

Pray God would develop the art of listening in you and in missionaries to open doors for conversations about His listening ear and His saving grace.

Prayer Focus–Ontario: Emmanuel Mukendi and his wife, Julia, are planting Church of the Eternal Word in Toronto, Ontario. "Pray the Lord would give us a breakthrough regarding gospel conversations this year as we commit ourselves to sharing within our community. We have ordered special pens printed with our church's name and website, and all our church members will use them as they share Christ. Every Sunday, we will encourage our people to

share with one person and give him or her a pen as a gift. We are praying God would bring about the salvation of souls."

PRAY FOR
NORTH AMERICAN MISSION BOARD

ARKANSAS: Anthony Banks
CALIFORNIA: Jordan Rodseth
FLORIDA: Miguel Estevill
NEW MEXICO: Rose Ignacio
INTERNATIONAL MISSION BOARD
AMERICAN PEOPLES: AS
ASIAN PACIFIC RIM PEOPLES: Jo North, TS
NORTHERN AFRICAN AND MIDDLE EASTERN PEOPLES: MD, SS

SUB-SAHARAN AFRICAN PEOPLES: JC,
Ryan Curry, Michael Ley

CHAPLAINS • VOLUNTEERS
STATE CONVENTION MISSIONARIES

RETIRED IMB: Carroll Golden,
Pamela Henagan, Barney Hutson,
David Johnson, Susan Ludwick,
Trisha Price, Manuel Sosa

THURSDAY, AUGUST 17

PASSAGE: 1 SAMUEL 20:1-42
FOCUS: 1 SAMUEL 20:4, 17

Thus far this week, we have identified forgiveness, prayer, and listening as factors in showing love to our neighbors. Today we will address support.

I am fortunate to live in a neighborhood where neighbors look out for one another. Many times, neighbors have retrieved my two meandering dogs. For a while, my dogs' feats of escape were a significant problem. Neither my husband nor I was available to deal with the situation in real time. We eventually realized our younger dog had learned to open the latch with his snout! My husband and I were grateful for our neighbors' support in keeping them safe.

Jonathan's support and loyalty to keep his friend David safe meant the difference between life and death. Jonathan's father, King Saul, seethed with jealousy at the thought of David becoming king. Without Jonathan, David may not have escaped the murder-minded king.

As you think of ways to support your neighbors, pray God would inspire missionaries to demonstrate their support in new ways to closed-minded individuals.

Prayer Focus–Massachusetts: Steven Castello is the lead pastor and planter of City on a Hill Church: Forest Hills in Boston, Massachusetts. "Pray for our church as we continue to reach new people, disciple them, and send them into the city of Boston to make more disciples. We have many nonbelievers and new believers in our church, and we are growing. This means we need more leaders to fill the gaps while we pour into new believers and prepare them to lead in the future. Boston is very transient. Pray for the heartache of saying goodbye to old faces, and pray God would give us the energy to continue to welcome new ones."

PRAY FOR
NORTH AMERICAN MISSION BOARD

FLORIDA: Vitaly Rymar
NEW MEXICO: Miranda Lash
NORTH CAROLINA: David Parsons
SOUTH DAKOTA: Richard McGehee
VIRGINIA: Fisseha Tesfaye

INTERNATIONAL MISSION BOARD
AMERICAN PEOPLES: ER

ASIAN PACIFIC RIM PEOPLES: KA,
Pierce Hite
CENTRAL ASIAN PEOPLES: RB
EUROPEAN PEOPLES: KN,
Patricia Vazquez
NORTHERN AFRICAN AND MIDDLE EASTERN PEOPLES: MH, SP

SOUTH ASIAN PEOPLES: DB, TC
CHAPLAINS • VOLUNTEERS

STATE CONVENTION MISSIONARIES
RETIRED NAMB: Michael Procter
RETIRED IMB: Oakie Blevins,
Sharon Fairchild, John Fischer

FRIDAY, AUGUST 18

PASSAGE: 1 KINGS 19:13b-21
FOCUS: 1 KINGS 19:16

The story of Elijah and Elisha epitomizes mentorship. The prophet Elijah intentionally prepared Elisha to be his replacement.

Mentoring focuses on transferring skills, knowledge, and experience. Natural mentorships can develop to encourage an exchange of

ideas, practices, and perspectives. For believers, mentorship extends more deeply in the form of discipleship as we share not only skills or expertise but also what we have learned and experienced as we walk with God.

In Baltimore, Maryland, Pascha Lee was tired of watching adolescent girls struggle. She founded a mentoring ministry called Imagine Me Ministries that matches mentors with young girls to oversee tutoring, social development, and ultimately sharing the hope of Jesus amid discouragement.

Showing love through mentoring and discipleship takes time and commitment, but the results can be fruitful and fulfilling. Pray God would prepare your heart to serve as a mentor and to disciple others. Pray God would provide more mentorship opportunities for missionaries to grow leaders and expand His kingdom.

Prayer Focus—Ohio: Ben Mangrum and his wife, Brittany, together planted Inspiring Hope Church in Hamilton, Ohio. "Pray for us as we transition to meeting in the YMCA in our community. We believe God has opened this door at the right time to enable us to continue to connect with our community and show the love of Jesus. Also, pray for our leadership team members as we lead through this transition and continue to develop leaders who will own the mission and multiply it throughout the church. Pray for our family. Pray we would continue to build one another up and prioritize one another during this season of church planting."

PRAY FOR
NORTH AMERICAN MISSION BOARD
COLORADO: Kathryn Britton
FLORIDA: Blake Harcup
INDIANA: Leonid Marsan
NORTH CAROLINA: Donald Charles
OHIO: Doug Wampler
TEXAS: Robeam Getaneh Solomon
INTERNATIONAL MISSION BOARD
ASIAN PACIFIC RIM PEOPLES: JB,
Vicki Dueker, Caleb Huhmann
CENTRAL ASIAN PEOPLES: KD, SO

EUROPEAN PEOPLES: Shannon Garner
NORTHERN AFRICAN AND MIDDLE EASTERN PEOPLES: KG
SOUTH ASIAN PEOPLES: Eddie Landry, DM
SUB-SAHARAN AFRICAN PEOPLES:
Sam Brittain, Jeffrey Johnson
CHAPLAINS • VOLUNTEERS
STATE CONVENTION MISSIONARIES
RETIRED IMB: Harry Bush,
Lynnette Kinnison, Lou Ann Lee,
SP, FR, Alfredo Valencia,
Alan Waters, Jack Yates

SATURDAY, AUGUST 19

PASSAGE: 1 JOHN 3:11-18

FOCUS: 1 JOHN 3:16

Martha Myers can be described as a modern-day martyr. She was called to missions at a young age and answered that call in 1977. Her skills as an obstetrics and gynecology physician served the people of Yemen well for 25 years.

Martha delivered countless babies, often going to villages late at night. She was most known for her love for the Yemeni people. But it was hatred for Christianity that prompted a patient's husband to storm into Jibla Baptist Hospital where Martha worked and gun her down along with two colleagues.

At her funeral, more than 40,000 Yemenis filed past her body. Former International Mission Board president Jerry Rankin said at the time, "Martha was not living for herself, but to serve others." How could she have known her love for her neighbors would cost her her life?

Pray for the protection of missionaries across the world—protection from physical harm, attack, and illness and from manipulative tactics that would thwart the gospel. Pray the gospel would prevail and God would be glorified no matter the circumstances.

Prayer Focus—Georgia: Joaquin Peña is planting Gospel Hope Church Español in Avondale Estates, Georgia. "Gospel

Hope Church recently celebrated its first anniversary. We celebrate what God has done in the past year and look forward to what He will do in the coming years. Pray for members of our congregation who are struggling. Pray adults would find jobs that don't require them to work on Sundays so they can attend our services. Pray people would come to know Christ through our English as a second language classes."

PRAY FOR
NORTH AMERICAN MISSION BOARD

ILLINOIS: Joshua Burks
INTERNATIONAL MISSION BOARD
AMERICAN PEOPLES: Phoebe Harrison
CENTRAL ASIAN PEOPLES: WH
EUROPEAN PEOPLES: Cal Hiebsch
SOUTH ASIAN PEOPLES: MP, MS
SUB-SAHARAN AFRICAN PEOPLES:
Trey Lancaster, Brooke Tipton
CHAPLAINS • VOLUNTEERS
STATE CONVENTION MISSIONARIES
RETIRED IMB: Chip Clary, Lee Collins,
Gerry Colston, Janene Ford,
Bruce Gerling, Delores Graham,
Cheri Orange, Larry Plyler, DS,
Betty Sledd, Paul VanStone,
Joyce Wright

SUNDAY, AUGUST 20

SEE FEATURE ON PAGE 39.

PRAY FOR
NORTH AMERICAN MISSION BOARD

ARIZONA: Bishnu Regmi
IOWA: Wesley Jones
KENTUCKY: George Lewis
MICHIGAN: John Thompson
MISSOURI: Luis Mendoza
NEVADA: David Tatlock
NEW JERSEY: Aaron Shum
OREGON: Randy Burrows
TEXAS: Ruben de Rus Martinez
INTERNATIONAL MISSION BOARD
ASIAN PACIFIC RIM PEOPLES: BD,
Daniel Kim, CP
EUROPEAN PEOPLES: Russell Ford,
Laura Moench, Adrea Spikes
NORTHERN AFRICAN AND MIDDLE EASTERN PEOPLES: RA, ZS, DY
SOUTH ASIAN PEOPLES: NR
SUB-SAHARAN AFRICAN PEOPLES:
Lauren Milewski
CHAPLAINS • VOLUNTEERS
STATE CONVENTION MISSIONARIES
RETIRED IMB: Carrie Chappell, DG,
Donald McLaren, Rae Moorhead,
Verna Tanner

missionary of the week

SUNDAY, AUGUST 20

COURTNEY MOBBS

AMERICAN PEOPLES

PASSAGE: 1 JOHN 5:1-12

FOCUS: 1 JOHN 5:11-12

International Mission Board (IMB)

summer missionary Courtney Mobbs served in Colombia at a refugee center. She was discouraged at the start of her time there, however, because few refugees would engage. Courtney struggled with her purpose for even being there.

One day, Courtney was supposed to teach a women's group, but when it came time to start, no one showed up. She was devastated and poured her heart out to God, asking Him to bring souls to hear His Word. Not even ten minutes later, women started pouring in.

At the end of the summer, when Courtney said goodbye to the refugee women, one of the women wept, explaining the center was the one place she felt loved and could hold on to the truth that God was with her through every circumstance. In that moment, God showed Courtney what her purpose was that summer. And that was enough.

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 for Courtney as she follows God's call for her life and for all IMB summer missionaries ministering around the world.



MONDAY, AUGUST 21

PASSAGE: 1 PETER 4:7-11

FOCUS: 1 PETER 4:9

The news channel reported flash flooding. Rescue personnel were called to the apartment complex where my friend Sharon lived. Water was pouring into Sharon's apartment when friends arrived in the dark of night to calm her frazzled nerves.

The complex suffered much damage, including to Sharon's furniture and clothes. She was forced to relocate. Fortunately, Sharon's newlywed friends opened their home, providing her and her two cats shelter for several months.

Christian hospitality is a gift focusing on people and their needs. We should be quick to offer the kind of hospitality and gifts mentioned in

today's Scripture passage, even though we are tired, busy, or inconvenienced. Our possessions, status, and schedules are temporal, but people are eternal and worth the investment.

When was the last time you opened your home or shared a meal with someone in dire need? Pray to be willing to open your home and your heart to someone with desperate needs.

Prayer Focus—American Peoples: The Mexico City Global City Team is asking people who can work remotely to partner with them and work in one of the coworking spaces in Mexico City, Mexico, to engage professionals in gospel conversations. Pray many would feel called to participate in this missions opportunity, that people would come to Christ, and that God would plant a church there.

PRAY FOR

NORTH AMERICAN MISSION BOARD

ARIZONA: Brandon Reimus

ARKANSAS: Dustin Clegg

INDIANA: Adam Llovet

MICHIGAN: Benjamin Fleet

TEXAS: Lauren Cartwright,

Cornelio Perez

INTERNATIONAL MISSION BOARD

ASIAN PACIFIC RIM PEOPLES: CB, RB,

Sarah Lee

EUROPEAN PEOPLES: EM

NORTHERN AFRICAN AND MIDDLE EASTERN

PEOPLES: KS, DT

SOUTH ASIAN PEOPLES: WJ

CHAPLAINS • VOLUNTEERS

STATE CONVENTION MISSIONARIES

RETIRED NAMB: William Parr

RETIRED IMB: Mark Alexander,

Susie Edworthy, DH,

Flo Love Hernden, Linda Sacco,

Virginia Smith

TUESDAY, AUGUST 22

PASSAGE: JAMES 2:14-26

FOCUS: JAMES 2:18

Ah, the age-old question: Is it necessary to do good works in order to be saved? In his book *Be Mature*, Warren Wiersbe summarizes today's Scripture passage by identifying three kinds of faith.

The first is dead faith. Those with dead faith substitute words for deeds, offering lame pleasantries to satisfy actual needs. The second is demonic. James shocked his listeners by using the illustration of demons: even demons believe! Demons are well aware God exists and know who He is; they understand the mightiness of His power. The third and most important kind of faith is dynamic faith. This kind of faith accompanies action and is based on God's Word and His love—the kind of love we are to imitate and share with others.

Which kind of faith do you have? Does your faith—a gift from God—produce good deeds—your gift to God in gratitude? Pray for those whom missionaries minister

to, that they would direct their faith to the right object: God. Not demons, not idols, not people. Just the one and only true God.

Prayer Focus—Asian Pacific Rim Peoples: An overwhelming number of people groups in northern Laos have never heard the gospel of Jesus. They remain tucked away, and unless someone goes to them, they will never hear the gospel. Pray God would send laborers to the harvest. Pray those laborers would persevere in language learning, maintain healthy relationships, and abide in the Vine, Jesus.

PRAY FOR
NORTH AMERICAN MISSION BOARD
CALIFORNIA: Nick Foley, Dana Thorsell
COLORADO: Christopher Darden
MONTANA: Joseph Todd
TEXAS: Kathyne Boroughs
INTERNATIONAL MISSION BOARD
AMERICAN PEOPLES: Eric Reese,
Danny Wright
ASIAN PACIFIC RIM PEOPLES: MC, SH
CENTRAL ASIAN PEOPLES: AS
EUROPEAN PEOPLES: Becky Rowland
NORTHERN AFRICAN AND MIDDLE EASTERN PEOPLES: DT
SOUTH ASIAN PEOPLES: SG
SUB-SAHARAN AFRICAN PEOPLES: CP
CHAPLAINS • VOLUNTEERS
STATE CONVENTION MISSIONARIES
RETIRED IMB: Jimmy Eager, Doug Shaw, Jack Shelby, Jess Thompson

WEDNESDAY, AUGUST 23

PASSAGE: GALATIANS 6:1-3
FOCUS: GALATIANS 6:2

I recently interviewed a middle-aged mother named Janet who serves on the chain saw and roofing teams of two disaster-relief organizations. She surprised me with her interest in operating a chain saw and shooting a nail gun, especially in light of her petite physique. Janet is willing to leave her job, home, and husband at a moment's notice to respond to the needs of a stranger. She warmed me with her compassionate words about how we are called to bear one another's burdens. Janet felt there was no better way to share someone's burden than by participating in the

aftermath of his or her trauma. What a powerful testimony!

Everybody needs help at one time or another. No believer is exempt from the task of helping others. Paul appealed to the believers in Galatia to use tender, loving care when seeking to restore a broken life.

Pray God would show you a deeper sense of humility and compassion to help mend the hurting. Consider enhancing your testimony with more acts of service.

Prayer Focus—Central Asian Peoples: Despair covers the women of Afghanistan. Now blocked from schooling and prosperous work opportunities, desperation and hopelessness fill their days. Pray the women of Afghanistan would lift their eyes to Jesus, the only true source of hope. Pray believers would share the gospel with them and reflect the love of Christ to these women and their families.

PRAY FOR
NORTH AMERICAN MISSION BOARD
FLORIDA: Alex Oliveira
ILLINOIS: Jacob Goble
INDIANA: Gabriel Fabian
NEW JERSEY: Delfin Orendain
NEW MEXICO: Joshua Valdez
PENNSYLVANIA: Pablo Gutierrez
WASHINGTON: Ankhbayar Jigjid
INTERNATIONAL MISSION BOARD
AMERICAN PEOPLES: Leah Brown, JG, CS, Landon Williams
ASIAN PACIFIC RIM PEOPLES: PK, AM
EUROPEAN PEOPLES: Cody Lawrence
NORTHERN AFRICAN AND MIDDLE EASTERN PEOPLES: ED, TS
SUB-SAHARAN AFRICAN PEOPLES: SM
CHAPLAINS • VOLUNTEERS
STATE CONVENTION MISSIONARIES
RETIRED IMB: Ginny Cannata, Gerri Helton, Tim Hetrick, Heesoon Park, Jim Park, Mack Shults, Betty Smith

THURSDAY, AUGUST 24

PASSAGE: GALATIANS 6:6-10
FOCUS: GALATIANS 6:9

Perseverance. Endurance. Patience. Call it what you will. Scripture says if we practice this behavior of high moral standards along with doing

good, we will reap a blessing. The trick is to not give up!

Paul certainly had the credibility to endorse his remarks. After being imprisoned, beaten, stoned, shipwrecked, whipped, adrift at sea, bitten by a snake . . . the list goes on, Paul continued to preach. He refused to give up, preaching to the Gentiles for decades until his death.

Paul's suffering and good deeds led to blessings and conversions. We still reap those blessings as we read his influential letters to the churches.

"Perseverance is not a long race; it is many short races one after the other," said Walter Elliot. I imagine every missionary listed in our prayer calendar this month has experienced many short races doing good for others. Pray missionaries would be energized with long-term endurance to pursue more short races. Pray the Lord would bring a harvest of blessing from their good deeds.

Prayer Focus—Deaf Peoples: At a Bible study meeting, Tim immediately dismissed the woman signing the gospel when he learned she was hearing and not deaf. He barely glanced her way. But as the discussion continued, he seemed to soften. By the end, he gave her his full attention. Pray Tim would fully trust in the Father for his identity, worth, and future.

PRAY FOR
NORTH AMERICAN MISSION BOARD
GEORGIA: Emma Cross, Forrest Harold Duvall
OHIO: Caleb Burlile, Paul Priddy
INTERNATIONAL MISSION BOARD
AMERICAN PEOPLES: Megan Ravelo, AS
ASIAN PACIFIC RIM PEOPLES: Katelyn Baity, AF, Ann Nagy
NORTHERN AFRICAN AND MIDDLE EASTERN PEOPLES: JS
CHAPLAINS • VOLUNTEERS
STATE CONVENTION MISSIONARIES
RETIRED NAMB: David Lee
RETIRED IMB: Lucy Pat Curl, LO, Peggy Thompson

FRIDAY, AUGUST 25

PASSAGE: PSALM 41:1-3

FOCUS: PSALM 41:1

Poverty is not just a lack of money. Poverty means limitations on food, electricity, clean water, education, employment, safe sanitation, health care, and more.

Bill Gates has been involved in the fight against poverty for years, giving away \$50 billion to combat the global problem. He joined the fight as part of a United Nations initiative to eradicate poverty by 2030. Of course, it will never happen. Jesus said the poor will always be with us.

Over and over, the Bible charges us to be kind to the poor, the weak, and the needy. If we are, we will be blessed. God blesses those who do what He says. But we do not do these things to be blessed; we do them because we ourselves are blessed.

Pray and ask God how He would like to work through you to lessen another's plight. This could look like a project for many or a relationship with one. Pray your heart would be softened to the plight of those in poverty.

Prayer Focus—South Asian Peoples: Hindu-background believers in a small village church are faithfully sharing the gospel in the region of Rohilkhand (*roh-HIL-kund*) in Uttar Pradesh, India. As a result, several Hindu families are close to belief in Jesus, but they are still clinging to idolatry. Pray specifically that the men of the families would believe. Pray this church would be a bright beacon of light in the community and multiply into new churches.

PRAY FOR

NORTH AMERICAN MISSION BOARD

ARIZONA: Marshall Morris

CALIFORNIA: Kelvin Aikens

GEORGIA: Brandon Henson

MARYLAND: Alexander Bouffard

NEW YORK: Kristin LaVallie,

Patrick Thompson

NORTH CAROLINA: Travis Byrd, Gary Lee

OHIO: Aaron Taylor

PENNSYLVANIA: Christian Aguilar

VIRGINIA: Dustin Carson

INTERNATIONAL MISSION BOARD

AMERICAN PEOPLES: Garry Wester

ASIAN PACIFIC RIM PEOPLES: CC, DP, HT

CENTRAL ASIAN PEOPLES: RC, VK, CM, MM

EUROPEAN PEOPLES: SH,

Rachel Partridge, Aimee Turner

NORTHERN AFRICAN AND MIDDLE EASTERN

PEOPLES: JP

SUB-SAHARAN AFRICAN PEOPLES: PI

CHAPLAINS • VOLUNTEERS

STATE CONVENTION MISSIONARIES

RETIRED IMB: Brenda Bayer, JK,

Martha Spangler

SATURDAY, AUGUST 26

PASSAGE: PSALM 133

FOCUS: PSALM 133:1

On a Sunday in August 1961, construction on a wall began, and barbed wire was installed to divide the capital city of Berlin, Germany. East Germany, which had been occupied by the Soviet Union since the end of World War II, erected a wall to close its border to West Germany, occupied by the United States, Great Britain, and France. Each side had its own political system.

The Berlin Wall prevented anyone from crossing to the other side. As a result, families were torn apart, the economy was at odds, and freedoms were compromised.

On November 9, 1989, the Berlin Wall was torn down, leading to the reunification of Germany. Like today's focus verse says, "How good and pleasant it is when God's people live together in unity!" (v. 1).

Living in unity does not mean there is always complete agreement. Every missionary knows that. But there must be harmony in order to work together. Every missionary knows that too. Maintaining a spiritual unity with one another, especially with those in the faith, is "precious" (v. 2).

As you pray for the missionaries celebrating birthdays today, pray a precious inward unity of purpose

would replace the isolation they may feel from their homes and families.

Prayer Focus—Sub-Saharan African Peoples: About 300,000 displaced people live in Cape Town, South Africa. As these asylum seekers and refugees experience harm and neglect in their new city, they lose hope that anyone will help them. Pray the Father who loves them would renew their hope and provide for their physical needs. Pray they would come to know true hope through belief in Jesus.

PRAY FOR

NORTH AMERICAN MISSION BOARD

ARIZONA: Victor Arias

CALIFORNIA: Michael Flynn

KENTUCKY: Ryan Horrell

LOUISIANA: Bobby Williams

OHIO: Abraham Gurung

ALBERTA: Allan Fundal

ONTARIO: Obed Valenzuela

INTERNATIONAL MISSION BOARD

ASIAN PACIFIC RIM PEOPLES: AC, JT

CENTRAL ASIAN PEOPLES: AE

EUROPEAN PEOPLES: Angie Ham

NORTHERN AFRICAN AND MIDDLE EASTERN

PEOPLES: JB, OT

SOUTH ASIAN PEOPLES: DD, JS

SUB-SAHARAN AFRICAN PEOPLES: KN

CHAPLAINS • VOLUNTEERS

STATE CONVENTION MISSIONARIES

RETIRED IMB: MB, Lila Reagan,

Pam Wafler

SUNDAY, AUGUST 27

SEE FEATURE ON PAGE 42.

PRAY FOR

NORTH AMERICAN MISSION BOARD

ALABAMA: Morris Hill

CALIFORNIA: Kierra Block, Henry Meza

INDIANA: Eric Ford

NEW JERSEY: Sergio Beloso

TEXAS: Ryan Napier

INTERNATIONAL MISSION BOARD

ASIAN PACIFIC RIM PEOPLES: MD, HS

CENTRAL ASIAN PEOPLES: MW

EUROPEAN PEOPLES: KC, Sarah Fuller,

Sebastian Vazquez, Mara Williams

NORTHERN AFRICAN AND MIDDLE EASTERN

PEOPLES: EB

SUB-SAHARAN AFRICAN PEOPLES:

Clay Steelman

CHAPLAINS • VOLUNTEERS

STATE CONVENTION MISSIONARIES

RETIRED NAMB: Dale Maddux

RETIRED IMB: EB, Robert Clark,

Robert Fortenberry, Dottie Hayes,

C. Albert Hoopes, Carolyn Lozuk,

MR, GS, Lynn Terrill

missionary of the week

SUNDAY, AUGUST 27

JOSIAS AND DÉBORA LAPORTE
QUEBEC, CANADA

PASSAGE: PSALM 101
FOCUS: PSALM 101:5

Gatineau sits on the border between the Canadian provinces of Ontario and Quebec.

Ottawa is Canada's capital city and is on the English-speaking Ontario side. Gatineau is in French-speaking Quebec. Many of the people in Gatineau work in the government in Ottawa but live in Gatineau.

To help reach the people of Gatineau, Josias and Débora Laporte planted La Chapelle Gatineau. The church is very involved in the community, providing additional volunteer labor for local organizations that need help. For example, the church recently helped repaint a women's shelter. They also helped relocate women who needed to move from their homes and into the shelter. As the people of the church have served at the shelter, many of the women have asked why the church wants to help them. When that happens, church members have an opportunity to tell them about Jesus.

THE COOPERATIVE PROGRAM takes the gospel to the nations and the neighborhoods. Your financial support through the Cooperative Program provides opportunities for missionaries to be the hands and feet of Jesus to those who feel forgotten.

PRAY for the Laportes and La Chapelle Gatineau as they find new, innovative ways to minister to the people of Gatineau.



MONDAY, AUGUST 28

PASSAGE: ISAIAH 1:10-18
FOCUS: ISAIAH 1:17

Isaiah opens with a scene similar to that of a courtroom. God is the judge presiding over the case of Judah's sin and rebellion. Although the people's pretentious acts of sacrifice and hypocritical worship are disgusting, God pardons them and allows them to repent and be forgiven. Corrective action is to do good, seek justice, help the oppressed, and fight for orphans and widows. These instructions are not only for the people of Judah but also for us in demonstrating love to our neighbors.

Kam Minthang, a Facebook friend of mine in India, is no stranger to defending the cause of the fatherless. He and his wife have

reared six orphaned and abandoned children, plus their two biological sons. Their faith is relentless. I recall the time a newborn girl was left on Kam's doorstep. He gave me the honor of naming her!

Missionaries, especially in third-world countries, are familiar with such scenes. Pray they would seize opportunities to infuse God's love into the orphans, widows, and oppressed in their communities. Pray you, too, would seek to do good for these populations.

Prayer Focus—American Peoples: Pray for an IMB team in Bogotá, Colombia, sharing Bible stories and the gospel with young Indigenous mothers who have been displaced. Team members offer a "mother and baby" class and share tips for maintaining a healthy diet and for successful breastfeeding so the mothers can avoid the expensive cost of formula.

PRAY FOR

NORTH AMERICAN MISSION BOARD

MISSOURI: Megan Anderson

OHIO: Jamie Elkins

ONTARIO: Edmond Sarmiento

INTERNATIONAL MISSION BOARD

AMERICAN PEOPLES: Sara Armstrong

ASIAN PACIFIC RIM PEOPLES: MP, SW, SY

EUROPEAN PEOPLES: DS

SUB-SAHARAN AFRICAN PEOPLES:

Nathan Baker

CHAPLAINS • VOLUNTEERS

STATE CONVENTION MISSIONARIES

RETIRED NAMB: Tommy Cupples

RETIRED IMB: Judy Billings,

Elbert Deaderick, Ira Henagan,

Russell Kyzar, Dave Mullican,

Kimberly Smith, Judy Tapp

TUESDAY, AUGUST 29

PASSAGE: ISAIAH 58:1-9

FOCUS: ISAIAH 58:6-7

Trouble in the camp again! Those hypocritical Israelites tried to pass off pious fasting and penitent acts as genuine worship, but it was nothing more than showmanship. Their fasting was for all the wrong reasons.

The Lord has a different recipe for fasting—one of love and godliness. First, free those who are innocent and imprisoned. Then sprinkle in less burden for employees. Third, drain oppression and chains that bind. And fourth, blend in shelter and clothes for the needy. Combine all ingredients for a healthy slice of goodness to share with a hungry neighbor. God reminds us to be sure to share with relatives who need help too.

Do you have all of the necessary ingredients to show love to your neighbor? Have you been guilty of showmanship or pious acts?

Pray the Lord would examine your heart to ensure that inward obedience and submission accompany your outward rituals of worship. Pray your recipe for love and godliness would incorporate compassion for neighbors and relatives.

Prayer Focus—Virginia: Pablo Hernandez and his wife, Grazia, are planting Iglesia Cristiana Sígueme in Harrisonburg, Virginia. “Pray for our church that the Lord is planting through us here in Harrisonburg. Iglesia Cristiana Sígueme is the first Hispanic Southern Baptist church in our town.”

PRAY FOR
NORTH AMERICAN MISSION BOARD

OHIO: Joseph Kaloger
INTERNATIONAL MISSION BOARD
AMERICAN PEOPLES: Sean Blacksten,
Anne Decker, Dawn Friesen,
Rhonda Richard

ASIAN PACIFIC RIM PEOPLES: JL, RO,
JP, MS

CENTRAL ASIAN PEOPLES: CW

EUROPEAN PEOPLES: Joe Joe Harrington,
Brenda Peacock

SUB-SAHARAN AFRICAN PEOPLES:
Wanne Dina

CHAPLAINS • VOLUNTEERS
STATE CONVENTION MISSIONARIES

RETIRED IMB: Roy Brent, Jimmy Cobb,
Anne Faulkner, Jane Grayson,
Mark Hathcox, Vicki Lassiter,
Bob Mulkey, MR, Tim Shupp

WEDNESDAY, AUGUST 30

PASSAGE: ROMANS 12:9-21

FOCUS: ROMANS 12:14

What? Pray God would bless those who persecute me? That's insane! No, that's love. God's love.

Perhaps the hardest people to show love to are those who are full of evil intent, especially those who harm innocent children and persecute Christians.

Persecution is more common than we would like to believe. According to Open Doors' 2023 World Watch List, more than 360 million Christians suffer high levels of persecution and discrimination because of their faith. Last year, 5,621 Christians were killed for their faith, 2,110 churches were attacked, and 4,542 Christians were detained. And it's getting worse.

What can we do? The Bible says to love those who persecute you, to bless them rather than curse them.

Jesus showed us returning good for evil is a higher standard.

Close your eyes for a moment. Imagine a missionary who has been threatened and how he or she might feel. Think about how you would feel. Now, pray each verse of the Scripture passage for yourself and for missionaries to be given the fortitude, wisdom, and patience to live out those verses.

Prayer Focus—All Missionaries: Some missionaries will be sending their children off to college in the US this month. Pray God would provide smooth adjustments for parents and children. Pray these young people would be firm in their faith and make good decisions. Ask God to gift them with friends.

PRAY FOR
NORTH AMERICAN MISSION BOARD

MASSACHUSETTS: Jeremy Stuart

MICHIGAN: Kevin Richardson

OHIO: Jon Ware

RHODE ISLAND: David Fensler

VIRGINIA: Gregory Brown

INTERNATIONAL MISSION BOARD

AMERICAN PEOPLES: Robin Janney

ASIAN PACIFIC RIM PEOPLES:

Jason Ebeyer, MH, Alexi Linville,
Brett Whittington

CENTRAL ASIAN PEOPLES: KJ, KP

NORTHERN AFRICAN AND MIDDLE EASTERN PEOPLES: AG, AP

SOUTH ASIAN PEOPLES: TB

SUB-SAHARAN AFRICAN PEOPLES:

Julie Espeland

CHAPLAINS • VOLUNTEERS
STATE CONVENTION MISSIONARIES

RETIRED IMB: Jane Courtney,
Richard Cummins, Bonnie Hearon,
Pat Muse, EP, Sam Stallings

THURSDAY, AUGUST 31

PASSAGE: MATTHEW 25:31-46

FOCUS: MATTHEW 25:35-40

Throughout this month, we have looked at ways to show love to our neighbors. Today's passage summarizes some of those ways: feeding the hungry, giving a drink to the thirsty, inviting a stranger into your home, providing clothes for the poor, caring for the sick, and visiting

the imprisoned. Jesus points out that when these acts of love are demonstrated to others, it is as though they are done to Him.

We must continuously work toward demonstrating Christian love. Sure, emotions may guide our actions, but it comes down to a matter of dedicated will. Christian love means we treat others the way God treats us. Often, that includes practical approaches.

Hospitality is mentioned throughout the Bible. Without a home, headquarters, or central meeting place, Jesus depended on the hospitality of many while He was on earth. Within the walls of welcoming homes, God was glorified.

Pray for new ways to demonstrate hospitality to others. Pray missionaries would foster new friendships from the hospitality extended to them.

Prayer Focus—In Your Church: Pray God would open the eyes of your church to the plight of refugees. Pray for insight and boldness in developing a plan to minister to them.

PRAY FOR
NORTH AMERICAN MISSION BOARD

FLORIDA: Oswaldo Saavedra

NEW HAMPSHIRE: Judith Scoggins

INTERNATIONAL MISSION BOARD

ASIAN PACIFIC RIM PEOPLES: MK, TM,
SP, ES

EUROPEAN PEOPLES: TL, Sarah Midkiff,
Mikko Sivonen

NORTHERN AFRICAN AND MIDDLE EASTERN PEOPLES: MK

SOUTH ASIAN PEOPLES: BN

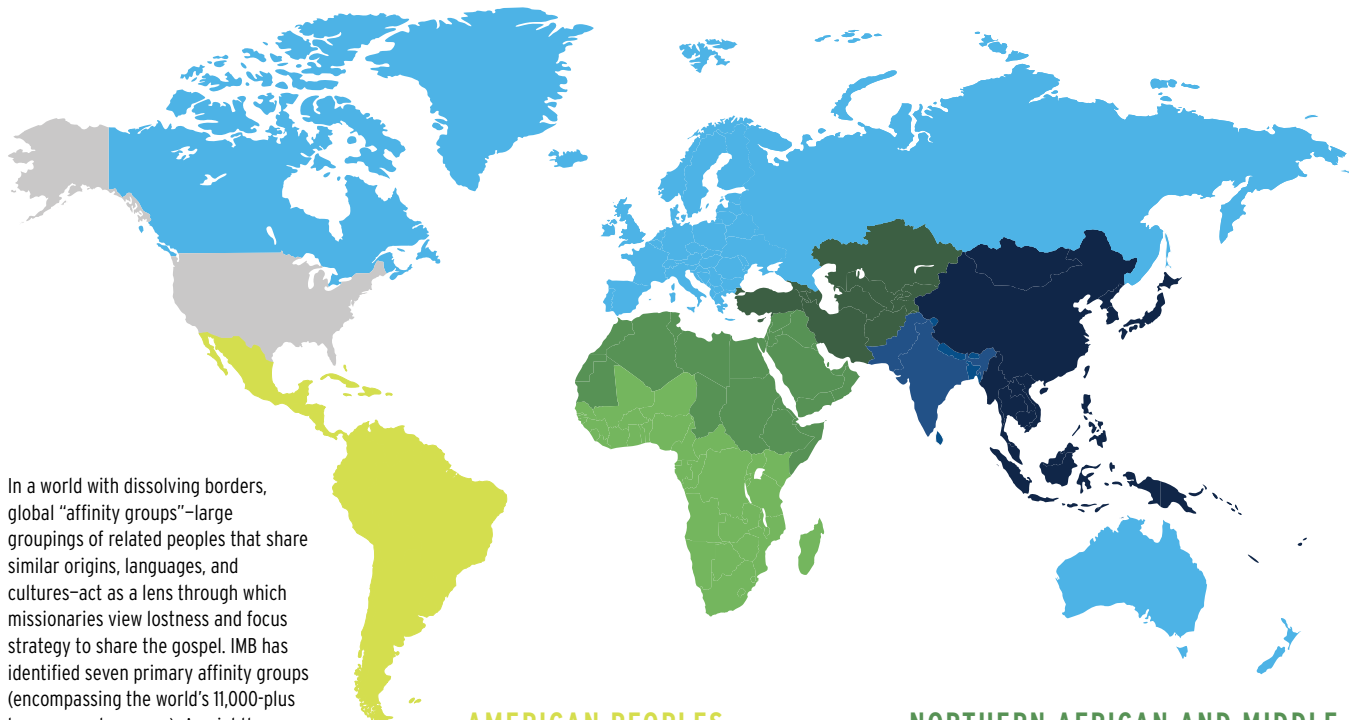
CHAPLAINS • VOLUNTEERS
STATE CONVENTION MISSIONARIES

RETIRED IMB: Betty Coy, Judi Folds, JG,
Mary Horton, James McAtee,
Zane Pratt, Karen York

Some names in the prayer requests from the International Mission Board may have been changed for security reasons.

Due to security reasons, some North American Mission Board (NAMB) missionaries may choose to opt out of inclusion in the prayer calendar or some may request only their first name be used.

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



KAREN O. ALLEN has made global neighbors through medical, musical, evangelical, and supportive missions journeys. Her Bible study *Confronting Cancer with Faith* celebrates a decade of bringing hope. Connect with Karen at ewerblessed.com.

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.



Feeding the HUNGRY

SHARE GOD'S LOVE WITH THOSE WHO ARE EXPERIENCING FOOD INSECURITY.

Can you imagine needing to choose between paying a bill and buying food? Or having to tell your children they won't be able to eat today? We often think of the United States as a land of plenty, but the reality is, millions of Americans regularly experience scenarios just like these, often due to circumstances outside their control.

According to Feeding America, around 34 million people in the US, including 9 million children, are currently experiencing food insecurity. This means they lack enough food to “live an active, healthy life.” And the COVID-19 pandemic only exacerbated the issue.¹

As believers, we are called to help those in need by praying, encouraging, and taking action (see Deuteronomy 15:11; James 2:15–16; and 1 John 3:17–18). Though the issue of food insecurity may seem insurmountable, if we who are members of the body of Christ each do our part, we can bring hope to hopeless situations by demonstrating His love to those in need in our communities, neighborhoods, and churches.

Consider these practical steps:

VOLUNTEER IN YOUR CHURCH FOOD PANTRY OR AT A LOCAL FOOD BANK.

Packing, sorting, and distributing food is a crucial need for many food banks and food pantries. If you can't physically volunteer, you could host a virtual food drive and collect funds to support the work of your local food bank. Visit [feedingamerica.org/find-your-local-foodbank](https://www.feedingamerica.org/find-your-local-foodbank) to find a food bank near you.

CREATE A COMMUNITY GARDEN.

Community gardens are a great way to help residents fill nutrition gaps. They also provide opportunities for connection and gospel conversation as you and your fellow gardeners work to plant, weed, and harvest among the fruit and vegetable beds.

DELIVER MEALS TO THOSE WHO ARE HOMEBOUND.

Talk to your church leadership or local food bank to find out who in your community could benefit from receiving regular meals. Recruit volunteers and establish delivery routes based on recipients' locations. Spend time with each recipient, and offer encouragement and prayer.

FILL BACKPACKS WITH FOOD FOR CHILDREN IN NEED.

Children from low-income families may receive free or reduced meals while they are at school. But on the weekends or during school breaks, they may go hungry. To alleviate this need, many food banks fill backpacks with nutritious food for children to eat at home. Visit [feedingamerica.org/our-work/hunger-relief-programs/backpack-program](https://www.feedingamerica.org/our-work/hunger-relief-programs/backpack-program) to find a backpack program near you or learn how you can start your own.

LEARN ABOUT GLOBAL HUNGER RELIEF.

Visit [globalhungerrelief.org](https://www.globalhungerrelief.org) to learn about the work of this Send Relief ministry and discover how you can help tackle the problem of worldwide hunger.

1. "Hunger in America," Feeding America, accessed March 13, 2023, <https://www.feedingamerica.org/hunger-in-america>.

SARAH FREE has experienced great joy serving in food ministries over the years.



A Scholarship Recipient's Journey from Girls in Action to the Missions Field

In 2022, the WMU Foundation granted \$140,564 in scholarships to 139 recipients, including 104 missionary kids. This was the highest scholarship amount granted since the WMU Foundation was established in 1995.

“The scholarship I received through the WMU Foundation gives me a strong sense of being part of the rich WMU history and legacy, and I cannot express how grateful I am for that,” said Ena Redding*, a former scholarship recipient.

Ena grew up learning about missions and missionaries through Girls in Action and has been serving as a missionary herself in the Middle East for the past four years. Before moving overseas, she attended seminary to help her grow in the knowledge of God’s Word. “I received my master of divinity degree but gained so much more,” she explained. “I gained a more profound love for God and His Word. I became excited about wanting others to grow in their knowledge and love of God and Scripture.”

Ena has been able to share her knowledge through discipling others on the missions field as well through her writing. “I began writing for WMU after I graduated from seminary,” she said. “I have loved combining God’s Word and His heart for the nations to help the church be on mission with God.”

Her experience in seminary has also been beneficial during her time in the Middle East as she disciples believers from Muslim backgrounds and serves alongside

an Arabic-speaking church. “Because of the theological education I have received, I feel more grounded in my faith and better equipped to make disciples and spread the gospel among the unreached,” she said.

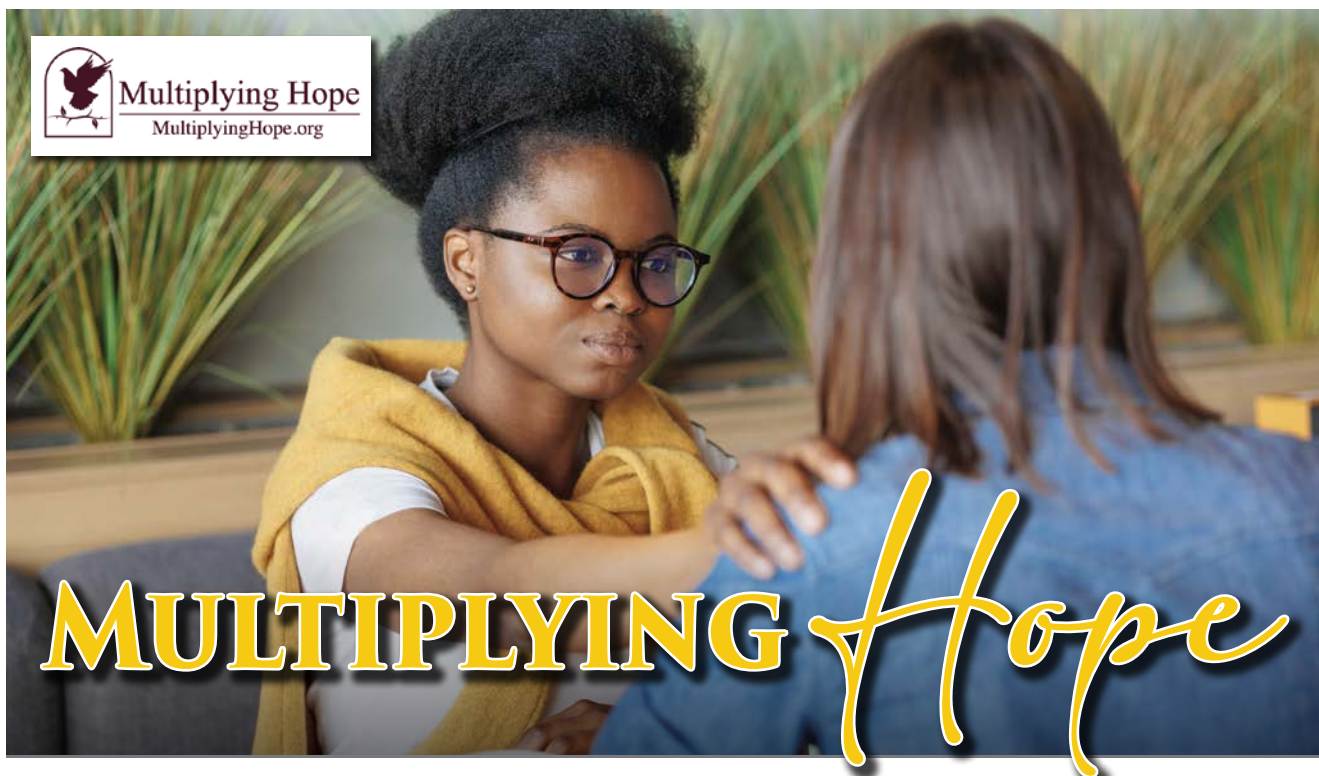
“Please pray for me as I learn Arabic so I can go deeper in discipleship and serve alongside our Arab brothers and sisters,” requested Ena. “And please ask God to grant me wisdom for leading the women on my team, discipling new believers, and writing. Pray the people in the Middle East would have hearts open to the gospel [and] a desire to grow in their faith and to join God on mission.”

Ena is grateful to those who give to the WMU Foundation scholarships in order to make stories like hers possible. “The scholarships I received were much needed for my seminary education, allowing me to continue being a part of what God is doing around the globe, both by serving overseas and writing for WMU,” she continued. “Thank you for investing in your missions passion through giving to WMU Foundation scholarships.”

Visit wmufoundation.com/scholarships-available to learn more about WMU Foundation scholarships and to give a one-time or monthly gift. If you’re like Ena and have also received a scholarship from national WMU or the WMU Foundation, be sure to visit wmufoundation.com/scholarshipalumni to join the Scholarship Alumni Society.

**Name changed.*

MAEGAN DOCKERY is the WMU Foundation communications manager.



I don't know how to talk to the refugees in my community. I know they are suffering, but I don't know where to start.

I don't know what to say to my friend who has experienced such great loss. I know Jesus is the answer, but where do I start?

We all have these moments—we know we have the answer in Jesus, but we don't know how to create environments where those who are suffering can find a safe place to meet with Jesus. Whether our friends and neighbors know Jesus or not, they need safe places where they can listen to one another's stories and deeply experience the truth of God's Word together.

Dr. Diane Langberg, author of *Suffering and the Heart of God*, said, "I think a look at suffering humanity would lead to the realization that trauma is perhaps the greatest mission field of the twenty-first century." Her words resonate in many of our hearts. The 22 years I spent overseas doing missions in Africa, Asia, and Europe convinced me of this truth long before I first read her words. Trauma can create a barrier to nonbelievers listening to and understanding the good news of Jesus or to believers growing spiritually.

Healthy communities are key to helping those who have experienced trauma. But how do we become that kind of community for one another? Every believer needs to learn how to walk alongside those who have experienced traumatic circumstances. Multiplying Hope responds to this need by teaching how to develop healing, healthy community.

Church-planting and trauma-counseling professionals lead the ministry of Multiplying Hope and believe all Christians can be equipped to walk alongside those who are hurting. While these professionals do not replace certified professional counselors, they do help churches and community groups create healing environments. Multiplying Hope uses experiential learning and storytelling to help people internalize and share God's redemptive stories. Whether believers or not-yet-believers, participants experience the joy of allowing their stories of hurt to be "re-story-ed" by God's redemptive story of restoration and healing, all within a community of people who listen to one another with respect and love.

For more information about Multiplying Hope's one-hour introduction and how you can be equipped to walk alongside those who are hurting, visit multiplyinghope.org.

.....
TRICIA STRINGER is the director of Multiplying Hope.

on the *journey*



Sandy

Sandy Wisdom-Martin
executive director/treasurer
WMU

From Lexington to Liberia

The Sunshine WMU group of Immanuel Baptist Church in Lexington, Kentucky, has given more than 50 gifts to Pure Water, Pure Love. The group's commitment to this WMU ministry spans more than two decades. It's personal for Lynn Birch, who serves as the group's treasurer. After her parents retired, they served as missionaries in Colombia. Her parents did not have clean drinking water, so a love for pure water has been on her heart for a very long time.



I asked Lynn what motivates the Sunshine WMU group to keep giving generously. She said, "Because of the importance. This is a real ministry. We want the whole world to have safe water. It is a way to tell about Jesus, the Living Water. What better way is there? We give water that will keep [people] healthy on earth, and we can tell them about water that's even better than that. And it's Jesus. I think it's just a wonderful gateway into telling people about Jesus. I wish I could do that with my neighbors here."

About the same time as I was talking with Lynn, water project photos came across my email. WMU partnered with Pastor Eddie Gibson and Brewster Road Community Church in Birmingham, Alabama, to drill a well and build a water tank tower in Marshall City, Liberia. The church is working to build a Christian school. Vandals destroyed the original facilities. The water tower is the first step toward rebuilding activities on the campus.

The Sunshine WMU group in Lexington is helping provide clean water and a gospel witness more than 5,000 miles away in Liberia. If you would like to learn more about WMU Compassion Ministries, visit wmu.com.

.....

**FATHER,
YOU CALL US TO SHOW
COMPASSION TO THOSE
WHO ARE IN NEED. GIVE
US HEARTS THAT BEAT IN
UNISON WITH YOUR HEART
FOR THE NATIONS. YOU
HAVE SHOWN INCREDIBLE
MERCY TO US. HELP US BE
MERCIFUL TO OTHERS.
IN JESUS' NAME,
AMEN**

.....





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wmufoundation.com | wmufoundation@wmu.org | (205) 408-5525

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