

MISSIONS

mosaic

in your home | in your church | in your world

MARCH 2021

Faith Stories Shared around the Table

BRIDGE THE GENERATION GAP AS WOMEN OF
ALL AGES TELL ABOUT THEIR FAITH JOURNEY.

To Live the
*Relentlessly
Generous*
LIFE

GIVE WITHOUT EXPECTING TO RECEIVE.

WEEK OF PRAYER FOR
NORTH AMERICAN MISSIONS
MARCH 7-14, 2021

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**The
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moves
forward**



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NORTH AMERICAN MISSIONS
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2020-21 WATCHWORD

But we do not belong to those who shrink back and are destroyed, but to those who have faith and are saved.

Hebrews 10:39

OUR MISSION

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

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Hugh Johnson*, Global Resource Team (p. 8)

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**Name changed.*

get in touch with us

EDITORIAL

Email | mosaic@wmu.org

Phone | (205) 991-4099

Mail | Missions Mosaic

100 Missionary Ridge

Birmingham, AL 35242

RENEWALS AND ADDRESS CHANGES

Phone | 1-800-968-7301

Mail | WMU Customer Service

PO BOX 830711

Birmingham, AL

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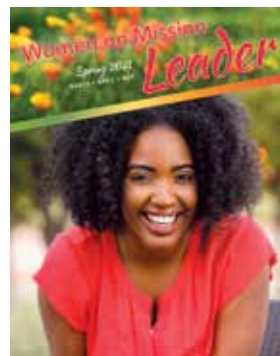
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LEAD WOMEN ON MISSION



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* Spring 2021. To purchase an annual subscription or the digital edition of the spring issue, visit wmustore.com.

a word from us

.....

Eleven-year-old Abby* knew what she had wasn't very much. It was \$32.20—she had earned it doing chores around the house so she could spend it on vacation. She knew it wouldn't touch the estimated \$4 million shortfall her parents had told her the International Mission Board (IMB) might be facing because of the COVID-19 pandemic. But Abby also knew something else—she had to give it away.

Abby's parents, who serve as IMB missionaries, encouraged her conviction. They jumped on board—they each matched her gift, then challenged friends on social media to join in and give \$32. They watched the total rise as people responded, saying they were touched by Abby's generous heart. People gave, and their children gave, too, giving away their birthday money and in some cases even asking for more chores.

The Abby Challenge took on more and more form, and in September 2020, IMB president Paul Chitwood called Abby on FaceTime and told her something that stunned her—because of her gift, others had given more than \$13,000. From there, the IMB made the challenge official with a goal of \$50,000.

When we went to press with this magazine, it was still going.

I've thought about Abby ever since I heard her story—how she said what happened has reminded her of the story of Jesus feeding the 5,000. She said it showed her that “even if what we have is really, really small, we can just give it to Jesus and let Him do the rest.”

Do I do that?

That question has burned in my heart since I heard of Abby's Challenge. Do I give sacrificially of the things I've worked hard for? Do I give sacrificially of what I have even if it's small? Do I trust He can use my “everything,” even if it's small?

This month, we'll have the chance to look at our hearts and see what God might be asking us to give, big or small. We'll see how early believers set that kind of generous example for us (see pages 26–27). We'll pray for God to help what we have to overflow to others. We'll look at ways to give to others through our time, our prayer, and the resources we have around our house (see page 5). We'll get ideas for how we might start compassion ministries in our communities to share what we have with people in need (see pages 6–7).

And we'll read stories from Scripture all month about people who gave generously. Then we'll pray for God to give us a desire and wisdom to do the same.

Which parts of your life do you think may be too big to give? What's holding you back from entrusting everything to Christ?

And what resources in your life do you feel are too small to make a difference? Take some time to remember Abby's story this month and think about how your job is to “give it to Jesus and let Him do the rest.”

*Name changed.



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GRACE

Grace Thornton, Editor
gthornton@wmu.org

.....
FOR IF THE WILLINGNESS IS THERE, THE GIFT IS ACCEPTABLE ACCORDING TO WHAT
ONE HAS, NOT ACCORDING TO WHAT ONE DOES NOT HAVE.—2 CORINTHIANS 8:12
.....



CELEBRATING FOCUS ON WMU

In celebration of Focus on WMU, Piney Baptist Church’s Women on Mission enjoyed their monthly meeting with a brunch at the home of Vera Scarbrough in Oakdale, Tennessee, on

February 22, 2020. There’s Snow Business like God’s Business and Missions in Our Own Backyard were the themes. The highlight of the brunch was the attendance of 93-year-old Jacqueline Langley (*fourth from left on front row*), the only surviving member/founder of Piney Baptist Church’s WMU from 1953, who still inspires the church and daily models what being missions minded means.

–Selina Eble, Tennessee

ANGELS OF LOVE

The Sisters of Talent, Faith and Love Women on Mission group of First Baptist Church, Romayor, Texas, have learned to express love for everyone by creating “Angels of Love.” Made from a potholder, a cup towel, and a dish cloth, they are pretty handy in the kitchen and let you know there’s always an angel in your home.



–Shirley McGovern, Texas



COMMUNITY MISSIONS PROJECTS

The Women on Mission of First Baptist Church, Dickson, Tennessee, prepared colorful baskets, each filled with a crocheted baby blanket, comb, nail file, and notepad. The baskets were given to a local pregnancy medical center. The group also donated small gifts for bingo and individual bags filled with candy and a card for Valentine’s Day tray favors for the nursing home.

–Patricia Bateman, Tennessee

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.

MISSIONS MOSAIC TEAM

- EDITOR | Grace Thornton
- MANAGING EDITOR | Kathleen Penton
- COPY EDITOR | Reagan Jackson
- ART DIRECTOR | Kelly Perry
- CONTENT AND MARKETING HUB MANAGER | Robin McCall

MANAGEMENT STAFF

- EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR | Sandra Wisdom-Martin
- PRESIDENT | Linda C. Cooper

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Cheerful GIVING

CREATE A PLAN TO SHARE GENEROUSLY.

BY TAMELA TURBEVILLE

God loves a cheerful giver. In 2 Corinthians 9:7 (ESV), Paul wrote, “Each one must give as he has decided in his heart, not reluctantly or under compulsion, for God loves a cheerful giver.” Everything comes from God, so our response is to share these gifts generously with others.

Money is not the only way to give cheerfully. Other assets include your time, talents, prayers, gratitude, attitude, and love.

Each day there are opportunities to share. Planning helps you be intentional, and, as always, start with prayer, asking God to give you eyes to see the moments when you could give. As you look for giving opportunities, keep a journal to record the events and the insight God gives as you serve others.

- Schools are a treasure trove of giving opportunities. Following the school policies, volunteer to be a reading tutor, mentor, or library helper. This provides time to invest in a child one-on-one. Keep a list of prayer requests for the child or children you encounter. What are their needs, physically and spiritually? What words of affirmation can you speak over them?
- Exercise and prayer are an excellent combination. As you take a walk, pray for families you notice along your path. As you pass schools, pray for the students, teachers, and parents. You may find your walk goes farther when you pray. In your journal, write about what you notice as you walk.

- New mothers always need a helping hand. With a new baby, chores go undone. Skip the baby shower gift; instead, volunteer to pick up the dry cleaning or groceries, or mow the yard. Delivering a meal is always helpful. In your journal, list prayers for the mother, the baby, and the family.
- Most of us read Christian books and devotionals. When finished, they collect dust on bookshelves and in boxes. These books could be an encouragement to teachers, your neighbors, and nursing home residents. Contact a local nursing home and school. Drop off a box of books where accepted. Call your neighbors, and let them know your library is open and you have some great books to share. In your journal, give thanks for the chance to share the gifts you have been given.
- Since the shopping world turned to an online marketplace, delivery drivers and postal workers are on our porches daily. Most delivery people are never noticed. This is an excellent opportunity to say thank you. Leave a note attached to a bottle of water or a snack on the porch when you expect a delivery. Or share your gift personally. As you write in your journal, remember how these workers respond to being noticed.

Being intentional about generously sharing the gifts lavished on us exhibits the love of God and opens hearts to know Jesus. What is your plan to give generously?

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TAMELA TURBEVILLE is a freelance writer and creator of LivingOneWord.com, a website dedicated to encouraging women to live rescued, redeemed, and restored.

Helping Hands

JOINING FORCES TO MEET LOCAL NEEDS

BY DONNA FORT

When Jesus looked at the crowds, He saw individuals and their needs. He knew their names and had compassion on each one. What is compassion? It is concern for the suffering or misfortune of others and a desire to do something about it. At times, the needs of a group of people are larger than a few of us can meet, so God opens our hearts in compassion and gives a vision for pulling together and starting a ministry to a community. Read about some of those ministries here, then check out a few ideas of how to start your own.



HELPING SPECIAL-NEEDS ADULTS

About one-fourth of the 32 million special-needs adults in the US could be taught skills that could help them support themselves. That fact is the reason BiG—the Brookwood in Georgetown community—got started.

“BiG is a God-centered, post-high school vocational community for adults with special needs,” said Anne Muilman, the director of admissions.

Erin Kiltz, who desired for her special-needs daughter to live a productive life, started the program. It began in Erin’s home in Georgetown, Texas, with eight citizens, which is what BiG participants are called. It later expanded into a church building, and now, nine years later, it has its own facility and serves 80 citizens.

A local pastor serves as chaplain and leads the citizens in daily devotions and singing. Many of the adults who work with the citizens to create pottery, candles, soaps, woodcrafts, jewelry, greeting cards, and baked goods are volunteers.

“If we try something that doesn’t work, we move on to something else. We call this falling forward,” Anne said. Community members and churches contribute 44 percent of the funding. The remainder is provided by tuition and the sale of items produced by the citizens. It is hoped that one day BiG will be totally self-funded.

ASSISTING FAMILIES IN A CRISIS

Dr. George Ross with the North American Mission Board in New Orleans, Louisiana, said churches there have identified a community in need—children and families in crisis. He said churches assist local adoption/foster care workers and foster parents by providing “three-day bags” with clothes for children who have been removed quickly from a bad situation without any of their personal items.

In Round Rock, Texas, churches work with Care Portal to assist families who were separated but are now reunited and need help to reestablish “home.” Care Portal is a nationwide online platform that shares the needs of hurting children and their families. The needs vary, but often they are food, kitchen items, and furniture. According to Christi McWhorter, the liaison at First Baptist, “Each church contributes what they are able—either in the form of money or the items requested. We have a storage building where we store items donated

for this ministry.” This helps the church meet needs as soon as they are identified.

CARING FOR THE SICK

Hope Clinic in Bartlesville, Oklahoma, was established in 2013 by members of churches in Washington Osage Baptist Association. Their vision is to spread the love of God to the community by providing free quality health care and spiritual guidance.

Every Thursday night, volunteer doctors, nurses, a pharmacist, and a dentist come together to provide free health care for people who could not otherwise afford it.

Robert Wadsworth, who heads up this ministry, said Paul Koonce—the association’s director of missions—had originally recommended they take it slow and see how God guided the process. But God’s plans turned out to be faster—a local church offered them a place to hold their clinic. Medical equipment, prescription medicine, and volunteers were all provided by God within a short period of time, and they began serving the community in late 2013.

Over time, God provided in numerous other ways. They were able to build their own building, and more than 200 volunteers from 28 churches representing seven denominations have participated in this ministry. More than 50 people have come to know the Lord. Everyone involved in the ministry wants to not only share the gospel but also see new believers grow in their faith. The clinic has recently joined forces with a local Baptist church to offer Bible study. They are trusting God that a new church will be started through this effort.

HOW TO GET INVOLVED

Want to get something started in your area to minister to a community in need? Here are some ideas for multigenerational ministry in your community:

- Do maintenance work, painting, or repairs on an elderly neighbor’s house.
- Provide occasional child care for children of single moms or foster parents.
- Spend time with senior adults listening to their stories.
- Assist with yard work for the handicapped or chronically ill.
- Organize emergency food, cleanup, etc. for a community facing a natural disaster.

.....
DONNA FORT, an IMB missionary in South Africa, has witnessed how compassion ministry brings people to Christ.



THREE GENERATIONS A MISSIONARY'S REFLECTION ON HIS FAMILY'S LEGACY

It was a characteristically cold, damp English winter day. A monochrome gray sky seeped unrelenting rain, the weather mirroring my mood as I stood in front of a gravestone in a place unknown to all but a few in England.

The village is located almost as far from the ocean as it's possible in England, and it's where I sang in the church choir just down the hill from where I stood. My grandfather preached every Sunday morning at that gray stone church, intoning the liturgy in a low, somber voice. And almost 30 years ago, it was the place where we would wish him farewell one last time before committing his body to the earth. On that day, just like this day, the rain was a brooding presence.

The elegant carved lettering on the gray granite gravestone tells my grandfather's life story in a concise 15 words, with an additional 10 dedicated to my grandmother. Somehow this understatement suits their lifelong humility, always seeking the best for others ahead of themselves.

Love of others and a desire to honor God took my grandfather as a missionary on a slow boat to India to teach in a small rural school. This same love took my grandmother to India some years later to be joined in marriage to my grandfather by the bishop of Bombay. This same love was demonstrated so convincingly to my mother growing up that she, too, was drawn, many years later at my father's side, to the missions fields of Asia, sailing the same ocean waters her parents sailed.

Having spent that same ocean passage as an unborn passenger and the following 16 years as a missionary kid, perhaps it seems inevitable I would find a similar calling to overseas missions as an adult. However, mine would be a circuitous journey from England to Asia by way of the software industry in the US and a small suburban Southern Baptist church outside Seattle that poured into my wife and me with its love for God and us. In this church, my faith truly became my own, and I relearned the joys of overseas service during mission trips. This church commissioned us into service with the International Mission Board 16 years ago to the Asian country of my childhood—a place whose language reemerged from distant memory and whose foods I still savor.

As our faith walk continued, my wife and I, with our two grown children, found ourselves completing our circumnavigation of the globe



IMB PHOTO

to an assignment back in Europe, an easy journey back to my family roots, the place I called home during those two childhood furloughs living with my grandparents in the beautiful middle of nowhere. Here.

I've come full circle. Thirty years ago, I stood on this spot to celebrate and grieve the end of my grandfather's life. When I visited his grave this past winter in the insistent but somehow gentle rain, another of life's many chapters was coming to an end. My mom, an accomplished medical and psychiatric doctor, had received from her professional colleagues the results of the many tests, scans, and medical procedures confirming quite unequivocally it would soon be her turn to join her father and mother in eternity.

My mom recently wrote, "The knowledge that my life expectancy is now limited by cancer has focused my thoughts on death more than usual." She quoted Sam Wells, vicar of St. Martin-in-the-Fields Church and one of her favorite Christian commentators, who says, "It's not finally about where you're coming from—it's about where you're going. We're going to heaven—where there is more than enough love for all, more than enough joy, more than enough truth, more than enough space for everyone to flourish. Stop saying 'Life isn't a rehearsal'—because, actually, it is—or 'Life's too short,' because the life that really matters goes on forever."

Reading my mother's words, I realized my circle has yet to be complete—and won't be until I follow my grandparents, and soon my mother, to the only place that will ever truly be home. May I strive to live every day until then as though it's my last, to live urgently and passionately for Christ—for I am already a citizen of heaven.

*Name changed.

The faithful support of Southern Baptists for 175 years has provided for generations of workers sharing the gospel to the uttermost parts of the world. Visit imb.org/175 to read more about the rich legacy of missions and commit to pray with us.

HUGH JOHNSON is a missionary writer and photographer for the IMB.



GOD DID IT THE UNEXPECTED CALL TO CHAPLAINCY

The best way James Beard can describe how he got into chaplaincy is three words.

“God did it,” he said, twice actually, the second time with a slight smile and a chuckle.

When James retired, he was satisfied with the notion of settling into a life of limited responsibilities—serving as a deacon at his church and enjoying uninterrupted time with his wife, children, and grandchildren.

But five years ago, his wife went to be with the Lord, and he needed to constructively occupy his time and maintain hope.

That doesn’t mean chaplaincy was on his radar. It wasn’t. Not even close. But his path toward becoming a volunteer Southern Baptist chaplain was its own proof this was a God-ordained next step for James’s life.

“I got an email at my church that said we had a church member in assisted living, and we want to start a Bible study,” James said. “The email got sent to me. I don’t know how it did. God did it. I went over to the facility and spent time in the car praying, and it was like this voice said, ‘You’re going to be the chaplain here.’”

James wasn’t really trying to hear that. “God, I don’t know what I’m doing,” was his response.

“I could hear God say, ‘I’ve got you, James. Don’t worry about it.’ And the rest is history.”

James started teaching a Bible study at the Windsor House Assisted Living center in Greenville, South Carolina, and he applied to become an endorsed Southern Baptist chaplain.



James Beard (right) with a resident of the assisted-living facility he serves as chaplain

James is the lone chaplain at the facility. He is supported and encouraged by his church, and he’s only ever missed two weeks—both because of the facility’s pandemic restrictions. But even with that, James found a work-around.

“I asked them, ‘What if I just come in and pray for the staff and pray for the residents and then leave from there?’ They told me that would be great, so ever since that adjustment, I haven’t missed since.”

Before the pandemic completely cut off his direct interaction with the residents, James would stand in a doorway more than six feet away from the residents and teach his Bible study to respect social distancing guidelines.

“It’s gotten tough for a lot of these residents who had been used to having people come visit them, and then all of a sudden, COVID-19 stopped that,” James said. “Still being able to show up and have a presence there was so important to me because I knew it was important to them.”

James believes he’ll be able to start gathering with the residents at the Windsor House again someday, just as before COVID-19 came. But until then, he’s doing whatever he can to serve faithfully.

“That’s the call to ministry we have as chaplains,” he said. “We do whatever we need to do to make sure we’re still sharing the love of Jesus with the people we serve.”

GABRIEL STOVALL is a senior writer/editor at the North American Mission Board.

WMU® God's mission.
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PURE WATER, PURE LOVE WHERE CLEAN & LIVING WATER MEET



One in nine people around the globe lacks access to clean water. Families without safe drinking water at home must risk contracting disease or parasites or else send women and children out walking for miles carrying heavy jugs to collect water from more sanitary sources. Pure Water, Pure Love (PWPL) is a WMU Compassion Ministry that meets this need by providing clean water to those who need it most. PWPL's mission is threefold: to supply missionaries with water filters, to provide the people missionaries serve with wells or a community water filtration system that offers clean water, and to supply missions teams with water filters for use on short-term mission trips.

Hundreds of churches have helped PWPL fund more than 125 water projects in more than 40 countries and provide thousands of water filters to missionary families. You can support PWPL in providing vital water resources around the world too. Pray for communities receiving access to clean water to come to know the Living Water, Jesus Christ. Share and teach others about the mission of PWPL and how they can get involved. Connect with your church, and seek out ways you can work together to provide clean water resources to those in need. Finally, consider giving financially to help fund new projects.

This past year, one of the many organizations PWPL helped support was Back to Africa in Kenya. PWPL provided the group with a water filter so it would have easy access to clean, safe running water. After a four-and-a-half-month wait for the water filter, Back to Africa's manager said, "It's been a great joy. Everything changed because of the pandemic, and it seemed forever for us. But we finally thank God we received the filter on the 25th of July. Now we are enjoying fresh water. We are so thankful to you!"

Before obtaining the filter, the group struggled to afford fresh drinking water. Oftentimes, lacking any other option, it would turn to contaminated sources, which posed health threats, especially for the younger children.

"Now they can get fresh water any time they need," said a community member. "They could not hide their joy on their faces on the first day of the installation. We say thank you very much to PWPL."

Access to this basic necessity has been life changing for the community. There is hope again. Instead of worrying about what's available to drink, children can focus on their education and a brighter tomorrow, putting their trust in the eternal Living Water.

If you are interested in learning more about PWPL, then check out the online minicourse Pure Water, Pure Love: An Overview for information, resources, and training tools. The self-guided lessons include videos and testimonies from those impacted by WMU's work.

To learn more or to support PWPL financially, visit wmu.com/pwpl.

Water facts come from water.org.

**WORLD WATER
DAY IS MARCH 22.**

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ALEXXIS LIPSEY is a senior English major at the University of Alabama at Birmingham and was a fall 2020 WMU student intern.

**ANNIE
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The mission moves forward



WEEK OF PRAYER FOR
NORTH AMERICAN MISSIONS

MARCH 7-14, 2021

missionaries featured in this year's Week of Prayer for North American Missions. No matter how dark the world around us may seem, we know this: the mission moves forward.

This week, we'll look at seven stories of missionaries and their families who are investing their lives to advance the gospel.

HERE'S A PREVIEW

- More than 300,000 South Asians, many Sikhs and Hindus, call the Greater Vancouver area home. Shahid and Maroofa Kamal are showing them they don't need many gods or gurus—just the one true God.
- In east Atlanta, racial and socioeconomic tensions are high. But Ryan and Tricia McCammack are seeing God bring reconciliation in their multicultural church plant.
- Victor and Ludmila Moura had a comfortable life in Brazil but felt God calling them to leave it all to plant a church for Brazilians in Boston.
- Anders and Jessica Snyder believe God reviving a dying church can be a picture of resurrection to the community—as they're seeing in Nampa, Idaho, where they lead a church “replant” and see lives changed.
- Joshua Valdez says the mostly Hispanic and Navajo youth in his area struggle to hope. Hunger, substance abuse, and suicide are rampant. But he's seeing Jesus change lives through Bible studies at his church plant in Farmington, New Mexico.
- Parts of New Orleans feel “forgotten”—they've taken a long time to rebuild, or even get a grocery store back, since Hurricane Katrina in 2005. So Bobby and LaKeisha Williams are investing their lives to connect the community with needed resources and new hope in Jesus.
- God rescued Jacob Zailian out of a cycle of using drugs, selling drugs, and doing time. Now he and his wife, Francince, take the gospel to the streets of Sanger, California, to reach those stuck in the same kind of life—and who “would scare people who go to most churches.”

As we read these missionaries' stories and pray for them this week, may we grasp how we're a part of the effort as the mission moves forward. Your giving to the Annie Armstrong Easter Offering® helps missionaries live and work in some of North America's darkest corners. Your gifts and your prayers help shine light and bring hope.

Do you ever feel as though the world around you is dark? The first Christians faced darkness all around, but they weren't hopeless—in fact, they overflowed with hope. But they could see plainly the world was broken and in need of a Savior.

And so they went—they shared Light with their neighbors. We follow that same call today, and so do the

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GRACE THORNTON is a writer and editor in Birmingham, Alabama. After spending a few years in England and the Middle East, she knows personally what a privilege it is to depend on the sacrificial gifts and prayers of others to take the gospel to those who have never heard it.



DAY 1

*Showing South Asians
a God Who Answers
Prayers*

**SHAHID & MAROOFA
KAMAL**
DELTA, BRITISH COLUMBIA

Shahid Kamal said it's not easy to convince the South Asians in his metro Vancouver community his God is the only deity they need.

"Hindus have many visible gods, and Sikhs have many gurus," said Shahid, who planted South Asian Community Church in 2016. "In the midst of this complex situation, we are trying to help them to know, believe, and receive Jesus Christ."

And he has seen one thing connect with them again and again—the power of prayer.

"Our prayer ministry is one of the successful connecting points," Shahid said. "Many came to our church for the very first time for prayer. They have their certain prayer requests. And, praise God; God answered them and showed them that He's a living God."

That fact stands out against the religious system they've been living in, Shahid said—and word is getting around. A church member brought one woman for prayer who told Shahid "her guru told her to go to church because he isn't able to help her in her struggles with the demonic spirits and other stuff."

That was a touching moment for Shahid—and he prays that kind of thing keeps on spreading.

More than 300,000 South Asians call the Greater Vancouver area home, and Surrey, a city that's part of the metro area, has "become the West Coast hub of all South Asian things," Shahid said. The community is full of South Asian grocery stores, restaurants, signboards, and even street names.

The people there speak a mix of languages, mostly Punjabi, Hindi, and Urdu. South Asian Community Church held services in Punjabi at the beginning, but

as it began to draw in different people groups, it began incorporating other languages as well.

"We try to connect with people and help them with things," Shahid said. "Some people need help adjusting to things in the new culture—like navigating work, housing, and government services."

He understands their struggles—he and his wife, Maroofa, moved to Canada from Pakistan several years back with their four children. Together they are trying to make their church a place where South Asians can find love and support. Maroofa is actively involved in ministry, leading women's Bible studies and counseling sessions.

And of course, they're constantly offering prayer as a way to connect. For example, every year they set up a place along the route of a massive Punjabi-Sikh celebration called the Vaisakhi Festival. They give out free food and set up a bouncy castle for the children, and then while the parents wait, they ask whether they can pray for them and with them.

"They are always ready," Shahid said. "They will not refuse that. If you ask them, 'OK, do you want us to pray for you?' they say, 'Oh, yes, please pray for me.' God is showing them He is a living God."

PRAY

- Pray for the South Asian Community Church's prayer ministry to continue to open doors to share the gospel.
- Pray for the hearts of South Asians in Surrey, British Columbia, to be drawn toward Jesus alone.



DAY 2

Loving a Diverse Community Well

**RYAN & TRICIA
MCCAMMACK**
AVONDALE ESTATES, GEORGIA

Ryan McCammack’s 17-year-old son is “a great kid,” but every day, Ryan is acutely aware his son needs guidance—the loving guidance of a father. It’s hard for him to imagine removing himself from that picture.

But that’s the story of many of the children in Ryan’s community. About 60 percent of the homes in DeKalb County, Georgia, don’t have dads in them. That’s a big challenge, he said—and the challenges don’t stop there.

His county consistently ranks in the top two in the state for abortions. It struggles with racial and socioeconomic tensions, with a large black and white population, a rapidly growing Latino community, and close geographic proximity to a large group of refugees from all over the world. It’s a picture of diversity with a vast scope of need.

But so is Ryan’s church—and that’s a beautiful thing, he said.

When he and his wife, Tricia, and their eight children moved to the Atlanta area to plant Gospel Hope Church, they wanted the congregation to reflect the multicultural community around it. To do that, Ryan—a white pastor—partnered with several churches, organizations, and Rod Dewberry, a black pastor who became Gospel Hope’s executive pastor.

And Ryan took on the challenge of learning east Atlanta as an international missionary learns a completely new culture and language.

“If we’re going to actually have truly multicultural or multiethnic churches, then we have to be committed to raising our racial IQ,” he said.

As a result of that investment, what’s developed over the past few years is a church that’s about 50 percent

African American, 40 percent white, and 10 percent international. But diversity isn’t the goal, Ryan said—the gospel is.

He said the point is to “be about making disciples and be a church that loves all kinds of people, and let God bring all kinds of people.”

When people get the gospel, it changes them—and it brings racial reconciliation, Ryan said.

That doesn’t mean the cultures all assimilate into one kind of worship; it means they worship together in an array of ways that represent the body of Christ as a whole. They love each other well, then they work together to change their communities.

One way they’re doing that is by working to flip the script for the fatherless in DeKalb County by investing in foster care, crisis pregnancy centers, and ministries that fight human trafficking.

“Essentially we want to say to people, ‘No matter what your starting point, through Jesus you can be reconciled to God vertically. And also, no matter what your starting point, you can be reconciled horizontally to people who are radically different from you,’” Ryan said. “Look around. This is a church for sinners who need a Savior, not a particular type of person.”

PRAY

- Pray for the McCammacks to continue to have favor among the diverse communities of people in their area.
- Pray for church members to love each other in a way that would show the world the love of Christ.



DAY 3

*Befriending Forgotten
Generations*

**VICTOR & LUDMILA
MOURA**
SOMERVILLE, MASSACHUSETTS

Victor and Ludmila Moura were comfortable in Brazil—more than comfortable, in fact.

He was a pastor of a growing church, and she was a government lawyer doing well in her career.

“We were in our church, a great salary, great prestige,” he said. “We had our own house, cars, and family, friends. Our hometown.”

But over time through a connection with a friend, Victor began to feel God pulling him toward planting a church in the New England area of the US. More than 450,000 Brazilians live there—and less than 3 percent has an active faith in Christ.

At first, the Mouras’ reaction was anguish. They didn’t want to leave everything they loved in Brazil. They knew they’d find a challenge on the other side—a new language to learn and new careers to forge, and, in the middle of that, Ludmila was expecting a baby.

But as they prayed, the call got stronger.

“I started realizing maybe there is a plan for us here,” Victor said.

Specifically, Boston’s Brazilian population tugged on his heart—they work long hours and face struggling marriages and depression. And over time, Victor found he was even more burdened for second- and third-generation Brazilians there—with English as their heart language, they struggle to find their place, even in their families.

“According to therapists in our area, those teenagers are in a crisis about their identity,” he said, adding they don’t connect in a church that just speaks Portuguese. “We are really trying to target the second and third gen because they are not going anywhere—they are

not going to American churches; they are not going to Brazilian churches.”

So in the spring of 2019, Victor launched his church plant, which has services in both Portuguese and English. He said he wants it to be a church where those struggling to find their identity can find a place in Christ—people like Yasmin, a 21-year-old third-generation Brazilian. English is her heart language, and her mom and grandmother were involved in church, but when she met the Mouras, she hadn’t been to church since she was 13.

“She was out of the church because she couldn’t connect in an American church, but also she couldn’t connect in a Brazilian church because of the culture,” Victor said. “It’s so different. She’s back to Christ now, but she’s still struggling with her background.”

It’s a complex problem, he said, but the church’s most effective strategy is a simple one—community. Missional house groups are its greatest strategy, he said.

“The millennials, they hate superficial stuff,” Victor said. “I think the most effective strategy to reach them . . . is being a friend.”

PRAY

- Pray for Victor and Ludmila to have wisdom about how to reach second- and third-generation Brazilians in Boston.
- Pray for Yasmin and other young church members to grow in their faith.
- Pray for new believers at the church plant to grow into strong leaders.



DAY 4

A Clean Start for a Church—and Its Neighbors

**ANDERS & JESSICA
SNYDER**
NAMPA, IDAHO

Anders Snyder can tell you—your quarters add up. He saw it happen one day in Nampa, Idaho, when he and other members of his church went to a nearby laundromat to give out free soap and change for laundry.

The goal was to love their neighbors and create a chance to share how Jesus loves them too. And God worked right there amid the washing machines, Anders said—He gave one woman, Alyssa, the realization she could have a clean start.

“She accepted Christ that day,” said Anders, who, along with his wife, Jessica, moved to Idaho to help replant Calvary Church Nampa several years ago. The call to lead a replant—to help a dying church turn things around—had burned in their hearts for a few years before God brought them to the city of nearly 100,000.

When they arrived, they found a diverse community waiting for them—one with strong Nazarene and Mormon influences and few healthy churches. The residential neighborhoods around the church were aging and declining, a mix of Anglo and Hispanic residents, Anders said. Drugs are a big problem there, as are poverty and hunger.

The Snyders’ goal was to reach out to their neighbors, show them love, and bring them into the church’s faith family. Alyssa was one of those.

But even with a clean start spiritually, she still had some things in her life to deal with.

“Two weeks later, she was back in jail because of lingering things from her choices, and so we lost track of her for over a month,” Anders said. “My first

time ever talking on a phone through the glass at a jail was with her when we finally dug up where she was. And she was in tears, like, ‘You came? You came to see me?’”

Absolutely, he told her—she was a sister in Christ, and as her family, they were going to walk with her.

“We believe the gospel affects lives and changes people,” Anders said.

And he and Jessica believe a church that comes back to life can be a strong witness to that.

“It tells a compelling testimony of the resurrected Christ, that something can come back from the dead,” he said.

So far, the Snyders have seen God grow their little church from a core team of around 20 original members to more than 100 people.

“We hope to be a multiplying, ascending, preparing kind of a place, as well as just keeping the doors open,” Anders said. “And I pray it reverberates out to the nations.”

PRAY

- Pray for the Snyders to have strength and wisdom to persevere through challenges and for leaders to rise up in their church.
- Pray for Alyssa to keep growing in her faith.
- Pray for the people in the neighborhoods around Calvary Church Nampa to be drawn to the love and light they see in church members.



**JOSHUA
VALDEZ**
FARMINGTON, NEW MEXICO

Joshua Valdez says his city is a tough place to make it, spiritually speaking.

“There is real emotional and spiritual darkness,” he said.

The population of Farmington, New Mexico, is a melting pot of culture and religion. The city’s residents are mostly Hispanic and Navajo, and the Navajo are very much “a forgotten people,” said Joshua, who is half Hispanic and half Navajo. “People just don’t think about them.”

Drugs are rampant there, as is alcohol abuse, and poverty and child hunger numbers are high. More than half of the county is religiously unaffiliated, and those who do say they believe in something are caught between competing faiths—Native American mysticism, Catholicism, Mormonism, and nominal Christianity.

“We’re ministering here in an area that is religiously diverse but also sizably post-Christian,” Joshua said.

When it comes to sharing the gospel, the biggest challenge “really depends on who you’re talking to,” he said.

But one thing is common in almost all his conversations—it’s likely the person he’s talking with is struggling with despair or feelings of worthlessness. He sees that all across the city where he serves as a church planter with the North American Mission Board’s Send Network.

He also sees it in his other job—he’s an intervention specialist at a local high school.

“My job basically is to be a mentor to students who are at risk of dropping out and kind of cultivate that mentoring relationship with them,” Joshua said. “I see the hopelessness of the youth. Most of them are coming from really rough situations.”

They’re from the “very lowest stratum” socially and economically, he said, and many of them come from broken homes.

But they’ve grown to trust Joshua, and the walls have come down. He’s seeing some of them visit his church plant, Higher Ground Church. The teens are not anti-Christian, he said—they’re kind of neutral and sometimes even intrigued, so they’re open to asking questions. During youth group gatherings at the church, he teaches the Bible verse by verse, and he’s seeing it change lives.

“I asked one of the teens why she came, and she told me it gives her hope, that she didn’t have purpose before,” Joshua said.

A young man who came to Higher Ground Church had a reputation in the school district for being suicidal and depressed.

“No one could get through to him,” Joshua said, “but he’s a different person now. And I think in large part that has to do with his coming to youth group, with his being loved on by Christians.”

PRAY

- Pray for Joshua to have wisdom on how to keep building relationships with students, especially during any COVID-19 restrictions he might face.
- Pray for more students to find hope in Christ through studying the Bible.
- Pray for the members of Higher Ground Church to be a light to their neighbors in Farmington.



DAY 6

*Helping a City
Pick Up the Pieces*

**BOBBY & LAKEISHA
WILLIAMS**
SLIDELL, LOUISIANA

Bobby Williams said there was a point in his ministry when he felt a lot like his city—exhausted.

He and his wife, LaKeisha, had picked a tough spot to start a church—post-Hurricane Katrina New Orleans, a place where some buildings were still abandoned and boarded up.

The area around the church plant was predominantly African American, low income, and even classified as a food desert for a while—it didn't get a grocery store back until several years after Katrina.

The needs were deeper than the Williamses could address on their own. Over time, the well felt dry.

"I was really at a personal low point," Bobby said.

But then the Williamses connected with resources and help from Southern Baptists, and with that support, they began to reach out to their community in a more comprehensive way.

"A lot of what we strive to do is provide resources," Bobby said. "We try to educate people spiritually, financially, educationally—you name it."

That's how his church—Next Level Church—got its name. He wanted to see people take their life to the next level starting right where they are. To help get that started, the church provides its neighbors with all kinds of assistance, all with the goal of leading them to Jesus.

LaKeisha's public health background goes hand in hand with the church's goal. The church holds fitness camps for children, along with offering services for adults like health fairs, HIV testing, haircuts, cooking classes, and events where they can pick up food, clothing, school supplies, and hygiene items.

With those felt needs met, the community feels something else, too—authentic love.

"The unique thing about our church, we've always for some reason attracted those who were either unchurched or previously hurt by a church," Bobby said.

In short, Next Level Church's compassion ministries show people it genuinely cares in a way they haven't experienced before. The events have helped the church relate to its neighbors and "build a relationship and open up the door to share Christ with them," Bobby said.

The bridges it's built have also helped Next Level Church keep on serving as COVID-19 has deepened the area's physical needs. Most members opted for online services as the virus spread, but the Williamses have found ways to continue ministry. LaKeisha has held video chats with people in the community to offer health advice during this time, and Bobby has continued to offer opportunities for discipleship. The church is also serving hundreds of meals regularly.

"There's a need in the community, and we're just doing what we can," he said.

PRAY

- Pray for Bobby and LaKeisha to have the strength to persevere in reaching out to the hurting people of New Orleans.
- Pray for Next Level Church's compassion ministries to open doors for it to share the hope of Jesus with many people.
- Pray for the hearts of its neighbors to be receptive to the gospel.



DAY 7

*A Pastor from
among Them*

**JACOB & FRANCINE
ZAILIAN**
SANGER, CALIFORNIA

Jacob Zailian knows the exact spot where his life changed—in a cell on the fourth floor of D pod in Fresno County Jail.

He'd grown up Catholic, but after finding his father dead, he didn't want anything to do with God. That took him down a path of drug dealing and abuse that lasted a long, long time—until the day his girlfriend visited him in jail and said she was leaving him and taking the children with her.

Broken, Jacob went back to his cell and prayed.

"I was tired of living my life addicted to drugs and gave up and surrendered everything to Christ," he said.

And God worked a miracle—Jacob started reading his Bible and grew in his faith, and once he was out of prison, he reunited with his girlfriend, Francine, and married her.

Now the Zailians spend their days reaching the homeless, drug addicts, and gang members of Sanger, California, people who "would scare people who go to most churches," Jacob said.

Much of his audience knows him already—he used to live on the streets too. When he came back and started inviting them to church, some would say, "I'll come if you start one."

So Jacob did. In April 2019, with the support of a local church and Southern Baptists, he planted Set Free Church, which takes the gospel to the streets and tries to help addicts and the homeless find hope in Jesus.

"It's pretty much the people that everybody looks at as a lost cause," he said.

He, his wife, and their children and other church members give out food and hot meals several times a

week. Jacob said that's central to what they do—the community created through that act of compassion creates a bridge to share Christ.

"We want to give them the truth of the gospel," he said.

They want to give them a path to recovery too. For those who meet Jesus and want a different life, Jacob helps connect them to a recovery ministry. Sometimes he even drives them there.

And after they're out, Jacob is ready to help them keep growing. Set Free Church recently opened a residential program at a renovated house where men can spend a year being intensely disciplined after their time in addiction recovery.

Jacob's prayer is that one day the church would have its own recovery center too—Set Free Ranch, a place where men can go to recover from addictions and get back on their feet.

All of it, he said, "is God"—God gave him a heart to help them all the way through the process because he was there once.

PRAY

- Pray for Jacob and Francine to have endurance as they minister to people in need on the streets, especially with the new challenges created by COVID-19.
- Pray God would transform hearts in Sanger with the gospel.
- Pray God would provide the resources for the Zailians to start Set Free Ranch.



DAY 8

A Mission That Won't Be Derailed

**Kevin Ezell,
NAMB President**

Being a missionary is not an easy calling. North American missionaries expect to encounter challenges. Perhaps the community they are serving is hardened toward the gospel. Sometimes local authorities make finding a meeting space for worship difficult. Often there are feelings of loneliness when moving away from friends and family.

Then came the historic challenges of 2020. Much of the world shut down for months, creating economic hardship and anxiety over public gatherings.

But your missionaries continued to reach North America for Christ. They moved the mission forward and found God was often opening new doors.

Church-planting missionaries all over North America worked to plant churches everywhere for everyone—no community too small, no city too daunting. Every corner of our missions field needs to have a gospel presence where people are called to respond to the lifesaving hope of Christ.

Missionaries in compassion ministry continued to come alongside those our culture often overlooks to meet tangible needs, opening the door to gospel conversations. Whether caring for a survivor of human trafficking, feeding the homeless, or helping refugees put together the pieces of their destroyed lives, your missionaries take the light of the gospel into the darkest circumstances.

Many of your missionaries found ways to provide food to those hit hardest by the reeling economy or collected and distributed supplies like masks and hand sanitizer to keep vulnerable neighbors safe and healthy. And serving in trying circumstances, they built relationships with people whom they otherwise would never have met. Those relationships are yielding fruit today.

I am so thankful to be able to say your North American Mission Board missionaries have continued to move the mission forward. By the grace and power of God, they did not stop when the pandemic restrictions went into place. They did not back down when every plan seemed to change daily. They did not give up on the communities they love and serve. Then as now, they display great courage and vision to persist—even thrive—amid great challenges. And you are a significant part of that.

Because of your giving and prayer support, we can encourage and resource missionaries to keep them on the field.

You fuel the mission as our missionaries change course, innovate, and continue sharing the gospel and making disciples. When needs in local communities arise, these missionaries can step up to bring material help and eternal hope because you give and pray. And lives are changed.

We are grateful for the incredible faithfulness Southern Baptists like you demonstrate all year through your prayers and gifts.

The needs in North America have become even more apparent in recent months. People are searching for peace and security that comes only through salvation in Jesus Christ, and, together, we can reach them as we move the mission forward.

PRAY

- Pray times of crisis would continue opening new doors to the gospel.
- Pray our missionaries and we would not grow weary in sharing the hope of the gospel.

Boston

FAST FACTS

- Boston's Freedom Trail features sixteen historical sites related to the Revolutionary War.
- While in Boston, visitors can participate in different activities, such as whale watching, cruises, and ferry riding.
- The Emerald Necklace is a collection of parks that stretches from Boston's Back Bay all the way to the Boston neighborhood of Dorchester. The Emerald Necklace Conservancy works to keep and protect the parks.
- The Brookline neighborhood of Coolidge Corner was home to President John F. Kennedy, and today you can visit the John Fitzgerald Kennedy National Historic Site, where you can take walking tours to see and hear stories of the late president's childhood.
- One nickname for the city of Boston is Beantown. The city has this nickname because back in colonial times, Boston received a constant supply of molasses syrup from the Caribbean, leading to the popular recipe of Boston baked beans.
- During colonial times, Boston's main form of government was town meetings. However, in 1822, Boston officially transitioned to being run by a city government.
- The city is home to the world-renowned Boston Symphony Orchestra.

Chocolate

CANDLE

Chocolate is popular not only in Boston but also in the state of Massachusetts. It was in Massachusetts that chocolate chip cookies were invented in the 1930s.

WHAT YOU NEED:

- Chocolate bar
- Empty soda can
- Old candle wax
- Candle wicks
- Empty container

WHAT YOU DO:

1. Take a pair of scissors, and cut off the top of the soda can. Take the chocolate bar, divide it into pieces, and place the pieces inside the soda can. Add the pieces of wax to the can.
2. Take a cooking pot, add water to it, and bring it to a boil. When the water starts to boil, place the soda can inside the pot. You should notice the wax start to melt.
3. As the wax and chocolate melt, use a spoon to stir the mixture. Once the mixture is well blended, remove the cooking pot from the stove eye. Pour the chocolate wax mixture into your empty container, and add the wicks.
4. Allow the wax to cool for about 20 minutes. The wax should change color from brown to cream.

Source: instructables.com/Homemade-Chocolate-Candle

MORIAH MASON is a junior at Samford University and is majoring in journalism and mass communication. Her area of concentration is in print journalism, and she was a fall 2020 intern with WMU.

BOSTON CREAM PIE COOKIES

VANILLA CREAM FILLING

- 2 cups milk
- ¾ cup granulated sugar, divided
- ¼ teaspoon salt
- 4 large egg yolks
- 4 tablespoons cornstarch
- 2 teaspoons vanilla extract or vanilla bean paste
- 2 tablespoons unsalted butter, cubed

VANILLA COOKIES

- 1 cup granulated sugar
- ½ cup unsalted butter, room temperature
- 2 large eggs, room temperature
- 3 cups all-purpose flour
- 2 teaspoons baking powder
- ½ teaspoon salt
- ¾ cup whole milk
- 1 teaspoon vanilla extract
- 2 teaspoons vanilla powder or vanilla bean paste (*optional*)

CHOCOLATE GANACHE TOPPING

- 4 ounces semisweet chocolate
- 2 tablespoons unsalted butter, cubed
- 1 tablespoon corn syrup
- Sprinkles for decorating (*optional*)

Prepare cream filling in a medium pot. Heat milk, ½ cup sugar, and salt until warm. While milk is heating, combine egg yolks, cornstarch, and remaining sugar in a medium bowl. Slowly pour heated milk into the egg mixture, whisking constantly. Return liquid to the pot, whisking constantly, and heat until thick but not bubbling (2-3 minutes). Strain through a fine sieve into a clean bowl. Add vanilla extract and butter. Stir until butter is completely melted. Place plastic wrap directly on cream filling to prevent a skin from forming, and refrigerate for at least 4 hours.

Prepare cookies. Heat oven to 350°F and line baking sheets with parchment paper. Cream butter and sugar together. Scrape down the sides of the mixing bowl before mixing in eggs. In a medium bowl, combine

flour, baking powder, and salt. Add vanilla extract to the measuring cup with milk. Alternate adding flour and milk, beginning and ending with flour. Add optional vanilla powder or vanilla bean paste. Use a ½-inch cookie scoop to place 12 cookies on each baking sheet, then bake 12-14 minutes, or until cookies are slightly golden and spring back to the touch. Cool 5 minutes on the baking sheet before transferring to rack to cool completely. Place cream filling in a piping bag with a small circular tip. Pipe filling onto one cookie and top with another.

Prepare topping by heating chocolate, butter, and corn syrup in a double boiler until melted. Cool slightly, then use a spoon or piping bag to top cookies with ganache. Add sprinkles, if desired.

Source: dixiecrystals.com/recipes/boston-cream-pie-cookies



more than Words

WORKING EFFECTIVELY ACROSS LANGUAGES

BY DANETTE HIGH

When the missions team entered the community, they thought they were off to a good start. They were greeted warmly by some of the community leaders and were offered tea. However, as they began to present the gospel through an interpreter, the situation felt tense. Because the team didn't speak the local language, they didn't understand what the problem was. Thankfully, their interpreter, Flor, understood not only the language but also the culture. She asked the team leader, "Do you mind if I speak to them for a moment?" The team leader, who had already begun to develop a relationship with this young woman, readily agreed. The team watched, a bit nervously, as Flor had a long conversation with the community leaders.

With a slight change of plans, Flor spoke of the gospel in a culturally appropriate way. Soon, the easy conversation was restored, and the team was able to minister as planned. When they left, the community leader assured the interpreter that she (and the team) was welcome in the village anytime.

Many people who have not yet heard of Jesus will not come to know Him through the English language. And if we can't speak the heart language of the people we hope to serve, interpreters are essential. However, working with an interpreter requires effort on our part. Establishing a relationship of trust ensures clear communication for all involved. Here are some guidelines to smooth your way across language barriers on a mission trip. Some of these tips will also aid your communication with those who speak English as a second language here at home.

- If possible, meet with the interpreter ahead of time to develop rapport.
- If you are using written materials, then provide these to the interpreter. Supplying a list of key terms—biblical words or phrases that may not translate readily—helps the interpreter think through the equivalent words or phrases in his or her language.
- Speak slower than you usually do. Stop after a sentence or two to let the interpreter do his or her job.
- Avoid idioms (for example, "It's raining cats and dogs"). They don't translate well, and we use them far more than we realize.
- Use simple English—an interpreter interprets only the words he or she understands. Simplifying your English is not dumbing down. It requires a greater understanding of the concepts on your part. If you can express it simply, then you understand it.
- Give one instruction at a time, especially for group activities or discussions.
- Avoid suggesting books. It's likely your audience won't have access to the book in its language.
- Watch out for language people can't picture or haven't experienced.
- Speak to the audience, not to the interpreter.
- Be careful with jokes—humor doesn't always cross cultures well.
- Pray for your interpreter before you go and during your trip. If your interpreter is not a believer, he or she will be the one closest to your message. Your words and actions may have eternal impact.

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DANETTE HIGH is thankful to have had opportunities to learn languages but knows local interpreters are the ones who continue to have influence locally.

Julia's MISSION

MAKING AN IMPACT FOR
THE KINGDOM IN GERMANY

BY STACY DYCK

A few years after her father's death, Julia attempted to numb the pain with drugs and detrimental relationships. She had a hole in her heart nothing could fill. After learning about Jesus through a women's Bible group, Julia discovered only He could fill this hole and free her from the guilt that burdened her heart.

Baptized at age 18 and now a beautiful woman of 22, Julia seeks to share the love of Jesus as she studies in Germany to be an educator. Missionaries are not just those who associate with a missions group but also those who choose to make Jesus known as best they can wherever they find themselves.

"What I am sure of is that Jesus gave those who follow Him the task of going into all the world and preaching the gospel," Julia said, citing Mark 16:15. "Since God has not yet put any other place or people on my heart, I think I should do this job where He has already put me."

Like Julia, young women who follow Jesus are impacting His kingdom all over the world by sharing the love of Jesus as they go about their daily lives—something we should all try to emulate.

Julia said it all starts with prayer—"Prayer is the foundation because only the Lord can move hearts and give me the right words or thoughts." She finds it helpful

to draw parallels between what people tell her from their lives and how she got to know Jesus.

Explaining to people how she changed is deeply important to Julia. "If people see the way I live my life but don't know what changed me so much, wouldn't I take the glory away from God and pretend to be responsible for it myself? Jesus is the best thing that has ever happened in my life," she said.

Julia views it as a privilege to partner with God in His work of transforming hearts. "Isn't it a privilege to know that we humans can't change people's hearts anyway? Only the Lord can, and He wants to use us," she said.

How different our world would look if all followers of Jesus lived with this thinking and these actions. The work of the missionary is a call to all followers of Jesus. We must not cast it off to those in faraway lands or those who do it full time. We must insert ourselves into the redeeming work of Jesus, just as Julia does.

"I am open for every way in which He wants to use me," she said. "How much Jesus loves me and how I experienced Him changed my whole life. I want to show people what a gain it is to live with Jesus."

This young generation is on to something—let us all be missionaries right where we are and make an impact for Christ just as Julia does.

STACY DYCK and her family served as missionaries in Europe for 11 years.



Faith Stories Shared around the Table

BY CINDY LEWIS DAKE

BRIDGE THE GENERATION GAP AS WOMEN OF ALL AGES TELL ABOUT THEIR FAITH JOURNEY.

I have a confession. Sometimes I “zone out” until a speaker begins to tell a personal story; only then am I completely engaged. Maybe like me, you find personal stories draw you in and hold you happily captive until you find out what happens at the end. Savvy speakers weave lessons into their stories, providing listeners with truths couched in memorable scenarios.

A few years ago, I had a vision (not an Isaiah 6 kind of vision, but you get the idea). I envisioned an event where young women could hear a 100-year-old Christian woman tell how her faith in Jesus carried her through a century of life and ministry. But there was more: I wanted the older generation to hear younger women tell of their commitment to Jesus and His call on their lives. I wanted this event to bridge the generation gap as women heard from each other, heard of God’s influence in their lives, and were challenged in their walk with Jesus.

We called the event Gather ‘Round the Table, and our theme was Jesus Is Enough. We featured four age-based panels (20s-30s, 40s-50s, 60s-70s, 80s+). Each panel had four women, and the “most seasoned” speaker was 101 years old!

WOMEN WITH STORIES

The panelists met a few times to plan their testimonies and pray. Each panelist had about five minutes to weave her faith story around these topics

- Challenges and joys of this segment of life
- What God is doing in this stage of life
- How each woman was fulfilling God’s call

SMALL-GROUP STORIES

Between the panel presentations, small-group discussions around the tables gave women a chance to process what they had heard, share their stories, and build relationships. We provided questions like

- If you have lived through the same stage of life as the panelists who just spoke, then describe a faith highlight you experienced in that time.
- If you are in that stage of life now, what are you experiencing in your faith journey currently?
- If you haven’t reached that stage yet, what questions do you have about it?

ROCK A PRAYERWALK

To give women a chance to get up and move, we planned an hour-long prayerwalk. One group walked to the nearby Baptist student center, while other groups prayerwalked around the downtown area near the church. We provided a simple “How to Rock a Prayerwalk” guide in our event booklet. When they returned, they shared at their tables how they experienced God’s presence during the walk.

FAITHFUL AT 101

Our oldest panelist was Emanetta Qualls, a 101-year-old International Mission Board missionary who served in Brazil for 21 years. Among the pearls of wisdom she shared was how Psalm 23 had inspired her all her life: “I’m an old lady, and I can truthfully say that goodness and mercy have followed me all the days of my 101 years!” The room exploded with applause.

What stories of faith are just waiting to be told around the tables and among the women of your church? When public health circumstances allow, gather and declare God’s faithfulness together.

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CINDY LEWIS DAKE (cindydake.com) writes from Texas, where Gather ‘Round the Table was her church’s 2019 women’s retreat. Her favorite piece of feedback from the event was this nugget: “This event affirmed the importance of communal remembering, as Scripture often calls God’s people to remember what He has done and to speak that truth aloud.”



The Generous Spirit of a GODLY WOMAN

BEING VIRTUOUS AT ALL TIMES BY JENEE' SHEARIN

When we live generously, we are willing to go beyond the expected. That type of lifestyle demonstrates kindness, but it also requires sacrifice from us. Even as Christians, this may seem difficult sometimes, particularly during challenging times. But we can grow a generous spirit when we build a godly character like the woman in Proverbs 31.

The second portion of Proverbs 31 focuses on the honorable character of a woman. This sage advice was passed down most appropriately by a woman to her son, more specifically the mother of King Lemuel. In the original Hebrew language, Proverbs 31:10–31 is an acrostic poem, meaning the beginning of each verse starts with sequential letters in the Hebrew alphabet.

Upon reading Proverbs 31, I would often grow frustrated and think to myself, *How am I ever going to be all of this?* Fortunately, my spiritual journey with God afforded me relief, and I found comfort in knowing that, with God, obtaining the various attributes mentioned is not an impossible task. The good news is we can serve a God who offers us a divine relationship and desires that relationship to be longstanding. Specifically, our journey to building good character is in process like our relationship with God.

We must be mindful this is a process and to be patient and prayerful. The closer we get to God, the more opportunities we have to develop an honorable character that can be as generous as the one described in Proverbs 31.

This proverb is filled with many attributes to model.

- Resourceful (v. 16)—“She considers a field and buys it; out of her earnings she plants a vineyard.”
- Well-prepared (v. 18)—“She sees that her trading is profitable, and her lamp does not go out at night.”
- Generous (v. 20)—“She opens her arms to the poor and extends her hands to the needy.”

- Resilient (v. 25)—“She is clothed with strength and dignity; she can laugh at the days to come.”
- Wise and faithful (v. 26)—“She speaks with wisdom, and faithful instruction is on her tongue.”
- Admirable (v. 28)—“Her children arise and call her blessed; her husband also, and he praises her.”

We may sometimes find ourselves living in a superficial world bombarded by outside influences seeking to shape our inner character and diminish our faithful service. Thankfully, the final verse (v. 31) offers us the reassurance we may need as Christian women: “Honor her for all that her hands have done, and let her works bring her praise at the city gate.”

Societal norms often seek to lessen the virtuous character in the part of life that some would label as ordinary or mundane. But the reality is—the qualities of an ideal Christian woman are extraordinary and not commonplace. Our everyday service may seem monotonous, but our service to God—if we're patient—yields a generous spirit that eventually triumphs like the woman of Proverbs 31.

JENEE' SHEARIN prayerfully seeks to continue to build a more generous character while strengthening her relationship with God.

Sacrificial Giving

WATCH AND LEARN.

BY SUSAN LAFFERTY

.....

We want you to know, brothers and sisters, about the grace of God that was given to the churches of Macedonia: During a severe trial brought about by affliction, their abundant joy and their extreme poverty overflowed in a wealth of generosity on their part. I can testify that, according to their ability and even beyond their ability, of their own accord, they begged us earnestly for the privilege of sharing in the ministry to the saints, and not just as we had hoped. Instead, they gave themselves first to the Lord and then to us by God's will.

-2 Corinthians 8:1-5 CSB

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PRAY

Thank the Lord that His Word is true. Ask for a teachable heart and mind as you read and study this passage in 2 Corinthians.

INTRODUCTION

In the noise and activity of the Temple, Jesus noticed the simple, quiet act of one woman. A poor widow put her two coins into the Temple treasury—coins that were the smallest of the small.

Many others dropped large offerings into the treasury that day. By comparison, the widow's gift was nothing. But Jesus let us in on the truth of that moment: "This poor widow has put in more than all of them" (Luke 21:3 CSB). This woman was the most generous of all. She gave everything she had.

The example of the poor widow and the example of the church in Macedonia both point to a key element for living generously in this world: giving all we have and all we are to the Lord our God.

BACKGROUND

According to Acts 16—17, on Paul's second missionary journey, churches were planted in the Macedonian cities of Philippi, Thessalonica, and Berea. From there Paul proceeded to Athens and then Corinth, where he planted the church in that location (Acts 18).

LEAD WOMEN ON MISSION

Use with meeting
plan on page 6 in
Women on Mission
Leader (Spring 2021).



In Acts 18:11, we learn Paul spent 18 months in Corinth, teaching them the word of God. A quick read through 1 Corinthians reveals this church was much loved by Paul but had several serious issues that needed to be addressed. Sexual immorality, denial of bodily resurrection, and lawsuits against fellow believers are just a sampling of these issues. Paul wrote to rebuke and instruct the young church.

In 2 Corinthians, Paul prepared the church for his upcoming visit and defended his ministry as an apostle. He also warned against false teachers. Paul loved the church and cared enough to confront the believers there when they needed discipline and correction. He noted the godly sorrow that produced repentance after his earlier letter and commended them for the change that had taken place in them.

In the middle of 2 Corinthians, the apostle gave them an example to follow. He shared with them concerning the generous and sacrificial giving of the churches in Macedonia. He encouraged the believers in Corinth to do likewise.

STUDY AND MEDITATE

- Prayerfully read through 2 Corinthians 8:1–5. Read through it again, out loud. Write the passage out in a notebook, leaving margins sufficient for notes.
- Look over the passage in your notebook. Highlight any name of God in this passage. Underline the other characters mentioned.
- What do you learn about God in verses 1–5? What do you learn about the believers in Macedonia?
- Circle specific words Paul used to describe the churches in Macedonia. You may wish to look up these words in a dictionary to further clarify their meaning. Which descriptions stand out to you? Note any opposites Paul used.
- Read through the context of 2 Corinthians 6:11—9:15. Note any cross-references for 2 Corinthians 8:1–5 in the margins.
- Chapters 8 and 9 reveal the importance of financial accountability before God and man. What did Paul use to ensure accountability?
- Note any references to gifts or giving. What do you learn about generosity and giving in this passage? About following through on a commitment?

- Read 2 Corinthians 9:7–8. What do you learn about God in these verses? What do you learn about grace? Which word is on repeat in 9:8? Read verse 8 aloud, emphasizing that particular word each time you read it. What was Paul teaching the church in Corinth through this verse? What is he teaching you?
- The churches in Macedonia pleaded for “the privilege of sharing in the ministry to the saints” (8:4 CSB). The word used for sharing is *koinónia*. Fellowship of believers is described as *koinónia*. This giving was part of their fellowship in the body of Christ.
- The true key to the generosity of the churches in Macedonia is found in 2 Corinthians 8:6. What is it? Why does this make a difference in giving? In life?

APPLY

- Take 9:7–8 and turn it into a personal prayer. Ask God to help you with verse 7. Then pray, “Thank You, Lord, that You are able to make every grace overflow to me, so that in every way, always having everything I need, I may excel in every good work.” Ask Him to show you what He would have you do today to glorify His name and walk by His grace.
- As you daily read your Bible this month, look for other examples in Scripture of those who gave themselves and their gifts to God willingly. Note bad examples as well—those who did not give willingly or generously. Write these examples in your notebook. What do you learn about God in those passages? What do you learn about people?
- Set aside time to consider the grace of giving in your life. Are you willing? Or do you resist giving to the Lord and His people? Have you asked Him to teach you His ways in giving?
- Read 2 Corinthians 8:6 again. Have you given your all to the Lord? Everything? What do you find yourself holding on to?

PRAY

Thank God for the example He gave to us when He freely and sacrificially gave His Son. Ask Him to lead you in the area of joyful and abundant giving.

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SUSAN LAFFERTY and her husband, Todd, have served with the IMB for more than 30 years. Susan writes weekly at susanlafferty.com.

GIVE Sacrificially; LIVE Generously

ENGAGE IN SURRENDERED PRAYER TO DISCOVER HOW THE FATHER
DESIRES FOR YOU TO GIVE AND LIVE. BY ANN MANISCALCO

Fixer-upper. Many homebuyers cringe at the mere thought. My friend Gina isn't one of those. She loves tackling messy and challenging renovation projects. Although it's often a mixed bag of extreme frustration and intense satisfaction, that both intrigues and challenges her.

"So," you may ask, "what does this have to do with giving sacrificially and living generously?" To me, it points out the way the Lord has wired each of us so differently. He's given Gina a knack for overlooking the ugly, a willingness to take chances, and a creative temperament. He's blessed her financially through the process, and by sacrificially expending time, skill, and money, she's enriched the lives of several families by providing them a comfortable, safe place to call home.

As God's treasured child, you, like Gina, are "wired" in unique and incredible ways to help fulfill His purposes here on earth. Every believer's path to sacrificial giving and generous living is as individualistic as one's fingerprints. Engaging in serious, surrendered prayer can more clearly reveal the Father's distinct plan for you.

In *Unscripted* (NewHopePublishers.com/ref/WMU), author Jeff Iorg challenges readers: "Developing a more missional lifestyle will require . . . sacrifice on your part. It will cost your two most important commodities—time and money." As you pray through the categories below, consider ways to couple this giving/living combo in these areas and others.

YOUR TIME

For various reasons, we often see both time and money in seemingly short supply. Jesus, however, engaged in His full-time ministry for only a brief span of time, yet He accomplished everything God called Him to do (see John 17:4). He lived a sacrificial lifestyle with what He had, generously pouring Himself into the lives of others.

With our to-do list crying out for attention, how do we model Jesus' example? One hint: consider His prayer life. He "often withdrew . . . and prayed" (Luke 5:16). As we commune with our Father, He guides us to use our time wisely, instead of squandering it. Do we sometimes make commitments without prayerfully seeking God's will, thus missing His best? Yes, everyone has

LEAD WOMEN ON MISSION :
Use with meeting :
plan on page 7 in :
Women on Mission :
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daily obligations with work and family that demand time, but a sacrificial lifestyle calls for intentionally creating ministry moments, “making the most of every opportunity” (Eph. 5:16). Proverbs 16:3 suggests prayer: “Commit to the LORD whatever you do, and he will establish your plans.”

YOUR MONEY

Just what is sacrificial giving? We may envision billionaire tycoons giving millions to worthy philanthropic projects. Jesus’ perspective, however, was quite different. In Mark 12:41–44, a destitute widow put “more into the treasury than all the others,” Jesus remarked, because she “put in everything—all she had to live on.” While we might focus on the “giving” part, the Lord places more value on what we’re “giving up” (the sacrifice). One person’s gift of excess millions may require much less sacrifice than a poor person’s monetarily insignificant offering. (See 2 Corinthians 8:1–6 for another example of sacrificial giving, which Paul called a God-given “grace.”)

To be sacrificial, giving must cost us something, yet the rewards can be gratifying. Years ago, I was a freelance writer for a local newspaper. During a busy December, I wanted to increase my Lottie Moon Christmas Offering amount, so I prayed, committing earnings from any unexpected assignments to the offering. The Lord blessed me, and a Christmas-themed story and my accompanying pictures (that required considerable time) garnered a full-page spread, netting me a tidy sum. Will you ask God to reveal ways to give sacrificially of your finances? It may mean something as small as forgoing a favorite coffee at a shop you love or as big as relinquishing cherished vacation time to serve on a missions team. Brainstorm with your missions group for ways to “excel in this grace of giving” (2 Cor. 8:7).

YOUR SKILLS, TALENTS, SPIRITUAL GIFTS, AND VALUES

Generous living results when we consider the generous Giver. God, through the avenue of grace, has “blessed us in the heavenly realms with every spiritual blessing in Christ” (Eph. 1:3). In addition to talents and skills (whether inherent or learned), we have education, background, and interests that compose us. And, more importantly, in 1 Corinthians 12, Paul assured believers that each has at least one spiritual gift (note the words *each one* and *everyone* in the passage).

Sometimes we may hide behind the “I can’t” mask, when it’s really a case of “I won’t.” As you prayerfully surrender, ask the Lord to help you honestly evaluate these components of your life and to show you ways He wishes to use the unique person you are.

SUMMING IT UP

So how does our generosity impact God’s work in the world? One simple answer: look at the influence our missionaries have had over the centuries. It may involve moving their family to an undesirable part of town to plant a church. For others, it means leaving home, family, and the familiar to travel to distant shores, establish a new residence, and embrace an unfamiliar lifestyle, culture, and language. Perhaps we’re to walk across the street to minister in an apartment complex or in a long-term care facility nearby or come alongside an overwhelmed single mom. “Look at the fields,” Jesus challenged (John 4:35).

How do you lead others to live generously? Start in the home as you portray a giving lifestyle to your family members. Include them in ministry opportunities. They must see you sacrificing your time, talents, and financial resources. Point out the internal blessings received when we expend ourselves for others. As you model and discuss opportunities God brings your way, incorporate comparable examples from Scripture. Outside the home, your lifestyle and testimony can spur others to want to emulate you, both in your church family and outside it. As you engage in worthwhile civic projects, you can be an influencer and advocate for addressing much-needed change and provide witnessing opportunities.

Giving sacrificially and living generously—it begins on your knees, moves to your heart, and progresses to your hands.

WAYS TO PRAY

1. Invite a friend to study and pray with you, if possible.
2. Read this article together.
3. On index cards, write the headings. (You can do this on your own, too, if needed.)
4. Read the related Scriptures, making notes of what challenges you.
5. Use part of your daily prayertime to surrender these to the Lord.

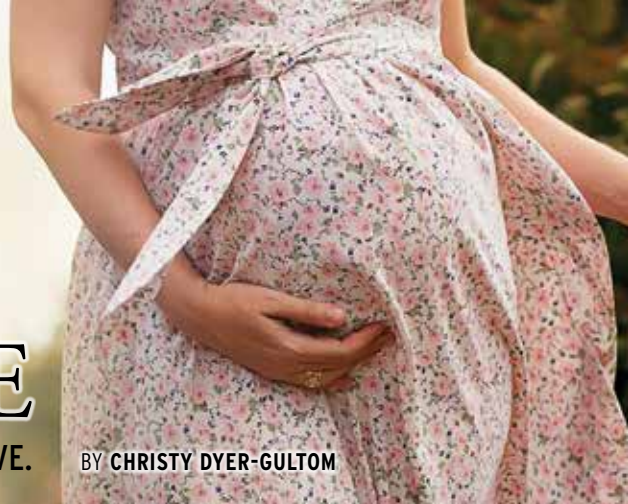
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ANN MANISCALCO writes from her cluttered computer desk in south Mississippi. She loves planning and helping carry out close-to-home missions projects, especially with senior adults.

To Live the Relentlessly Generous LIFE

GIVE WITHOUT EXPECTING TO RECEIVE.

BY CHRISTY DYER-GULTOM



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

I recently found out my husband and I are expecting our first baby! We are so excited to start this new phase of life, but almost immediately we were reminded how expensive babies can be. As we started to plan, a friend introduced me to our local Buy Nothing Facebook group. Have you heard of these? Apparently you can find them worldwide, and upon doing some research I was amazed at what is happening there. It's a gift economy—everything is exchanged with no expectation of receiving anything in return. These groups are popping up all over the world to help communities care for one another. What an amazing concept—it's something that, as Christians, we should be familiar with. In fact, we should be living this way daily. This month we are going to explore how God calls us to relentlessly live generous lives, not just with our income but with everything He has entrusted to us.

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. Print out images of the flags of the US states and the Canadian province featured in the Week of Prayer for North American Missions: California, Georgia, Idaho, Louisiana, Massachusetts, New Mexico, and British Columbia. Make sure you have enough images for each group participant. On the back of each flag, write the name and place of service of each missionary having a birthday that day. Pass out the flags. Remind participants to continue to pray for North American missions all month long.

MONDAY, MARCH 1

PASSAGE: GENESIS 22:1-18

FOCUS: GENESIS 22:9-11

What does it mean to live generously? We get a foundation for that in the story of Abraham. Right off the bat in Abraham's narrative, we see God show favor to him—favor he didn't earn or deserve (Gen. 12:1-3). We are recipients of that same kind of favor in the grace of Jesus Christ—we receive the gift of salvation we could never earn or deserve. So when we give generously, we know it's not to earn favor from God or earn blessings on earth—it's to give to others in the same way He gave to us, without expecting anything in return except the heavenly rewards of our Father. We'll talk more about that later.

This week we are going to look at Old Testament heroes of faith who lived generously. Let's start from the beginning. God had promised to Abraham, in his old age, a son—an heir who would make Abraham a great nation and a people, God's people. God gave Isaac to Abraham, but some years later, before Isaac had any children of his own, God made a strange request—He asked for Isaac's life. Imagine how Abraham must have felt when asked

for the life of his promised son, the only means for him to become a great nation. But we do not see Abraham beg God to spare his son; what we see is obedience. He knew God would live up to His promise somehow. Abraham's generosity went so deep, he was willing to give his son. (Sound familiar?) Pray today for opportunities to follow God obediently even in hard requests.

Prayer Focus—American Peoples: Seven preteen girls who attend a church plant in Rio de Janeiro are surrounded by negative influences. They struggle with what they learn at church and what they see in their neighborhood. Pray they would be increasingly transformed by Jesus. Pray for their families who don't know Jesus yet.

PRAY FOR

NORTH AMERICAN MISSION BOARD

- ARKANSAS: Randy Bond
- CALIFORNIA: Joshua Simmons
- GEORGIA: Thangsuan Hatlangh
- LOUISIANA: Deborah Smith, David Sneed
- OREGON: John Peters

QUEBEC: Jean-Marc Princivil INTERNATIONAL MISSION BOARD

- AMERICAN PEOPLES: RF
- CENTRAL ASIAN PEOPLES: AW
- EUROPEAN PEOPLES: Joel Jolley
- NORTHERN AFRICAN AND MIDDLE EASTERN PEOPLES: GO
- SOUTH ASIAN PEOPLES: CP
- SUB-SAHARAN AFRICAN PEOPLES: Phil Barnes
- CHAPLAINS • VOLUNTEERS
- STATE CONVENTION MISSIONARIES

RETIRED NAMB: Bill Dunning, Charlie Hanna, David Phan

RETIRED IMB: Randy Brooks, Ron Copeland, Sammye Crawford, Jack Day, Hawk Hawkins, Doug Knapp, Rhonda Miliakoff

TUESDAY, MARCH 2

PASSAGE: GENESIS 45:1-15

FOCUS: GENESIS 45:5-8

What I love most about this story is seeing it in its entirety and knowing God's plan for Joseph played out through some really dire circumstances. It's possible you have walked through some hard times in your life. Take comfort in knowing the same God who worked things together for good in Joseph's story is doing the same with your story, whether you see the results of that in your lifetime or not.

Joseph could not have known all God planned for him as he sat in a pit thinking he would die. Then when he was rescued only to be sold into slavery, he might have wished to die instead. But God had much bigger plans, and as we see in verse 8, Joseph realized it was God who sent him to Egypt, not his brothers. Joseph's good character and sharp mind led him to a place of leadership, and God's prophetic words through Joseph led to salvation for Egypt and the people of God through Joseph's work. Joseph's love for his family and God made him relentless in his work and generosity. Pray today, and ask God to show you His plans for you in a situation you are facing.

Prayer Focus—Central Asian Peoples: Esma*, a woman in Central Asia, has many unanswered questions about religion. Her friend recently shared the story of Adam and Eve and God's plan to redeem humankind. Pray Esma would consider the spiritual truths her friend shared and would look to God's Word for answers.

PRAY FOR

NORTH AMERICAN MISSION BOARD

NEW MEXICO: Mark Dunn

ONTARIO: Gene Ridenour

INTERNATIONAL MISSION BOARD

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CENTRAL ASIAN PEOPLES: KS

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NORTHERN AFRICAN AND MIDDLE EASTERN PEOPLES: JS, WS

SOUTH ASIAN PEOPLES: JC

SOUTHEAST ASIAN PEOPLES: SJ, LT

GLOBAL RESOURCE TEAM: SS

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WEDNESDAY, MARCH 3

PASSAGE: EXODUS 32:1-16

FOCUS: EXODUS 32:13-14

The most relentless, generous person in the Bible and throughout history is God. Now this may sound like your typical Sunday School answer, but let's take a look at it. Today's passage is just one of the many examples of God's generosity toward the Israelites. For hundreds of years, we see this pattern play out: God is gracious and provides for Israel; Israel is grateful for a moment, then they get selfish and rebellious; sometimes God displays His wrath, and other times He doesn't; but every time God is merciful and generous to His people.

In this passage, we see the Israelites worshipping a calf, claiming it brought them out of Egypt. How forgetful these people must have been. But God relented from His anger and spared His disobedient, undeserving people. How often do we see God do this today? God still serves as Judge, but we are so often the recipients of His faithful love and generous mercy—mercy we don't deserve. Thank God today for His never-ending generosity in your life.

Prayer Focus—Deaf Peoples: Nick* recently shared the gospel with Iris*, a Southeast Asian Deaf friend. She showed an openness like never before. Workers have prayed for and shared with Iris for quite some time, but she hasn't decided to follow Jesus yet. Join them in lifting her before the throne of God.

PRAY FOR

NORTH AMERICAN MISSION BOARD

CALIFORNIA: Issa Alnazal, Justin Paslay

CONNECTICUT: William Sustache

FLORIDA: José García, Larry Tucker

MISSOURI: Ulysses Ross

NEW HAMPSHIRE: Kevin Peters

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Thomas Sieberhagen

NORTHERN AFRICAN AND MIDDLE EASTERN PEOPLES: JL, BP, JS

SOUTH ASIAN PEOPLES: WC, CH

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THURSDAY, MARCH 4

PASSAGE: RUTH 1:1-22

FOCUS: RUTH 1:16-17

Family has always been an important part of cultures around the world. No story shows greater biblical loyalty to family than the story of Ruth, who created a bond with her mother-in-law, Naomi, that was deep and generous. Through the heartbreak of losing their husbands, they grieved together. As Naomi returned to Judah, she realized the hope for her two daughters-in-law to have bright futures would be much higher in their country. Why should they leave behind their original families, their gods, and the comforts of home

when she had nothing to provide for them, no hope of sons to marry, and no way to know what awaited them in Judah?

But Ruth wasn't concerned with herself. She loved her mother-in-law and was willing to sacrifice her future to go where she went, live where she lived, and worship the God she worshipped. God provided for Ruth along the way, and at every turn, Ruth also gave generously of what she had to Naomi. Ask God today to show you a way you can give sacrificially.

Prayer Focus—East Asian Peoples: Sally*, Judy*, and Hannah* each had negative church experiences in their past. Praise God Sally and Judy are now new believers, and Hannah recommitted herself to Christ. Pray for them to grow into faithful disciples of Jesus. Pray their families would also believe and be transformed by Him.

PRAY FOR

NORTH AMERICAN MISSION BOARD

COLORADO: George Benson

FLORIDA: John Shultz

NEBRASKA: David Martinez

OREGON: Nathan Chang

TENNESSEE: Kevin Lorance

ALBERTA: Kristen Toussaint

BRITISH COLUMBIA: Ashley Austin

INTERNATIONAL MISSION BOARD

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EAST ASIAN PEOPLES: SH

EUROPEAN PEOPLES: Julia Edwards, CP

NORTHERN AFRICAN AND MIDDLE EASTERN

PEOPLES: DO, JR

SOUTH ASIAN PEOPLES: CB

SOUTHEAST ASIAN PEOPLES: KJ

SUB-SAHARAN AFRICAN PEOPLES: Daren Davis, Ben Sustar

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STATE CONVENTION MISSIONARIES

RETIRED NAMB: Margaret Allen, Michael Brooks, Don Cartwright, Lucille Elliott, Cleo Parham

RETIRED IMB: Rodney Coleman, Jane Martin, BP, Mark Vaughan

FRIDAY, MARCH 5

PASSAGE: 1 SAMUEL 16:3-23

FOCUS: 1 SAMUEL 16:19-22

We all know Saul and the role David filled in the lineage of Christ. But Jesse also played a key role. Jesse brought his seven oldest sons to a sacrificial feast with Samuel. Assuming David would not be needed, Jesse left him tending sheep. God chose David though, and once he arrived, Samuel anointed him as the future king. I'm sure Jesse, David, and even his brothers probably thought, *Now what?*—and that is where we see Jesse's generosity. When Saul called for David's service, Jesse generously sent David with several gifts, trusting God's plan for David. He gave David generously not only to God's service but also to King Saul. We know all this was preparation for David to become king, but to Jesse it was giving his son away. Ask God today to show you how to use your family to be generous to others.

Prayer Focus—Northern African and Middle Eastern Peoples: The sister-in-law of an Arab pastor in the Netherlands was thrown out of her house after her husband discovered she follows Jesus. Pray she would find refuge in Jesus and the church. Pray for the pastor to have peace and wisdom to know how to help her from afar.

PRAY FOR

NORTH AMERICAN MISSION BOARD

COLORADO: Kelly Parrish

FLORIDA: Cedric Lauchner, Rogney Paz

ILLINOIS: David Park

MICHIGAN: Kevin Armstrong

NEVADA: Ryan Ivy

OREGON: Chandler Townsend

WEST VIRGINIA: Ryan Navy

ALBERTA: James Hathaway

INTERNATIONAL MISSION BOARD

AMERICAN PEOPLES: Andy Kennedy

CENTRAL ASIAN PEOPLES: GM, MW

EAST ASIAN PEOPLES: DW

EUROPEAN PEOPLES: AR

SOUTHEAST ASIAN PEOPLES: NB, NC, SK

SUB-SAHARAN AFRICAN PEOPLES: BB,

Ginger Goss, Parker Phillips, Rebecca Shapley

IMB GLOBAL: PM

CHAPLAINS • VOLUNTEERS

STATE CONVENTION MISSIONARIES

RETIRED NAMB: Jo Garland, Charles Schlauch

RETIRED IMB: Pat Lewellyn, Loren Robinson

missionary of the week

SATURDAY, MARCH 6

KF

EUROPEAN PEOPLES

BIRTHDAY: MARCH 10

PASSAGE: ESTHER 4:1-17

FOCUS: ESTHER 4:15-16

As operations directors for the European affinity, IMB missionary KF and her husband live in Prague, Czech Republic. They coordinate with field leaders in Europe and IMB staff in the US to help missionaries in Europe serve effectively. They also work to help facilitate church planting, discipleship, and training efforts across Europe. Europe and the US experienced similar changes affecting daily life during the global pandemic. "Like you, we have tried to capitalize on the opportunities the pandemic presented, especially using technology to share and connect with others," she said.

The couple previously spent 18 years as church planters in Ukraine. "We moved to Prague, in part, due to my health," KF said. She is grateful her rheumatoid arthritis is currently under control thanks to the medical care she can receive. Gratitude is what she says keeps her spiritually healthy.

Pray for her and the other IMB missionaries serving in the European affinity. Your faithful giving to the Lottie Moon Christmas Offering allows more than 500 missionaries to bring the gospel to some spiritually dark and hopeless places in Europe. As they build relationships with the lost and work with national partners, they pray many would receive the good news of salvation in Jesus. Lift up the couple's colleagues in Ukraine, who recently mourned a team leader's death due to cancer. Remember the other colleagues serving with them in support roles.

PRAY FOR

NORTH AMERICAN MISSION BOARD

CALIFORNIA: Alexis Cutz, Anton Fero

MICHIGAN: Eric Stewart

MISSOURI: Rodney Rambo

NORTH CAROLINA: Jason Ledford

INTERNATIONAL MISSION BOARD

CENTRAL ASIAN PEOPLES: CH

EAST ASIAN PEOPLES: CR

NORTHERN AFRICAN AND MIDDLE EASTERN PEOPLES: BR

SOUTH ASIAN PEOPLES: BR

SOUTHEAST ASIAN PEOPLES: MK

SUB-SAHARAN AFRICAN PEOPLES:

William Hardwick, AS

CHAPLAINS • VOLUNTEERS

STATE CONVENTION MISSIONARIES

RETIRED IMB: Joy Snow, Leona Tarry

SUNDAY, MARCH 7

PASSAGE: NEHEMIAH 5:1-19

FOCUS: NEHEMIAH 5:14-17

There is so much richness in the story of Nehemiah. We see from the beginning a leader who gave his life generously to God and to the people of Israel. He left a position in the king’s palace to instead protect and restore the city of God. But Nehemiah gave so much more. In this passage he governed the land with mercy, grace, and forgiveness. While other Jews took advantage of those less fortunate in their community, Nehemiah called for this injustice to cease. He demanded the leaders restore the dignity of the oppressed and help secure their financial future. He didn’t stop there. As governor he did not take advantage of his privileges; he gave graciously to his people. He continued the work of the wall and hosted many people at his dinner table. He gave and gave. What a great example for us to follow. Did you know we can be generous just by stopping injustice? Caring for those who are hurting and in need doesn’t have to come at great financial cost. It’s something our world desperately needs from us. Pray today for the issues of injustice in our world.

Prayer Focus—Sub-Saharan African Peoples:

There are 319,000 Bangobango people in the Democratic Republic of the Congo. These people mostly follow Islam and also practice ancestor worship. An orality project began among the Bangobango to translate stories from the Bible into their language. Praise the Lord the Bangobango people will soon have recordings of Bible stories in their language. Pray God would use these to spread His Word among the Bangobango.

PRAY FOR

NORTH AMERICAN MISSION BOARD

ALABAMA: Yuji Yasaka

CALIFORNIA: Andrew Iskender

FLORIDA: Oscar Longoria

GEORGIA: Hector Pineda

KANSAS: Jason Sperling

PENNSYLVANIA: Fadl Nagi

TENNESSEE: Morgan Cockrell

ONTARIO: Carrie Byers

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CENTRAL ASIAN PEOPLES: JW

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EUROPEAN PEOPLES: JM, Melissa Robinson

SOUTH ASIAN PEOPLES: JH

SUB-SAHARAN AFRICAN PEOPLES: KG

CHAPLAINS • VOLUNTEERS

STATE CONVENTION MISSIONARIES

RETIRED NAMB: Rebecca Moncrief,

Jerilyn Smith

RETIRED IMB: CC, Janet Dillard, Ellamae Elder,

GG, Martha Morgan, Debby Owens,

Deborah Royals, Polly Scott,

Lounette Templeton

MONDAY, MARCH 8

PASSAGE: MATTHEW 27:57-60

FOCUS: MATTHEW 27:59-60

This week we shift to New Testament heroes of faith who lived generous lives. There are so many ways as believers today we can live generously—with our time, with our finances, with our resources, and with our lives. Let’s start with this short story about a man who gave his resources to honor the King of kings. Joseph of Arimathea, a wealthy follower of Jesus, probably had much to give. We don’t know much about him, but we do know he wanted to honor Jesus, so he asked Pilate for His body. He prepared it for burial, and he placed it in his tomb. This

act of generosity was so important it was mentioned in Scripture. It is an encouragement to us that all our actions have consequences. It can at times seem daunting to give, but every gift can create a ripple effect worth seeing. Pray today asking God to show you one gift you can give to someone around you.

Prayer Focus—Sub-Saharan African Peoples:

Throughout God’s Word we read of men who interceded for their people. Sadly, God says, “I looked for someone among them who would . . . stand before me in the gap on behalf of the land so I would not have to destroy it, but I found no one” (Ezek. 22:30). Thank you for standing in the gap before God for the nations represented in Durban, South Africa.

PRAY FOR

NORTH AMERICAN MISSION BOARD

COLORADO: Elizabeth Slack

KANSAS: Eric Franklin

KENTUCKY: Whitney Clayton

MICHIGAN: Jason Loewen

OKLAHOMA: Stephen Myers

INTERNATIONAL MISSION BOARD

AMERICAN PEOPLES: BC

EAST ASIAN PEOPLES: DS

EUROPEAN PEOPLES: SC

NORTHERN AFRICAN AND MIDDLE EASTERN

PEOPLES: AC

SOUTH ASIAN PEOPLES: HA

SUB-SAHARAN AFRICAN PEOPLES: GS

CHAPLAINS • VOLUNTEERS

STATE CONVENTION MISSIONARIES

RETIRED NAMB: Elodia Cano, Monty McWhorter

RETIRED IMB: Helen Bond, Cape Caperton, LG,

David Glaze, James Harvey, James Jordan,

Mark Ledlow, Carol McGriff, Elaine Perrill,

Carol Robertson, RW

TUESDAY, MARCH 9

PASSAGE: MARK 12:41-44

FOCUS: MARK 12:44

We go from Joseph’s gift yesterday to a much larger act of generosity today. At face value, it may not seem that way. A large tomb that probably costs a lot of money seems like a bigger gift than the widow’s two small copper coins. But Jesus looked past what was seen to the unseen—the reality of this widow’s life. She gave all she

had to the Temple. Many gave out of wealth, but she gave out of poverty. She gave all she had to honor the Lord. I bet, much like Abraham, she had faith God would continue to provide for her if she gave everything.

One of the biggest roadblocks we face in generous living is the thought, *What about me?* We worry if we give too much, then we will experience great need. But it is often in our most sacrificial, relentless giving when we are most blessed. As you pray today, ask God to give you the heart of this widow, who was willing to give whatever she had.

Prayer Focus—Sub-Saharan African Peoples: A missionary in Ghana was inspired by US “camera clubs” that helped him learn to take pictures. Now he teaches people how to use their cameras. Some are Muslims who are open to prayer and short devotions as he closes each gathering. Pray God would provide opportunities for him to have gospel-centered conversations with these men.

PRAY FOR
NORTH AMERICAN MISSION BOARD

- ALABAMA:** Donna McCullough
- COLORADO:** Matthew Whitt
- MICHIGAN:** Jeremy Roth
- VIRGINIA:** Jonathan Laughinghouse
- INTERNATIONAL MISSION BOARD**
- CENTRAL ASIAN PEOPLES:** MM
- EUROPEAN PEOPLES:** SC
- NORTHERN AFRICAN AND MIDDLE EASTERN PEOPLES:** AB, DF, KT
- SOUTHEAST ASIAN PEOPLES:** BJ, AR
- SUB-SAHARAN AFRICAN PEOPLES:** Jee Su Kim
- CHAPLAINS • VOLUNTEERS**
- STATE CONVENTION MISSIONARIES**
- RETIRED NAMB:** John Capps, Joshua Grijalva, John Haeger, Roger Hill, Paul Smith
- RETIRED IMB:** Brenda Johnson, John Magyar

WEDNESDAY, MARCH 10

PASSAGE: LUKE 10:38-42
FOCUS: LUKE 10:41-42

Distraction can be a roadblock to generosity. Our lives are full of people, work, and even church activities that can distract us from what God is calling us to do. Mary

and Martha generously offered hospitality to Jesus. But they each chose a different route of hospitality. Mary sat at Jesus’ feet, and Martha was busy with all the preparations necessary to host the Son of God. These preparations seemed necessary, and while they were good, they weren’t what was best. Martha let those distractions take her away from what was most important. She got frustrated that Mary’s form of hospitality was affecting her negatively, and she went to Jesus for sympathy. But Jesus reminded Martha that Mary chose well by spending time and giving up the distractions to be with Him. Take a few moments to pray about what is distracting you from giving the most to God. Make a list of these things, placing them where you can see them often, so the next time you are tempted to let a distraction take the place of giving generously you won’t make that same mistake again.

Prayer Focus—Sub-Saharan African Peoples: For the early church, prayer was not an afterthought or the Christian way to start and end a meeting. Prayer was not just something added on to the “real work” of the apostles. Prayer was crucial then, and it must be for us now. Pray the Baptist churches we partner with in sub-Saharan Africa would be houses of prayer.

PRAY FOR
NORTH AMERICAN MISSION BOARD

- ALABAMA:** Ashley Costello
- GEORGIA:** Kenneth Cash
- MISSISSIPPI:** Thomas Nolen
- OHIO:** Matt Hamilton
- ALBERTA:** Amor Ruba
- ONTARIO:** Charlie Harris
- INTERNATIONAL MISSION BOARD**
- AMERICAN PEOPLES:** Penny Stamps
- CENTRAL ASIAN PEOPLES:** DD, AJ
- EUROPEAN PEOPLES:** KF, Amy Jones
- NORTHERN AFRICAN AND MIDDLE EASTERN PEOPLES:** CC, JS, WT
- SOUTHEAST ASIAN PEOPLES:** Meghan Dickey, Patricia Mullis
- SUB-SAHARAN AFRICAN PEOPLES:** Steve Jackson, Karen Johnson

CHAPLAINS • VOLUNTEERS
STATE CONVENTION MISSIONARIES

- RETIRED NAMB:** Bonnie Coldiron, Luana Golinski, Dannie Morris
- RETIRED IMB:** DB, Robin Brown, BD, Kitak Kim, Janet McDowell, Marleen Robinson, Laura Shelton, Jeanne Walker, Perry Walker

THURSDAY, MARCH 11

PASSAGE: LUKE 19:1-10
FOCUS: LUKE 19:8

The story of Zacchaeus is quite memorable to those of us who grew up in the church. We sang his song over and over as we learned how Jesus’ saving grace can give us eternal life as He forgives all our sins. Zacchaeus’s story is one of redemption. He went from being a man of great sin and greed to a generous follower of God. His reputation preceded him as pious people in the crowd remarked that Jesus was going to dine with a sinner, which really pointed more to their sin than Zacchaeus’s. Jesus shared His great hope and forgiveness with Zacchaeus, which led to him realizing how his greed had cheated others. He vowed to pay them back and on top of that give half of his possessions to the poor. This is the power the gospel has; it turns wretched sinners into benevolent followers of Christ. Pray today God would give you the heart of curiosity seen in Zacchaeus.

Prayer Focus—Sub-Saharan African Peoples: Proverbs 22:6 says, “Start children off on the way they should go, and even when they are old they will not turn from it.” Often the children in African churches get overlooked. Rarely, you’ll find a church with a good children’s ministry. Pray Baptist churches we partner with would see the importance of reaching out to children in the church and the community.

PRAY FOR

NORTH AMERICAN MISSION BOARD

ARIZONA: Michael Campbell
CALIFORNIA: Daniel Atondo, Eric Beeman

INTERNATIONAL MISSION BOARD

CENTRAL ASIAN PEOPLES: HM
EAST ASIAN PEOPLES: TC, KG, GH, Kacie Kubosumi, PV

EUROPEAN PEOPLES: GD

NORTHERN AFRICAN AND MIDDLE EASTERN PEOPLES: RR, BW

SOUTH ASIAN PEOPLES: MB

SOUTHEAST ASIAN PEOPLES: MJ, MS

SUB-SAHARAN AFRICAN PEOPLES: Twylia Bell, Donna Fort, Caroline Reel

IMB GLOBAL: AS

CHAPLAINS • VOLUNTEERS

STATE CONVENTION MISSIONARIES

RETIRED NAMB: Frank Deutsch, Amy Harris, Judy Langley, Gerald Steffy

RETIRED IMB: Melissa Atkins, Delores Bishop, Gary Bishop, Bev Bryan, Mike Campbell, Dale Dison, Janice Mooney, Jenny Musen

FRIDAY, MARCH 12

PASSAGE: ACTS 20:17-36

FOCUS: ACTS 20:19-20; 35

The Apostle Paul taught us and the early church so much—not just with his teachings but also with his life. We have a wealth of knowledge and stories from his life and ministry that show us how to be true followers of Christ. Many of these examples show us generosity in action.

In today’s passage, we see an example of Paul’s generous living (vv. 19–20). His life was not his own. He lived to preach the gospel and serve the Lord. Later in verse 35, Paul encouraged his readers to use their finances and resources to give to others—not only for the recipient’s benefit but also for the giver’s—“It is more blessed to give than to receive.” Paul had experienced this firsthand. Much of his ministry he was bivocational, working with his hands in order to work for the gospel. Other times he was blessed by the gifts of the church. Spend some time today thanking God for all the ways He continually blesses you.

Prayer Focus—Sub-Saharan African Peoples: Pray hearts would be encouraged and unified during a first-time meeting of the Upper Nile Cluster, which is made up of personnel from Eastern African countries. We praise God for the opportunity to come together for a time of prayer and retreat as one family. Pray for humble, teachable hearts as we focus on our great and Holy God.

PRAY FOR

NORTH AMERICAN MISSION BOARD

ARIZONA: Bryan Powers
GEORGIA: Derwin Anderson

NEBRASKA: Vernon McMorris

OHIO: Kyle Hughes

INTERNATIONAL MISSION BOARD

DEAF PEOPLES: KR

EAST ASIAN PEOPLES: JF

NORTHERN AFRICAN AND MIDDLE EASTERN PEOPLES: JA, LI, JT, MW

SOUTH ASIAN PEOPLES: SM

CHAPLAINS • VOLUNTEERS

STATE CONVENTION MISSIONARIES

RETIRED NAMB: Samuel Gonzalez, Al Guajardo, Chief Lawson

RETIRED IMB: DB, Richard Clark, Charles Cole, Marshall Duncan, Louie Scales, Ed Smith, Ray Turner

missionary of the week

SATURDAY, MARCH 13

JEFF THOMPSON

**1339 PITT RIVER RD.
PORT COQUITLAM, BC V3B 1N8
CANADA**

BIRTHDAY: MARCH 13

PASSAGE: ACTS 2:42-47

FOCUS: ACTS 2:44-45

Most missions or church-planting promo videos include a missionary or church planter saying something like, “There aren’t many Christians here, but people are hungry for God.”

But Jeff Thompson, a Southern Baptist church planter in Port Coquitlam, a suburb of Greater Vancouver, said his experience is not the same.

“In Canada, people are not hungry for God,” he said. “Their lives are pretty great, so it generally takes a significant crisis to make them even consider they might be lacking something.”

Jeff previously served churches in Texas and Florida before he, his wife, Charlene, and their six children moved to Port Coquitlam to plant New Hope Church. He quickly learned being a solo church planter is lonely work and taxing on every level.

“I prayed for years for pastoral partnership in ministry, and the Lord has provided exactly that,” Jeff said. “We are holding church services with another local church that is pastored by one of my best friends. It’s been an incredible blessing, and we’re looking forward to what the Lord is going to do in the coming years.”

Jeff said his greatest joy comes from seeing Christians grow spiritually.

“I love seeing Christians grow to the point they are able to feed themselves spiritually and experience the thrill of God moving in their lives through their faith,” he said.

Pray Jeff would have wisdom in leading New Hope Church during the unique challenges brought by COVID-19 and for more pastors to lead churches.



PRAY FOR

NORTH AMERICAN MISSION BOARD

CALIFORNIA: Jongho Kim

MARYLAND: Adam Muhtaseb

VIRGINIA: Cameron House

BRITISH COLUMBIA: Jeff Thompson

INTERNATIONAL MISSION BOARD

AMERICAN PEOPLES: Stanley Clark, Sherry Cody, Robin Tinley, Audrey Tucker

EAST ASIAN PEOPLES: Donna Qualls

EUROPEAN PEOPLES: BK, Terra Lindsey, AM, LM, Joy Price

SOUTH ASIAN PEOPLES: BC, CN

SUB-SAHARAN AFRICAN PEOPLES: Hanna Welch

CHAPLAINS • VOLUNTEERS

STATE CONVENTION MISSIONARIES

RETIRED NAMB: Gary Floyd, Gwendolyn Holden, Melanie Smith

RETIRED IMB: Donna Brown, Pratt Dean, LG, Ruth Harris, Imsun Kim, Gene Wilson, Joe Pat Winchester

SUNDAY, MARCH 14

PASSAGE: 2 CORINTHIANS 8:1-6

FOCUS: 2 CORINTHIANS 8:2-3

Today and tomorrow we'll look at two groups of people who lived generously. First, Paul told the church at Corinth about the generosity of the believers in Macedonia. Apparently they were suffering a great trial that included poverty. But in great joy the Macedonians were able to give generously to the work of the gospel. They desired more than having their needs met—they wanted to share in the privilege of serving God. I love this example of giving sacrificially because it displays the power of the body of Christ working together. We as the church are better together, and the gifts God gives us are multiplied greatly when put together. What one can give out of poverty would be very little, but when 100 people give out of poverty, there is a greater gift. Have you considered where God has placed you in your church family and even in your denomination and how you can join together with other believers to give to those in need?

Prayer Focus—Florida: John Shultz planted One Church at Atlantic Beach in Atlantic

Beach, Florida. "Pray for us as a new church plant during the COVID-19 crisis. We have a good, small core team. It is just hard to find your lane during times of such fear."

PRAY FOR

NORTH AMERICAN MISSION BOARD

COLORADO: Jason Soderstrom, Aleksandr Trbovich

GEORGIA: Paul Sabino

KANSAS: Mark Yates

MARYLAND: Mussie Woldemskel

MISSOURI: Aaron Williams

NORTH CAROLINA: Mark Etheridge

VERMONT: Sean Odom

INTERNATIONAL MISSION BOARD

CENTRAL ASIAN PEOPLES: AR

EAST ASIAN PEOPLES: HL

EUROPEAN PEOPLES: BW

NORTHERN AFRICAN AND MIDDLE EASTERN PEOPLES: JI, LI, EP

SOUTHEAST ASIAN PEOPLES: BO, TS

CHAPLAINS • VOLUNTEERS

STATE CONVENTION MISSIONARIES

RETIRED NAMB: Elizabeth McCormick, Faythe Mincey

RETIRED IMB: Laverne Arnold, Joanna Bernhardt, Paul Burkwall, Wayne Emanuel, John Griggs, Mike Houser, Eleanor Kuter, KO, Marcia Richardson, Bob Zbinden

MONDAY, MARCH 15

PASSAGE: 2 CORINTHIANS 8:7-9:5

FOCUS: 2 CORINTHIANS 9:1-5

Paul went on to relate the generosity of the Macedonians to the generosity he saw in the church at Corinth. He encouraged them to continue excelling in their faith and growing in generosity. He reminded them of their joyful giving in the past and encouraged their giving to continue. The believers in Corinth were experiencing a time of great wealth; therefore, Paul urged them to give generously to others they didn't even know. It seems they had committed with great eagerness to send a gift to this unnamed group of believers. So in Macedonia, Paul used their planned generosity as an example to the churches there. The Corinthians' joy in giving was contagious, spreading throughout the church. Paul ended

this passage by encouraging the believers to give voluntarily rather than out of obligation and, in so doing, teaching them and us an appropriate attitude toward giving. In our lives, we must give out of a desire to serve and to love, not out of obligation or pressure. As you pray today, evaluate your giving—what are you giving generously and what are you giving out of a sense of obligation? **Prayer Focus—Alabama:** Jimbo Alldredge is a collegiate/university missionary serving in Auburn, Alabama. "Please pray the college students in our ministry would be bold in seeking out lost students on campus and reaching them with the gospel. Pray we at First Baptist Church of Opelika would spur them on and mobilize them to this [work]."

PRAY FOR

NORTH AMERICAN MISSION BOARD

ALABAMA: Lou Raughton

GEORGIA: John Kwak

INDIANA: Robert Anderson

NEVADA: Oscar Munguia

NORTH CAROLINA: Larry McMath

OHIO: Joshua Stone

PENNSYLVANIA: Eric Baldwin

TEXAS: Carl Brown

SASKATCHEWAN: Louis Leventhal

INTERNATIONAL MISSION BOARD

CENTRAL ASIAN PEOPLES: CB, LW

EAST ASIAN PEOPLES: MM

NORTHERN AFRICAN AND MIDDLE EASTERN

PEOPLES: KD, BH

SOUTHEAST ASIAN PEOPLES: BK, KR

CHAPLAINS • VOLUNTEERS

STATE CONVENTION MISSIONARIES

RETIRED IMB: Carter Davis, Ed Engle, Franklin Kilpatrick, Linda Malone, Bruce McBee, Helen Reynolds, Jacob Shin

TUESDAY, MARCH 16

PASSAGE: PHILIPPIANS 4:10-20

FOCUS: PHILIPPIANS 4:14-16

If we were giving out first-century achievement awards, the generosity award would have gone to the church at Philippi. We see in today's passage, and other passages Paul wrote, the Philippians excelled in gift-giving. We can learn from their many examples. They gave generously to Paul's ministry so he

could devote his time and attention to sharing the gospel. Their gift was to God, not just man.

We also see a great example of Paul’s reliance on the Lord in times of wealth and times of poverty. He was content no matter how well he was provided for and was grateful for all he had been given. We often miss this as a receiver—the thankfulness we share to God and the giver goes a long way in showing our hearts for generosity. I believe it goes beyond a simple thank you to an attitude of contentedness as we see Paul express. Pray today God would gift you with this kind of contentedness.

Prayer Focus—Texas: Stan Smith is a military chaplain (LTC) serving Brooke Army Medical Center in Fort Sam Houston, Texas. “As the new chief of the Department of Ministry and Pastoral Care, I am finding increased stress among our health-care providers directly related to the COVID-19 crisis. Please pray our ministry team would continue to find impactful ways to share God’s steadfast love in these uncertain times.”

PRAY FOR
NORTH AMERICAN MISSION BOARD

CALIFORNIA: Bogdan Kipko

COLORADO: Kalen Malueg

PENNSYLVANIA: Steven Gintz

INTERNATIONAL MISSION BOARD

CENTRAL ASIAN PEOPLES: CJ, DP

EAST ASIAN PEOPLES: KL

EUROPEAN PEOPLES: PB

NORTHERN AFRICAN AND MIDDLE EASTERN

PEOPLES: KG, EM

SOUTH ASIAN PEOPLES: KH, PS

SUB-SAHARAN AFRICAN PEOPLES: Philip Cain,
Carla Evans

CHAPLAINS • VOLUNTEERS
STATE CONVENTION MISSIONARIES

RETIRED NAMB: Douglas Chanco

RETIRED IMB: Donna Cain

WEDNESDAY, MARCH 17

PASSAGE: MATTHEW 6:1-4

FOCUS: MATTHEW 6:3-4

Shifting to the Gospels, let’s explore what Jesus taught about generosity. There is so much richness in the

teachings of Christ, and His life was an example of perfect Christian living. While we won’t attain His perfection here on earth, we can look to Him as the example we should all follow. The simple truth of this teaching is that generosity isn’t something to boast about. Our giving should be done with humility and secrecy. We aren’t trying to be tricky but rather are doing our good deeds for our Father in heaven, who knows all things done in secret. The receiver of the gift simply gets the benefit of our work for the Lord. As a missionary who raises support, I’m often blessed by gifts given in secret. I kind of hate it, because I love to show my gratitude for these gifts, but this passage reminds me all a giver needs is gratitude from the Lord. Pray today God would show you one way you could give in secret within the next week.

Prayer Focus—Florida: Craig Olive is a collegiate/university missionary serving international students attending the University of Florida in Gainesville, Florida. “Please pray God would draw many internationals to Himself through our seven small groups and friendship partners. Pray God would raise up many internationals who would become disciple makers when they return to their home countries. Pray God would raise up more Americans and churches as laborers to help us reach out to the many internationals here. Pray God would bless my marriage and family as we parent four kids.”

PRAY FOR
NORTH AMERICAN MISSION BOARD

FLORIDA: Paul Helton

KANSAS: Seth Kaburungu

KENTUCKY: Jay Haynes

MICHIGAN: Kevin Hester

OHIO: Kareem Smith

TEXAS: Duane Blue

INTERNATIONAL MISSION BOARD

AMERICAN PEOPLES: Ron Jones, Carlos Llambes

CENTRAL ASIAN PEOPLES: AH

EAST ASIAN PEOPLES: Glenda Cook

EUROPEAN PEOPLES: Eric Haney

SOUTHEAST ASIAN PEOPLES: SP

CHAPLAINS • VOLUNTEERS
STATE CONVENTION MISSIONARIES

RETIRED NAMB: Dorette Landes, Alice Martin,
Patricia Morgan

RETIRED IMB: James West

THURSDAY, MARCH 18

PASSAGE: MATTHEW 6:19-24

FOCUS: MATTHEW 6:19-21

We’ll skip down a few verses from yesterday’s passage and see why our giving should be done in secret. Jesus taught that our treasures on earth are meaningless. The world will pass away—all we have in this life will end. The rewards we accumulate for our earthly existence are easily stolen or broken. In reality, these earthly rewards often lose their luster long before they are destroyed because we are fickle and frail humans whose excitement over things fades quickly.

Therefore, if our treasures are stored above, they will have so much more meaning. Our heavenly treasures are an account we have for the good we did here on earth. It’s fun to sit and imagine what they will be like, something we can’t know until we get there. What we do know, though, Jesus made clear in verse 21—our treasures are a great representation of our heart. Pray today thinking through these questions—*What motivates me? What brings me joy? What clues show my heart’s focus?*

Prayer Focus—South Carolina: Andrew Weems is a public safety chaplain serving the Columbia Police Department in Columbia, South Carolina. “Please pray for our officers as they work under tremendous pressure, seeking to serve and protect all without bias. All law enforcement officers are facing growing pressure in an already stressful environment where they put their lives on the line every day. Pray God’s wisdom for all chaplains as they minister and serve these men and women who are called to serve in law enforcement careers.”

PRAY FOR

NORTH AMERICAN MISSION BOARD

- CALIFORNIA:** Masresha Mekonnen
- MINNESOTA:** Thomas Boyer
- MISSOURI:** Mike Whittymore
- MONTANA:** Joe Penberthy
- NEW MEXICO:** Jared Bridge
- PENNSYLVANIA:** Joshua Crans, Wilson Tuero

INTERNATIONAL MISSION BOARD

- AMERICAN PEOPLES:** Karen Dickey, RJ Locklear, LS
- CENTRAL ASIAN PEOPLES:** JC
- EAST ASIAN PEOPLES:** LC, JL, TV
- EUROPEAN PEOPLES:** JB
- NORTHERN AFRICAN AND MIDDLE EASTERN PEOPLES:** SM, JR
- SOUTH ASIAN PEOPLES:** SW
- SOUTHEAST ASIAN PEOPLES:** PP
- SUB-SAHARAN AFRICAN PEOPLES:** Aubrey Curry, LS

CHAPLAINS • VOLUNTEERS

STATE CONVENTION MISSIONARIES

- RETIRED NAMB:** Jim Goodner, Eusebio Manganag, Kathy Miller, Arnold Moon, Herbert Slaughter, June Yi

- RETIRED IMB:** Renee Crane, Bob Evans, Florence Frederick, Paul Phan, Eddie Ray, Mary Jo Stewart, DW, Betty Ann Whitson

FRIDAY, MARCH 19

PASSAGE: MATTHEW 10:40-42
FOCUS: MATTHEW 10:42

In today’s passage, Jesus showed us giving even something small like a cup of cold water can earn us some of those heavenly rewards we talked about yesterday. It’s a truth that got personal for me while living in New York City as the COVID-19 pandemic started. People began to panic rather quickly, and the social media boards ran amok with posts about how to protect ourselves and what we should do if this or that happened. It got rather selfish rather quickly, not even by ill intent but rather out of people’s earthly need for self-preservation. I got overwhelmed and thought, *I cannot get sucked into this kind of thinking. What do I do?*

So I created a simple post and asked my neighbors how I might serve them in this time of need.

It really wasn’t much, and over the months that followed I can count on both hands the number of “good deeds” I did. But I believe these small acts of generosity went a long way for my neighbors. Consider praying today for God to show you opportunities to give a “cup of cold water” to your neighbors, coworkers, or others in your community.

Prayer Focus—Washington: Ankhbayar Jigjid planted Eternal Joy Mongolian Christian Church in Seattle, Washington. “We pray to God we can connect with many Mongolians through Zoom, personal relationships, new outreaches, and friendship. Pray we could disciple new believers. Please also pray for God’s provision.”

PRAY FOR

NORTH AMERICAN MISSION BOARD

- LOUISIANA:** Hunter Forman
- MARYLAND:** Steffan Carr
- MISSISSIPPI:** Brenton Shelby
- NORTH CAROLINA:** Mike McKee
- OHIO:** José Mendoza, Emory O’Bryant
- PENNSYLVANIA:** Michael Wingle

INTERNATIONAL MISSION BOARD

- EAST ASIAN PEOPLES:** Keith Morgan, SS
- EUROPEAN PEOPLES:** Olga Gilbert, Ruthanne McRae
- NORTHERN AFRICAN AND MIDDLE EASTERN PEOPLES:** DH
- SOUTH ASIAN PEOPLES:** JL
- SOUTHEAST ASIAN PEOPLES:** KM
- SUB-SAHARAN AFRICAN PEOPLES:** Hillary Anderson

CHAPLAINS • VOLUNTEERS

STATE CONVENTION MISSIONARIES

- RETIRED NAMB:** Marie Elledge
- RETIRED IMB:** Uless Bergeron, Patsy Davidson, Betty Hardister, Landon Jones, James McPherson, Bob Pemberton, Kaye Rolfe

missionary of the week

SATURDAY, MARCH 20

JUANITA BRAWLEY

AMERICAN PEOPLES

BIRTHDAY: MARCH 20

PASSAGE: LUKE 6:37-45

FOCUS: LUKE 6:37-38

As Juanita Brawley gazed out the window of her home, she looked up to see Mexico’s beautiful mountainside. In past years, she often walked her daughter J’Lee to school, crossing steep hills in the Mexican villages where she and her husband, Jonnie, work to plant churches among indigenous peoples. To make the most of her time between school runs, Juanita began visiting people along the way. This led to new relationships and ministry opportunities that later contributed to a church plant.

Juanita’s journey in missions has brought to life the words of Psalm 121:1 (ESV), “I lift up my eyes to the hills.”

“I would often lift my eyes to those hills and ask for guidance, peace, and joy from the Lord,” Juanita said.

Often, the only available housing in small villages were abandoned homes next to cemeteries, so Juanita and her family lived in a house next to a cemetery in more than one village.

“As I lived so close to the physically dead and was surrounded by those spiritually dead, the urgency of the gospel is so real,” she said. Juanita now lifts her eyes up to the hills with thankfulness for God’s faithfulness and help in bringing the word of life to her neighbors.

Not everyone Juanita encounters is open to the good news of Jesus. Pray for the Lord’s help as the Brawley family works in a new region in Mexico with a history of strong opposition to evangelical Christianity. Pray God would not let their feet be moved as they continue to plant churches. Join in praying for the good news of the gospel to penetrate the hearts of the lost.



PRAY FOR

NORTH AMERICAN MISSION BOARD

- FLORIDA:** Louis Tamburro
- GEORGIA:** Christopher Renfro
- HAWAII:** James Parks
- INDIANA:** Matthew Brewer
- NEW YORK:** Ashley Emmert
- OKLAHOMA:** Drew Cunningham
- OREGON:** Matthew Holdahl

INTERNATIONAL MISSION BOARD

- AMERICAN PEOPLES:** Juanita Brawley
- EAST ASIAN PEOPLES:** JB, AR
- NORTHERN AFRICAN AND MIDDLE EASTERN PEOPLES:** RH, MT
- SOUTH ASIAN PEOPLES:** MC
- SOUTHEAST ASIAN PEOPLES:** EC, JJ, KP
- GLOBAL RESOURCE TEAM:** KB

CHAPLAINS • VOLUNTEERS

- STATE CONVENTION MISSIONARIES**
- RETIRED NAMB:** Abel Becerra, Verna Holmes
- RETIRED IMB:** Richard Cook, Caryn Fenwick, Sam Paris, Glenna Stamps

SUNDAY, MARCH 21

PASSAGE: MATTHEW 25:14-30
FOCUS: MATTHEW 25:29-30

In today’s passage, I see the motivation for living generously. In this parable, Jesus told of a man who left his three servants with a portion of his wealth. Two of the servants used the money to make more money for their master. The third man, out of fear, buried the money so when the master returned, it was the exact same amount as when he left. I might have done the same thing, but as we see, the master assumed his servants would be good stewards of his money. He was pleased with the return on his investments but very unhappy with the man who buried his gold.

All we are given on this earth belongs to God. We are just the visiting stewards of it. Our money, our jobs, our houses, our cars, and our families all belong to God, and His desire is that we would be good stewards of what He has given. With this knowledge, it’s easier to give away our money, our houses, and our families to His good. Pray

God would continually grow your motivation to live generously.

Prayer Focus—American Peoples: After attending a missionary team’s cross-cultural missions class, members of a church in Colombia created a church missions committee. God gave another member an opportunity through her job to serve people in the mountains. Pray for this church as it asks God for opportunities to show His love and gospel to its neighbors, the Arhuaco (ar-WAH-coh) people, in the mountains.

PRAY FOR

NORTH AMERICAN MISSION BOARD

- CALIFORNIA:** Morgan Chambers
- KENTUCKY:** John Morris
- MONTANA:** Mark Pearson
- OHIO:** Shawn Acrey, Jeff Beisel
- OREGON:** Raju Subedi

INTERNATIONAL MISSION BOARD

- EAST ASIAN PEOPLES:** DB, KB, KW, MZ
- NORTHERN AFRICAN AND MIDDLE EASTERN PEOPLES:** AH, MN
- SOUTH ASIAN PEOPLES:** SS
- SOUTHEAST ASIAN PEOPLES:** TC, JM
- SUB-SAHARAN AFRICAN PEOPLES:** Laura Sharpe, Brent Turner

CHAPLAINS • VOLUNTEERS

- STATE CONVENTION MISSIONARIES**
- RETIRED NAMB:** Miguel Soto Ramos
- RETIRED IMB:** MB, Jim Brock, Brenda Caldwell, Kay Harless, Gloria Sloan

MONDAY, MARCH 22

PASSAGE: MARK 6:30-44
FOCUS: MARK 6:34, 37

Jesus’ ministry was full of miracles, and most of our study of this story highlights the amazing miracle of turning five pieces of bread and two fish into a meal for 5,000-plus people. As we look a little deeper, though, we see Jesus and His disciples showed generosity to this crowd through their willingness to feed it. The disciples pointed out to Jesus the crowd was getting hungry. Their solution was to send the people into nearby towns to eat before shops closed. Jesus’ solution was to feed them. Unsure how they’d feed such a crowd, the disciples pushed a little harder, and Jesus took

what they had and multiplied it. Additionally, we see Jesus and His disciples gave of themselves to this group of people. They had clearly had a busy day and were headed to a quiet place for rest. But when they arrived and saw the crowd, they forgot about their need and cared for the people. As you pray today, ask God to show you ways you can serve those around you—even when you are tired, hungry, or down.

Prayer Focus—Central Asian Peoples: The Uighurs (WEE-ghurs) are a primarily Muslim ethnic minority group in Central Asia. One Uighur family has heard the gospel for almost 20 years, and yet the daughters (who have heard it the most) say they cannot accept this message until their father does. Pray for a Uighur church to be planted in their neighborhood of wealthy and very influential people. Pray the men would lead their families to Jesus.

PRAY FOR

NORTH AMERICAN MISSION BOARD

- ALASKA:** Brian Moore
- ARIZONA:** Marcos Campos
- COLORADO:** Cameron Pacheco
- INDIANA:** Jerry Barton
- WISCONSIN:** Riley Pitts

INTERNATIONAL MISSION BOARD

- EAST ASIAN PEOPLES:** JC, GE, SG, SK, DM
- EUROPEAN PEOPLES:** Christian Roth
- NORTHERN AFRICAN AND MIDDLE EASTERN PEOPLES:** OI, AM
- SOUTH ASIAN PEOPLES:** MH, SW

CHAPLAINS • VOLUNTEERS

- STATE CONVENTION MISSIONARIES**
- RETIRED NAMB:** Lillian Bingham, Judith Caudle, Edith Chan, Cynthia Duncan, Nancy Harbeson, Cindy Thomas

TUESDAY, MARCH 23

PASSAGE: LUKE 10:25-37
FOCUS: LUKE 10:33-35

The parable of the good Samaritan makes me take a good look at my heart. A priest and a Levite, both supposed men of God, passed by without offering help. As a Christian leader, it’s easy for me to assume my heart is always in the right place, but without the actions of love and

care for those around me, I would just be going through the motions. I think this is easy for us to do from time to time. Our humanness gets in the way of our godliness, but God desires action. The Samaritan gave of himself. He gave hospitality in caring for this man. Seeing that Samaritans were looked down upon by Jews, he made himself vulnerable in caring for someone who may not have chosen him to help. He gave of his finances by paying the innkeeper to look after the beaten traveler. The answer to Jesus' question is clear. The Samaritan was the only neighbor to this guy, and Jesus' response was, "Go and do likewise" (v. 37). Let's do the same! As you pray today, ask God the hard question of, "When have I been like this priest and the Levite?"

Prayer Focus—Deaf Peoples: One night, June*, a leader of a Deaf church in Southeast Asia, dreamed about two of her friends who had irregularly attended an outreach group for years but never committed. When she woke up, June shared the gospel with them, and both decided to follow Jesus and were later baptized. Praise God! Pray for them as they are disciples.

PRAY FOR
NORTH AMERICAN MISSION BOARD

LOUISIANA: Deanna Corbett
TENNESSEE: Judy Hansard
VIRGINIA: Jada Kennedy

INTERNATIONAL MISSION BOARD

AMERICAN PEOPLES: Ann Boyter, Ronda Massey, Tammy Richardson

CENTRAL ASIAN PEOPLES: JW
NORTHERN AFRICAN AND MIDDLE EASTERN PEOPLES: BB, RM

CHAPLAINS • VOLUNTEERS
STATE CONVENTION MISSIONARIES

RETIRED NAMB: Jimmie Burton
RETIRED IMB: Mattie Lou Bible, Wayne Brinkley, John Brown, Marjorie Dean, Debbie Harrison, DM, Jeri Moore, Wayne Pennell, Robert Shehane

WEDNESDAY, MARCH 24

PASSAGE: JOHN 3:10-16
 FOCUS: JOHN 3:16

In God's great and sacrificial generosity, He gave us His one and

only Son. He gave His Son because He loved the world, and He desired to give us hope for eternal life. We see throughout Jesus' ministry His willingness to lay down His life for His people. At the end of His life, we see His pain and fear as He pleaded with God for another option. But God, in His abundant mercy, gave Jesus to be the only needed sacrifice for our sins. Jesus willingly gave up His life for us. This is truly the greatest gift the world has ever received. It is, therefore, the greatest gift we can share. The world around us is suffering great brokenness.

The gift we have in the gospel is the solution to all brokenness. If we truly want to live generous lives, our desire will be to share this message of hope with the world around us. If you give nothing else, then give this gift to those in your life—the gift of the spoken gospel as a hope to those in need. Pray today for the boldness to share the story of Christ with a friend God places on your heart.

Prayer Focus—East Asian Peoples: Only 0.34 percent of Taiwan's 4.6 million Hakka know Jesus. Central Taiwan is home to nearly half of these 4.6 million Hakka. Most Hakka believers are the first and only believers in their families. Pray God would lead more churches in Central Taiwan to reach whole Hakka families with Christ's love. Pray all barriers to the gospel would come down.

PRAY FOR
NORTH AMERICAN MISSION BOARD

ALABAMA: Matthew Scott
CALIFORNIA: Paul Persi
KENTUCKY: Pavel Urruchi
NORTH CAROLINA: Robert Wallace
OREGON: Jeremy Cook
TEXAS: Chris Pugh

INTERNATIONAL MISSION BOARD

AMERICAN PEOPLES: Tim Louderback, Heather Tolbert
CENTRAL ASIAN PEOPLES: CL, EN, SS
EAST ASIAN PEOPLES: DG, JH, RY
EUROPEAN PEOPLES: RW
NORTHERN AFRICAN AND MIDDLE EASTERN PEOPLES: MB, CM, JM, HR

SOUTH ASIAN PEOPLES: AB, CR
SOUTHEAST ASIAN PEOPLES: JC, CG, DH
CHAPLAINS • VOLUNTEERS
STATE CONVENTION MISSIONARIES
RETIRED NAMB: Bob Beike, Loredana Haeger, Cary Hanks, David McKenzie, Flor Morales
RETIRED IMB: Clive Buttemere, Marty Childers, Steve Ditmire, Betty Gabriel, Ann Hartley, Marcia Hayes, James Humphries, Garlinda Hyde

THURSDAY, MARCH 25

PASSAGE: PSALM 112:1-10
 FOCUS: PSALM 112:5, 9

As we wrap up this month's devotion on living generously, we'll look at more passages that encourage us to live for others and give of ourselves. We must see the importance of this call from God because of its presence all over Scripture. In this psalm, the writer shows us the difference between the righteous and the unrighteous. We see "it is well" with the righteous. They don't have to fear, because their hope is in God, and their riches are in Him. They give freely of what they have, and they don't have to worry about getting bad news, because they know God will take care of them. They follow God's commands. They are gracious and compassionate. They are generous and lend freely. They love justice. They trust in the Lord. They give gifts to the poor. This is the way people live when they know their reward is in heaven and the goal of their life is to know God and share His love with others. Pray God would help you live as someone who can't be shaken, someone who knows her life and possessions belong to the Lord.

Prayer Focus—European Peoples: During a recent outreach event, believers encountered two men of different generations in the Rhine, Ruhr, main river areas of Germany, who have embraced New Age spiritual philosophies. The believers shared their testimonies and the gospel,

bringing one of the men to tears. Pray Germans would seek God with all their hearts until they find the truth that sets people free.

PRAY FOR

NORTH AMERICAN MISSION BOARD

- MARYLAND:** Sean Nolan
- NEVADA:** Jonathan Fountain
- OHIO:** Thomas Bevers
- OREGON:** Colin Luoma
- TENNESSEE:** William Levengood

INTERNATIONAL MISSION BOARD

- AMERICAN PEOPLES:** TE
- CENTRAL ASIAN PEOPLES:** JH, AS
- EAST ASIAN PEOPLES:** Whitney Jackson
- EUROPEAN PEOPLES:** AM
- NORTHERN AFRICAN AND MIDDLE EASTERN PEOPLES:** DH, CP, AS
- SUB-SAHARAN AFRICAN PEOPLES:** EB, Fay Cannady, Laura Pettigrew, MS

CHAPLAINS • VOLUNTEERS

STATE CONVENTION MISSIONARIES

- RETIRED NAMB:** John Reed
- RETIRED IMB:** Richard Bartels, Ann Berkley, Elaine Hancock, Mark Patenaude

FRIDAY, MARCH 26

PASSAGE: PROVERBS 11:23-29
FOCUS: PROVERBS 11:25

Have you ever gone to a movie based on the recommendation of friends, who talked it up as the best movie of all time? They sat and recounted—no spoilers, of course—their favorite things about it, describing scenes and characters until you could see it playing out in front of you. Then you went to see the movie. This conversation with your friend defined your experience. Whether it ruined it for you or helped you understand the greatness of the story, your experience was defined by another's experience.

Proverbs often does a great job of showing us cause and effect. If you hoard grain, people will curse you. If you seek good, then you will find it. Just like your movie experience, generosity has the power to define our life experience. It seems counterintuitive, but giving leads to happier and healthier life

experiences. Ask God to remind you of ways your giving has led to a happier and healthier life.

Prayer Focus—Northern African and Middle Eastern Peoples: Abdu*, a member of the Tuareg (TWAR-eg) people of the Sahara Desert, reached out again to his believing friend for help. He wants to leave his war-torn homeland. Abdu and many others like him want to be free, but they chase after things of this world that can't give them true freedom. Pray Abdu and those like him searching for freedom would find true freedom in knowing Jesus.

PRAY FOR

NORTH AMERICAN MISSION BOARD

- ARIZONA:** Andrew Bailey
- CALIFORNIA:** Jili Yang

- COLORADO:** Kenneth Slack
- KANSAS:** Jeffrey Rains
- NEW YORK:** Eric Hoke
- PUERTO RICO:** Xavier Torrado
- TEXAS:** Jonathan Baek, Jacqueline Osbourne
- NOVA SCOTIA:** Hugh Morrison
- INTERNATIONAL MISSION BOARD**
- CENTRAL ASIAN PEOPLES:** JG, BH, DH, AR
- EAST ASIAN PEOPLES:** DB
- EUROPEAN PEOPLES:** Susan McCrary, Stephen Park
- NORTHERN AFRICAN AND MIDDLE EASTERN PEOPLES:** KW
- SOUTH ASIAN PEOPLES:** SA
- SOUTHEAST ASIAN PEOPLES:** JL, Jill Owens
- SUB-SAHARAN AFRICAN PEOPLES:** Deron Meilstrup
- CHAPLAINS • VOLUNTEERS**
- STATE CONVENTION MISSIONARIES**
- RETIRED IMB:** DB, Pam Brannen, Bobbie Caperton, Carlene Cobb, Greg Idell, CM, SM, Mary Witt

missionary of the week

SATURDAY, MARCH 27

ERIC GIBBS
35105 W. CUDIA RD.
STANFIELD, AZ 85172
BIRTHDAY: MARCH 27

PASSAGE: PSALM 41:1-3
FOCUS: PSALM 41:1

The Tohono O'odham Nation in southern Arizona is the second largest Native American reservation in the United States at about 2.8 million acres and 75 villages. Yet there are only three Southern Baptist churches on the reservation, including one in the village of Cockleburr planted by Eric Gibbs.

"We had served, taught, and shared three years in Cockleburr without seeing anyone come to Christ," said Eric, a Southern Baptist church planter. "One Saturday in 2014, one woman gave her life to Christ. Her then-boyfriend, now husband, came to Christ a short while later, and then he led his brother and sister to Christ.

"In one year, we were able to baptize more than 20 people. The next year Cockleburr Ethne' Church was born!"

Eric said there are many strongholds among the people to whom he ministers.

"Many people struggle with alcohol and drug addiction," he said. "There are traditional beliefs woven in the fabric of the culture that often make it difficult for people to come to Christ. There is a great deal of spiritual darkness in many of the villages that have never had a consistent gospel presence."

Pray God would raise up O'odham people who would love Him, serve Him, and reach people from within their culture with the gospel. Pray, too, God would give Eric and members of Cockleburr Ethne' favor on the reservation.



PRAY FOR

NORTH AMERICAN MISSION BOARD

ARIZONA: Eric Gibbs

COLORADO: Joshua Story

KANSAS: Gobar Biswa

KENTUCKY: Kevin Henderson

MASSACHUSETTS: Morgan Proudfoot

NORTH CAROLINA: Nguaya-Gonosu Batsuli

SOUTH CAROLINA: Lidia Navarrete

INTERNATIONAL MISSION BOARD

AMERICAN PEOPLES: Amy Fisher, Scott Pittman, Jeff Thomas

CENTRAL ASIAN PEOPLES: MH

DEAF PEOPLES: SF

EAST ASIAN PEOPLES: TB, EH

EUROPEAN PEOPLES: SG

SOUTHEAST ASIAN PEOPLES: MC, TF

CHAPLAINS • VOLUNTEERS

STATE CONVENTION MISSIONARIES

RETIRED NAMB: Robin Kicklighter, Gerald Lawton, Carolyn Reed

RETIRED IMB: Stanley Foskett, Kyu Hwang, Laverne Rummage, Ann Tidenberg

SUNDAY, MARCH 28

PASSAGE: JOHN 6:1-13

FOCUS: JOHN 6:9-10

Last week we looked at Mark's account of the feeding of the 5,000 and how the disciples and Jesus showed generosity. This week, let's look at John's account of this story, because he gives us a look at someone else's generosity. From the other Gospel accounts, it could appear one of the disciples was carrying this lunch, but what we learn here is the five loaves and two fish came from a boy. Although we do not know much about this little boy, we know he showed up with his lunch where Jesus was. His mom probably packed it for him and expected he'd eat it alone somewhere along his way. But Jesus had other plans. This little guy gave generously and watched God do big things. This is a cool lesson for us. We just need to be generous, sit back, and let the Lord do the rest. We aren't the ones performing miracles. We can simply give, and God can do something mighty. In your time of prayer today, ask God to help you see

when you are trying to play His role of miracle worker instead of your role as giver.

Prayer Focus—South Asian Peoples: Recently two believers were arrested and jailed by the secret police. The local church prayed for their release. Before the men were released, police warned them to stop sharing the gospel, but they won't stop. Pray God would protect believers, His Word would keep spreading like wildfire, and those who are persecuting believers would come to faith.

PRAY FOR

NORTH AMERICAN MISSION BOARD

CALIFORNIA: Daniel Huskey

GEORGIA: Ethan Seifried

NEVADA: Jeremiah Nzuna

TENNESSEE: Michael Horner

INTERNATIONAL MISSION BOARD

CENTRAL ASIAN PEOPLES: SW

EAST ASIAN PEOPLES: YI, RP, TW, SY

EUROPEAN PEOPLES: Justin Ham, Kevin Peacock

NORTHERN AFRICAN AND MIDDLE EASTERN

PEOPLES: AB, CB, WN

SOUTH ASIAN PEOPLES: BC

GLOBAL RESOURCE TEAM: DS

CHAPLAINS • VOLUNTEERS

STATE CONVENTION MISSIONARIES

RETIRED NAMB: Jack Sappenfield

RETIRED IMB: Jerry Bedsole, Julian Coleman

MONDAY, MARCH 29

PASSAGE: ACTS 9:36-43

FOCUS: ACTS 9:39

Our generosity has an impact on others. This is a great lesson because it may not always be obvious. Dorcas (or your translation may say Tabitha) is described as someone who was always doing good. Others might have thanked her every now and then, and she was probably well-liked because of her good deeds. She might not have been aware of how much she meant to her friends and family, but in her death, they mourned. The widows of her community stood around her, mourning, showing off the work she did to provide for them. She was needed in her community, and Peter was able to use the power of the Lord

to bring her back to those who loved her. This was not because it was better for her on earth, but because it was better for her community to still have her for a little while longer. Her status in the community also helped spread this miraculous news, which led to many coming to know Jesus. So, whether you see it or not, your generosity does impact the people around you. Pray today asking God to show you a true picture of who others see you to be.

Prayer Focus—Southeast Asian Peoples: For years, a Burmese believer, Sara*, in Yangon (yan-GONG), Myanmar, participated in ministry outreach through her church. Recently God led her to move to Crossroads Village, where there are 100 homes full of people who need Jesus, to share the gospel. Several have expressed interest in hearing more about Jesus. Ask God to strengthen Sara. Pray many villagers would trust in Him.

PRAY FOR

NORTH AMERICAN MISSION BOARD

MASSACHUSETTS: Joshua Adams

NEVADA: Thomas Finch

TENNESSEE: Zach Medlock

TEXAS: Robert Birkhead

UTAH: Bryan Catherman

INTERNATIONAL MISSION BOARD

AMERICAN PEOPLES: Patrick Regalado, Pascal Stowell

CENTRAL ASIAN PEOPLES: MB, RH, KP

EAST ASIAN PEOPLES: David Weng

EUROPEAN PEOPLES: Hannah Rooks

NORTHERN AFRICAN AND MIDDLE EASTERN

PEOPLES: JS

SOUTH ASIAN PEOPLES: LC

CHAPLAINS • VOLUNTEERS

STATE CONVENTION MISSIONARIES

RETIRED NAMB: Judy Kim

RETIRED IMB: Harold Johnson, Mary Johnson, MM, Mike Masters, Dee Oliver

TUESDAY, MARCH 30

PASSAGE: 2 CORINTHIANS 9:6-13

FOCUS: 2 CORINTHIANS 9:7

I'm going to be vulnerable with you for a moment. I struggle sowing generously and giving cheerfully with my whole heart. It's a struggle not because I am selfish and want

to hoard all my stuff and my life, but it's a struggle because of fear. As much as my head knows God will bless and will work all things to my good, sometimes my heart is reminded of the times I've given and been rejected or the times I've given, and people just keep taking. For me, this is mostly a struggle with how I give of my time. I'm overly careful to guard myself so others won't take advantage of me. But this is not what Scripture teaches.

Day after day this month we have seen God's favor poured out and promised to us. So even though past experience can tell me something about the world, it can't change God's promise to me. He will bless generosity even while the world tries to stomp on it. Be vulnerable today, and admit to God where and why you are holding back on living generously.

Prayer Focus—All Missionaries: Learning a new language is difficult for most people, but it is essential in most fields of service. Pray God would open the missionary's mind to learning, cause his or her to hear the sounds, and give the ability to laugh at one's mistakes.

PRAY FOR
NORTH AMERICAN MISSION BOARD

- CONNECTICUT:** George Lim
- ILLINOIS:** Paul Cartwright
- KANSAS:** Carroll Carter
- KENTUCKY:** Travis Vaughan
- MISSISSIPPI:** Steven Gee
- MONTANA:** Kelly Mitchell
- PENNSYLVANIA:** Brian Dobak
- TEXAS:** Peggy Davenport
- BRITISH COLUMBIA:** Suzanne Perry
- INTERNATIONAL MISSION BOARD**
- CENTRAL ASIAN PEOPLES:** CD, CH
- EAST ASIAN PEOPLES:** Lori Loomis, RW
- EUROPEAN PEOPLES:** AC, Lori Upchurch, Denise Wood
- SOUTHEAST ASIAN PEOPLES:** SS, GT
- CHAPLAINS • VOLUNTEERS**
- STATE CONVENTION MISSIONARIES**
- RETIRED NAMB:** Kenneth Holland
- RETIRED IMB:** Connie Andrews, Russ Bare, Bob Couts, Ray Eitelman, Charles Swanner

WEDNESDAY, MARCH 31

PASSAGE: GALATIANS 6:1-10
FOCUS: GALATIANS 6:2, 10

What a joy it has been this month to share with you from my heart what God has shown me about living a relentlessly generous life. My prayer is we would do better at living a life of giving of ourselves, our time, and our resources to those around us so they would know the joy and hope God has provided us. In this, we are to carry each other's burdens, whether that is giving sacrificially as a family or working together with a community of believers to do so. We should also do good to all people, especially our brothers and sisters in Christ, those down the street and around the world. We are a part of a great movement of God connected through missions. Let's find any way possible to continue this great tradition of giving so all will know the love of Christ. As we wrap up this month, reflect on what God has taught you. Ask God to help you live relentlessly a generous life.

Prayer Focus—In Your Church: Ask God to give your church a heart for your nation. Connect with a North American Mission Board missionary and covet to be a prayer partner.

PRAY FOR
NORTH AMERICAN MISSION BOARD

- COLORADO:** Gabe Reed
- IDAHO:** Juan Cuevas
- OKLAHOMA:** Cody Deever
- INTERNATIONAL MISSION BOARD**
- CENTRAL ASIAN PEOPLES:** JH
- EAST ASIAN PEOPLES:** AC
- NORTHERN AFRICAN AND MIDDLE EASTERN PEOPLES:** GH, AT
- SOUTH ASIAN PEOPLES:** BB
- SOUTHEAST ASIAN PEOPLES:** EB, RG, ET, JT
- SUB-SAHARAN AFRICAN PEOPLES:** Barbara Singerman
- CHAPLAINS • VOLUNTEERS**
- STATE CONVENTION MISSIONARIES**
- RETIRED NAMB:** Donn Broecker, Beula Roamer, Bill Spencer
- RETIRED IMB:** Terry Adams, Kala Baillio, John Robinson

**Name changed.*

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.....
CHRISTY DYER-GULTOM is a NAMB church planting missionary in New York City who loves connecting with each of you through Prayer Patterns.

Prayer Calendar Information

Southern Baptist missionaries and their spouses who are serving for more than two years are listed on their birthdays.

- **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.
 - **NATIONAL MISSIONARIES** serve in roles related to developing strategy and providing training and support to other NAMB-endorsed missionaries.
- 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.

EAGER for Easter

PREPARE NOW FOR HOLY WEEK.

BY LAURA MACFARLAN

When I say *Easter*, do you say *bunny*? For Christian families, preparation for Holy Week must be more than filling baskets with chocolate, dying eggs, and buying new outfits for the children.

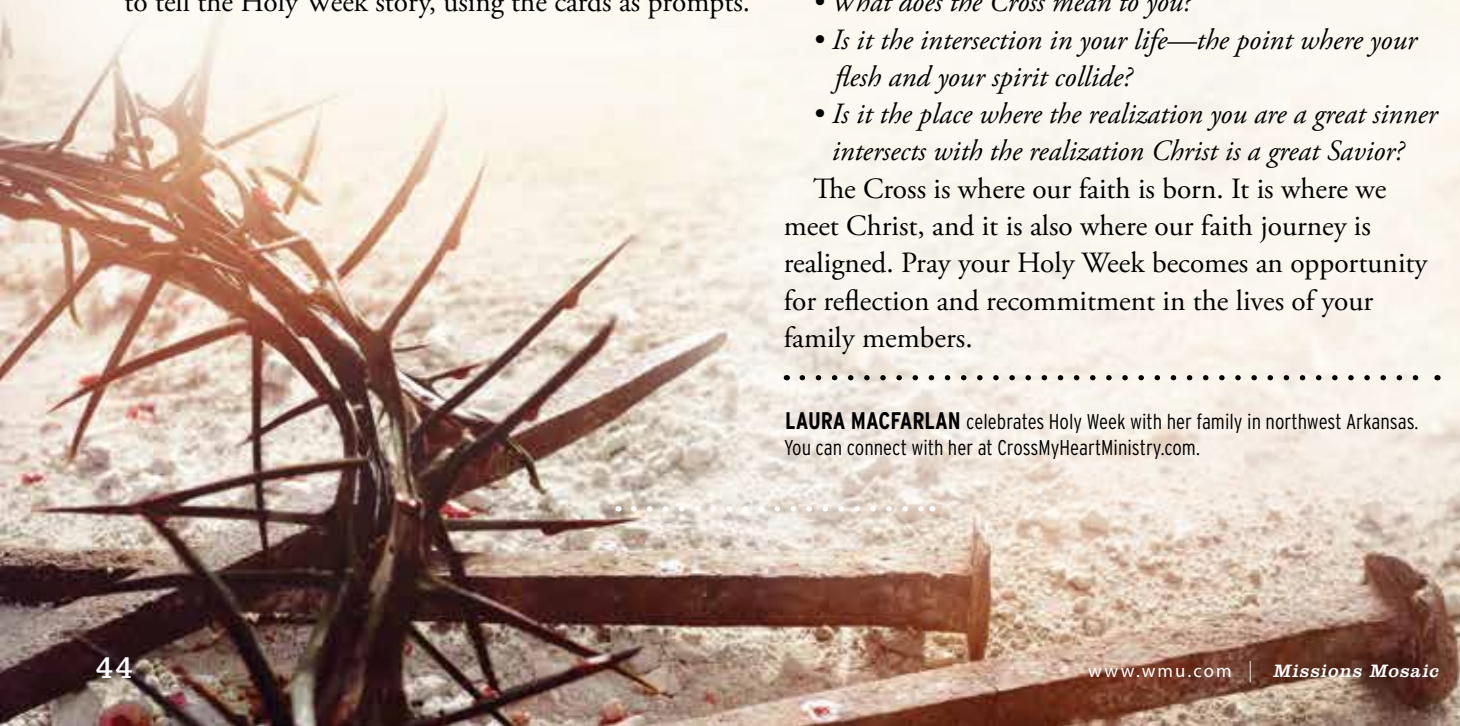
Easter is the celebration of our living Savior. Our eternal hope hinges on its reality. Pray for guidance, and prepare now to create memorable Holy Week traditions your children will treasure. Here are a few ideas:

1. Keep your Easter week schedule open. Give yourself permission to cancel a few commitments and even miss piano lessons or other after-school activities. These choices show your children how special Holy Week is.
2. Eat dinner together every day. Read Holy Week passages from the Gospels, beginning with the triumphal entry of Jesus into Jerusalem. If your children are young, consider using a children's Bible storybook.
3. Choose two or three Bible verses each evening. Write these on two 4-by-6 cards. Draw a picture (palm leaf, stone, silver coin, etc.) on each card to help younger children identify the verse. Turn cards facedown, and play a matching game. At week's end, work together to arrange the cards chronologically. Encourage children to tell the Holy Week story, using the cards as prompts.

4. Challenge older children to find Old Testament verses that prophesy about Holy Week.
5. Choose a passage to memorize together as a family. Write it on a small chalkboard or marker board, and display it during Easter.
6. Host a Saturday evening movie night to watch the Easter classic "Ben Hur." Serve popcorn and root beer floats. Take time to discuss the movie.
7. Keep Easter lunch focused on Christ. Choose Scripture verses that follow Jesus through Holy Week, write them on slips of paper, and place inside plastic Easter eggs. During lunch, ask each family member to select one egg and read the verse inside. Use the verses strategically to answer questions your children may have.
8. Display a tabletop cross. Discuss the design of the cross—two intersecting beams. Ask older children and teens to share ideas of what intersection could symbolize. Examples: God's love and God's justice. Time and eternity. Flesh and Spirit. Sin and sacrifice. Say, *At the Cross, we see the tension—God's love constrained by His justice . . . and His justice constrained by His love. They come to a point of intersection at the Cross and in the Person of Jesus Christ. Ask:*
 - *What does the Cross mean to you?*
 - *Is it the intersection in your life—the point where your flesh and your spirit collide?*
 - *Is it the place where the realization you are a great sinner intersects with the realization Christ is a great Savior?*

The Cross is where our faith is born. It is where we meet Christ, and it is also where our faith journey is realigned. Pray your Holy Week becomes an opportunity for reflection and recommitment in the lives of your family members.

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LAURA MACFARLAN celebrates Holy Week with her family in northwest Arkansas. You can connect with her at CrossMyHeartMinistry.com.
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A FAMILIAR STORY

MINISTERING TO FAMILIES IMPACTED BY ADDICTION

BY LACI POST

SUBSTANCE ABUSE PREVENTION
SUNDAY IS MARCH 21.



Everyone had a familiar story. They were meeting for a church prayer group, and they each had a prayer request surrounding addiction in the family. Sarah's mother is an alcoholic whose addiction broke apart their family and often led to Sarah being neglected as a child. Leslie's son is a heroin addict, constantly in and out of jail and unable to help support his daughter. Allison's brother is an addict who lives with their mother, taking advantage of her home, car, and income. Camille's brother-in-law is an alcoholic, cannot keep a job, is unable to provide consistent care for his young son, and has caused divisions within the family.

THE NUMBERS

With the 2018 National Survey on Drug Use and Health estimating that 19.7 million people over the age of 12 in the United States battled a substance use disorder in 2017, almost no family is immune. Add to this the growing opioid epidemic, and it is even more prevalent. The National Institute on Drug Abuse reports about 21 to 29 percent of people who are prescribed opioids for chronic pain misuse them, and about 128 people die in the United States every day from opioid overdoses. Moreover, according to *Psychology Today*, one out of every five children grows up in a home where a parent is an addict. The repercussions of addiction on the family are immense.

THE EFFECTS

Having a family member with an addiction has long-term and short-term effects on children, parents, grandparents, husbands, wives, and siblings. Communication between

family members becomes difficult. Trust deteriorates. Marriages end. Jobs are lost. Financial strain is created. Perhaps the saddest outcome is children of an addict are three times more likely to be neglected or abused (Addiction Center). These children can also suffer from learning and developmental delays, emotional distress, and the tendency to repeat patterns of substance abuse.

THE CHURCH

Families impacted by addiction need the church. The first thing the church can provide is a place of support, encouragement, and restoration. Those struggling with addiction in the family often experience shame and heartache. They need loving people to listen and empathize with them. Prayer groups, small groups, and Sunday School classes where people can honestly and openly share their burdens and request prayer provide emotional relief.

The church can also provide specialized services. Churches can offer a Christ-centered recovery group or lead families to groups at other churches in their area.

Lastly, the church can address individual needs caused by addiction in the home. Is there a single mother who cannot afford her bills because of an absent father's addiction? Is there a child of an addict who needs someone to spend time with him or her? Is there a parent struggling with a son's or daughter's addiction who needs someone to talk to?

Addiction in the family is a familiar story in every community. Many families need the church to provide a place of support, specialized services, and individual care. How can you and your church help these families?

LACI POST writes articles and historical fiction from Dallas, Georgia. She is also a writer for Ascensa Health, a provider of addiction treatment services to homeless and low-income communities.

WHEN THINGS ARE DIFFERENT

WMU'S VISION FUND HELPS MISSIONARY KIDS REENTER LIFE OFF THE FIELD WELL.

BY GRACE THORNTON

Every day at lunch, Becky Courson gathers the children she teaches and gives them a sample of food they've never had before to try. She said, "Their goal is to try it without letting me know they don't like it and then say, "Thank you for letting me try that."

Becky's calling these days at the International Mission Board's training center is to prepare the children of future missionaries to become TCKs, or third-culture kids, who thrive in the call God has placed on their families. "One of the basic things we teach kids is that different isn't necessarily bad, just different," she said.

They need the skills to be able to evaluate whether the "different" they are experiencing is just "different," or if "different" is something that isn't appropriate for a child of God. The latter happens less often with food and more often with topics like behavior and beliefs. "We talk about different religions—some of the basics, like what god they worship or who their leader is," Becky said. "Then we talk about how other religions might teach you to be kind, and that's a good thing. But they may also teach you to worship another god, and that kind of different we can't accept."

Becky knows what it's like to sort through this kind of adjustment—she and her husband, Jim, spent 17 years on the missions field in Taiwan, raised their children there, and helped with TCK education for the region. She got

to Taiwan in large part because of WMU, she said—she's convinced it was the women's prayers and influence in her and Jim's lives that reshaped their hearts to follow God to Taiwan.

The fact Becky has been there comforts parents who are concerned about their children adjusting to life in an unfamiliar culture, both on the way overseas and on the way back. She says the MK (missionary kid) Reentry Retreat for college freshmen—sponsored each year by a different state's WMU and with money from the Vision Fund—teaches them how to get ready for "different" again.

"Many have been in very remote areas," Becky said. "It helps so much for them to come back and go to the retreat and be a part of a group who are likeminded in that they see the world differently than a lot of typical Americans do. Yet again, in college they have to face the idea that 'different' is not always bad, but sometimes it is, and how do I make that judgment call?"

The retreat can help them get ready for that, and Becky said she's thankful for the support that makes it happen. "WMU has done a really good job of providing that for them," she concluded.

To help keep that going for future TCKs returning from the field and navigating life in the US, give to the Vision Fund at wmufoundation.com/vision.

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GRACE THORNTON is a freelance writer living in Birmingham, Alabama.



LIVE *Generously*

BY LINDA CLARK

GIVE YOUR TIME, ABILITIES, AND FINANCES.

Years ago, a group from my church formed a Baptist Young Women group and asked Cate to be our Bible study leader. What began as a monthly gathering morphed into increasing our time together to three out of four weeks of the month. Because of her teaching, we became on fire for missions! Only two of us had ever been involved in missions before, so everything was new. Cate was perfect for our fledgling group, even though she'd been retired from teaching longer than any of us had been alive. We welcomed her gentle ways and thoughtful guidance as she helped us navigate our new missions world.

As we came to our first season of prayer for missions, Cate showed us how to set an offering goal, and she gave the first amount. When we decided to do a food ministry, she started the project with money to launch it. Although financially she was on a limited retirement income, she was generous. She modeled for us what it means to live

generously, giving her time, abilities, and finances. She influenced us to live generously, even though we were young mothers with limited resources and time.

Cate had learned in her walk with God that she could live generously because her Savior had given her His example as the standard for life. The articles in this month's issue of *Missions Mosaic* have been written with this theme in mind. Pay close attention to the Bible Study and the This Month's Spotlight articles to gain a better understanding of how God calls us to sacrifice for Him as Hebrews 13:16 (CEV) says: "But don't forget to help others and to share your possessions with them. This too is like offering a sacrifice that pleases God."

As you engage in ministry and share Christ with family, friends, neighbors, and strangers, realize the way you live speaks volumes about your faith in God. Just as Cate did, you must live your life generously, regardless of your financial status or your circumstances.

Scripture quotations marked (CEV) are from the Contemporary English Version Copyright © 1991, 1992, 1995 by American Bible Society. Used by Permission.

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LINDA CLARK is president of Indiana WMU and adult lead strategist for national WMU.



on the *journey*



Sandy

Sandy Wisdom-Martin
executive director/treasurer
WMU

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**FATHER, I PRAY FOR MISSIONARIES
AND OTHERS TODAY WHO MAY BE
STRUGGLING WITH DEPRESSION,
POST-TRAUMATIC STRESS DISORDER,
ANXIETY, OR ANOTHER MENTAL ILLNESS.
GRANT PATIENCE AND STRENGTH TO
THOSE SUFFERING AS WELL AS THEIR
FAMILIES. MAY THEY FIND FAVOR IN
YOUR EYES. IN JESUS' NAME, AMEN**

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Used by God

The obituary read: *Lindsay Cobb, 57, passed away suddenly on December 4, 2009. Founding member of Uptown Baptist Church, Language Missionary on Church Planting Team for Chicago Metro Baptist Association and Illinois Baptist State Association. Lindsay was responsible for planting over 30 ethnic language churches in the Chicago area and sponsored over 100 refugees from around the world.*

Lindsay was not the first North American Mission Board missionary I ever met, but he was one of the first I grew to love and appreciate. Traveling to Chicago to participate in missions teams serving at Uptown Baptist Church was a highlight of my young adult years. Lindsay was one God used to teach me to love the peoples of the world. Sometimes you would have to lean in closely to hear what he was saying. He had a quiet manner and a humble spirit. His stories of lives transformed captivated me. On any program where Lindsay spoke, I listened intently.

Yet even after decades of being around Lindsay, there was a secret I did not know. Lindsay suffered with mental illness. Lindsay left his wife. He became homeless and lived in his car. Lindsay's lifelong battle ended when he took his own life. I remember thinking at the funeral, *How did we not know?* The answer is simple. We did not know because Lindsay was a master at deceiving himself as well as disguising his disease and pain.

In a September 2020 article for *The Alabama Baptist*, Tracy Riggs wrote: "The statistics are troubling: According to the National Institutes of Mental Health, nearly one in five adults in the United States lives with some type of mental illness and less than half of those receive help. Applied across a church congregation of 250 members, the statistics suggest that as many as 50 people in the congregation are living with a diagnosable mental illness." These can include disorders in the categories of mood, eating, trauma, substance abuse, personality, anxiety, and psychotic.

Beloved missionaries are not immune to mental illness. As you participate in the Week of Prayer for North American Missions, pray for the health of those who serve. Pray also our missionaries would have wisdom and discernment as they encounter people who are struggling. Ask God to give them courage to talk openly and honestly as well as seek help for themselves or those they shepherd.

The sum of Lindsay's life cannot be measured solely by his mental illness. He was a man God used to share His love with those most marginalized. I am grateful for his positive influence on many families that will be felt for generations.



ON THE JOURNEY

Conversations

Join Sandy Wisdom-Martin and guests for *On the Journey Conversations* to hear engaging conversations that will inspire you to go deeper in your Christian faith walk.

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WMU FOUNDATION

Casting a Vision

The Vision Fund supports the ministry of WMU, which began over 130 years ago in the hearts of visionary leaders to pray and systematically raise money for missions.

Today, WMU continues to champion praying and giving to support Southern Baptist missions, as well as learning about missions, doing missions, and telling about Jesus.

WMU seeks to make disciples of Jesus who live on mission through missions discipleship, leadership development, and compassion ministries.

When you give to the Vision Fund, you are helping move the ministry of WMU forward. Visit wmufoundation.com/vision to give a one-time or monthly gift today!

Find your missions passion.

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