

April 2025

MISSIONS



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Bible Study Thrives

North Macedonia
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France
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THINKING IT THROUGH

BY ERIC BARTON

Sweet Smelling Offerings

At the end of King David's 40-year reign, the nation of Israel was tasked with building a house for the Lord God. Describing this temple, David said it must be "exceedingly magnificent, famous, and glorious throughout all countries." (1 Chronicles 22:5) Because David recognized this would be no small task, he zealously made abundant preparations before his death. He not only assembled much of the materials but also recruited the skilled labor necessary to build a house worthy of the Lord's name. Following David's godly leadership and example of generosity, the children of Israel responded with like liberal giving. What followed is one of the most wonderful displays of unity, generosity, and devotion in Scripture.

Offered their possessions

Out of love for and devotion to his God, David led by example in his giving (1 Chronicles 29:2–3). Scripture says he collected the temple's materials with all his might. Furthermore, David gave over and above all that he had prepared: he dedicated gold and silver from something he called his "own special treasure."

Responding equally, the children of Israel offered from all they possessed. Whoever owned something useful for building the temple donated to the cause (vv. 6–8). This spirit of generosity was a source of great joy for King David and all Israel. Why? Because they had offered of their own free will, with hearts wholly devoted to their God (v. 9).

Offered themselves

The second thing the people generously offered was their hearts, souls, minds, and strength. Scripture describes the people of God as having loyal hearts. It also speaks of their willing minds; that is, they were fully engaged and committed to the task at hand. They expressed no reluctance but were prepared to give their very best. Their willingness was more than good intentions; they acted on it and offered the strength of their hands to build the temple. Unsurprisingly, these are the very attributes King David exhorted his brethren and his son Solomon to possess: a loyal heart, a willing mind, a seeking soul, and a body ready to serve with all its might (1 Chronicles 22:19; 28:8–10; 29:2).

Offered their praise

The third offering God's people made was praise and worship as their hearts overflowed with joy and gratitude. King David began with the fruit of his lips, declaring, "Blessed are You, Lord God of Israel, our Father, forever and ever. Yours, O Lord, is the greatness, the power and the glory, the victory and the majesty." (1 Chronicles 29:10–11) Afterward, the people "prostrated themselves before the Lord," offered sacrifices of praise, and made burnt offerings in abundance (vv. 20–21). Altogether, it was a unified act of worship worthy of the One who dwells in eternity, with heaven as His throne and earth His footstool.

The sacrifices of today

Today, the Most High is building something far more precious than "temples made with hands." (Acts 7:48) In this dispensation of grace, our God is building a new creation, His church, where in His Spirit may dwell (1 Corinthians 3:16). And that church comprises individuals from every tribe, tongue, people, and nation—each one bought with the precious blood of Christ. Together, we have been transformed into living stones. Our Savior is using us, as living stones, to build a spiritual house, a holy priesthood tasked with offering up spiritual sacrifices to our God by Jesus Christ (1 Peter 2:4–5).

Interestingly, the spiritual sacrifices of the New Testament are identical to those offered in David's day: our possessions, our person, and our praise (Hebrews 13:15–16; Romans 12:1). And, since our Savior is "the same yesterday, today, and forever," He remains worthy of the same love and devotion Israel showed (Hebrews 13:8).

Oh, that God would mold us into another generation of grateful children possessing loyal hearts, willing minds, seeking souls, and generous hands that serve with all their might. And, having offered our spiritual sacrifices to Him, may we then turn our attention to our fellow man, proclaiming "the praises of Him who called [us] out of darkness into His marvelous light." (1 Peter 2:9) In doing so, the church will be a temple exceedingly magnificent, famous, and glorious throughout all countries, such that all men are drawn to the one true Living Stone. ■

Eric Barton is a CMML director.

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COVER PHOTO: Alejandro Chavez and daughter Pamela distribute Gospels of John in Eugene, OR—Photo by Adriana Chavez



A Journey of Faith

Ministering to Oregon's Hispanic Community

BY ALEJANDRO CHAVEZ



In 1987, I came to believe in Jesus Christ as my only Savior. In the city of Irapuato, Guanajuato, Mexico, God used several missionaries with CMML, most prominently Bard and Pam Pillette's family (*Missionary Prayer Handbook* Day 30), to lead me to Him. Shortly thereafter, I married Adriana, who had come to know the Lord around the same time I had. God blessed us with two beautiful daughters, and during a family vacation about 14 years later, we visited the Pillettes in Oregon, where they had moved to serve the Lord cross culturally. That experience transformed the course of our lives.

As we witnessed the Pillette family's testimony and experienced the love with which they ministered to the Hispanic community, God placed in Adriana's heart and mine the desire to dedicate our lives to the same work. Upon returning to Mexico, we began praying for this new direction. Six months later, we received an invitation from the Pillettes to join their ministry in Oregon and serve the Hispanic community alongside them.

In 2002, I resigned from my job as a financial adviser, and fully trusting in God's calling, I attended Emmaus Bible College in Iowa for one year, which was a privilege. This time was crucial for deepening and strengthening my biblical knowledge and preparing me for the ministry God had called my family to.

In 2003, we arrived in Oregon, specifically in the city of Medford. Our purpose was to collaborate with the Pillette family in a missionary work focused on the Hispanic community.

Oregon is home to many ethnic communities, including Chinese, Indian, Mexican, Filipino, and Vietnamese. The Hispanic community, however, is the largest. Since our arrival, it has expanded. Between 2003 and 2013, Hispanics grew from 9 to 12 percent of the state's population, with many working in agriculture and construction.¹ By 2020, they represented 13.9 percent, with second- and third-generation families becoming more integrated into society.² Current estimates place the Hispanic population at 14 percent, with cities like Eugene having

seen notable growth.³ This demographic shift underscores the importance of our ministry.

A new beginning in Eugene

After working closely with the Pillette family to appoint elders and deacons in the established churches in Medford and Grants Pass, my family and I felt the Lord's clear calling to embark on a new ministry. He led us to the city of Eugene on November 13, 2013, to plant a Hispanic church, and we trusted that God would guide every step of this new endeavor.

Our efforts began humbly but meaningfully. During a visit to a local store, we had a providential encounter with a couple. We approached them intending to share God's Word and asked if they would be willing to participate in Bible studies. To our joy, they agreed. Thus, we began meeting with them, trusting that the Lord would bring more people in time. Indeed, little by little, others joined our small group, which initially consisted mostly of Mexicans. Each meeting strengthened our spirits and confirmed that God was working in the attendees' hearts.

Evangelism and growth through outreach

As the group grew, we began leveraging public Hispanic and non-Hispanic events as evangelism opportunities. At these events held throughout the year in Eugene and surrounding cities, we would distribute copies of the Gospel of John and evangelistic tracts about our faith in Jesus. These initiatives allowed us to participate in our community and connect with more Hispanics interested in learning about God's Word.



Top (clockwise from top left): In 2015, Iglesia Biblica de Eugene was a small but faithful gathering; After a decade of growth, IBE now comprises new and mature believers; Annually, five Hispanic assemblies—those started by Oregon missionaries—gather for a leadership meeting. **Bottom:** Believers from IBE participate in a public Fourth of July event to share the Gospel.

One of the most significant moments occurred on July 4, 2022, during an Independence Day parade in the city of Creswell, Oregon, about 15 miles from Eugene. While distributing evangelistic tracts and copies of the Gospel of John to Hispanic families and individuals, we met a couple who had recently arrived from Colombia. They showed genuine interest in joining Bible studies, and as a result, a new phase in our church's growth began. Five other Colombian families, most of whom have since trusted in Jesus Christ, soon joined the couple. They not only strengthened our church but also marked significant numerical growth for Iglesia Bíblica de Eugene ("Eugene Bible Church"). This development has been a clear demonstration of God's faithfulness and His work in the lives of those seeking to draw closer to Him.

The importance of discipleship

Discipleship is one of our priorities as a church. We firmly believe it is a foundational pillar in every believer's spiritual growth. For this reason, we offer everyone who joins the church



and places his or her faith in Christ a discipleship Bible study. It is designed to teach the principles of the Christian faith and help the individual establish a personal, solid relationship with Christ. This discipleship aims to not only impart biblical knowledge but also

encourage a life of obedience to Christ, integrating the teachings of God's Word into daily living.

We personalize the discipleship process to each person's level of knowledge and spiritual maturity, allowing the believer to grow effectively in his or her walk with the Lord. During these Bible studies, participants study key topics such as salvation, prayer, Bible reading and meditation, the importance of the local church, leadership in the church, and the call to share the Gospel. They are also encouraged to ask questions, share their concerns and experiences, and seek ways to apply the truths to their daily lives.

Through this discipleship, we aim for new believers to not only grow in their understanding of the Scriptures but also feel supported by fellow believers. Discipleship strengthens bonds among church members, fostering relationships based on love, prayer, fellowship, and mutual service. By the end of the process, many participants have grown spiritually, and some help to disciple others, fulfilling Jesus's mandate in Matthew 28:19-20 to make disciples.

This focus on discipleship has been key to the consolidation and growth of our church. It ensures that everyone who joins

feels welcomed and receives the tools necessary to develop a living, committed faith.

The preparation of future church leaders

As part of our commitment to the church's spiritual growth and edification, we dedicate one weekday exclusively to preparing prospective elders and deacons. A group of about eight faithful men participate. The biblical leadership course they study equips them with not only solid theological knowledge but also practical skills to serve with love and humility.



The course content is based on principles drawn from Scripture. Some of the passages it emphasizes are 1 Timothy 3, Titus 1, and Acts 6, which outline the qualifications and responsibilities of elders and deacons. During the sessions, the participants delve into topics such as Christian character, conflict resolution, preaching and teaching the Bible, resource management, and pastoral care. Additionally, they work on their understanding and practice of prayer, intercession, and serving with a willing, obedient heart.

We are deeply grateful for and encouraged by the level of commitment the eight men have demonstrated. They actively participate in the training sessions and practice what they learn. Each one plays a key role in ministering God's Word, both in Sunday gatherings and weekday Bible studies. This dedication reflects their desire to serve the Lord and the congregation with integrity and love.

Training elders and deacons is essential to the strength of our church; it ensures that the congregation's spiritual and practical needs are effectively met. Beyond academic preparation, we seek to cultivate in them spiritual sensitivity and servant's hearts, making them capable leaders who can guide others toward a deeper relationship with Christ. This preparation is not only a biblical mandate but also an investment in the future of our faith community, ensuring it is well shepherded for years to come.

Prayer requests

Obedience in making disciples of all nations: Please pray that the Lord will grant us, as a church, hearts willing to obey His command to make disciples, as stated in Matthew 28:19-20. May each of us be sensitive to the Holy Spirit, sharing the Gospel with those around us, whether they are family, friends, co-workers, or strangers.

Additionally, please pray that our congregation will be organized and enthusiastic in participating in the evangelistic

Above (L-R): Women participate in a Bible study, a key part of IBE's ministry; Men also benefit from Bible studies, whether those for new believers or the course for elders and deacons.

outreaches we carry out. May the events provide fruitful opportunities to reach people from various cultures and backgrounds, and may God prepare their hearts to receive the message of salvation.

The growth of future elders and deacons: Please pray that God will continue to work powerfully in the lives of the men who may become, in the future, our church's elders and deacons. May the Lord shape their hearts, strengthen their faith, and guide them in walking closely with Him.

Let us ask that they may grow in spiritual maturity, wisdom, and humility, reflecting Christ's character in their daily lives. May the Holy Spirit prepare them to take on responsibilities with dedication and joy, enabling them to faithfully and lovingly serve the congregation in Eugene.

A willing heart to love and serve the Hispanic community: Pray that the Lord will continue to renew in our church a heart filled with love and compassion for the Hispanic community living in the United States, especially in Oregon. May we see each person as the Lord does, recognizing his or her spiritual, emotional, and material needs. May we always be willing to extend a helping hand and show the love of Christ through our actions.

Let us pray that many Hispanics in Oregon will hear the message of salvation. May the Lord prepare their hearts to receive His Word, granting them hope and eternal purpose amid the challenges they face as they settle in a new country. ■



Alejandro and Adriana Chavez are commended from Iglesia Creyentes en Cristo in Grants Pass, Oregon.



¹ Jerry Garcia, "Latinos in Oregon," Oregon Encyclopedia, 8 November 2023, OregonEncyclopedia.org; Josh Lehner, "Oregon's Growing Hispanic and Latino Population," Oregon Office of Economic Analysis, 21 June 2023, OregonEconomicAnalysis.com. ² United States Census Bureau, "Profile of General Population and Housing Characteristics (Oregon)," 2020, Data.Census.gov/table?g=040XX00US41&d=DEC+Demographic+Profile. ³ Lehner, "Oregon's Growing Hispanic and Latino Population."



From top (L-R): Hispanic children watch an object lesson; Alejandro and Adriana's family, including their two daughters, son-in-law, and grandchildren, minister to the Hispanic community in Oregon; Alejandro (right) encourages a recent convert, who owns a jewelry business at a Mexican store; Adriana and Pamela chat with vendors at a Hispanic Saturday market; The Chavezes connect with a couple, receiving food and sharing the Gospel; Cultural events are also an excellent opportunity to reach Hispanics; Sometimes, IBE helps host Hispanic family events, such as quinceañeras, seeing them as good opportunities for evangelism.

In the Plan of God

A Bible Study Grows within a Philippine Prison

BY CRAIG W. SUTHERLAND

In mid-2023, a young believer named Arnel, who helps in the Lord's work in Brooke's Point, Palawan, Philippines, came to me with a request. He asked me to help his father, Danny, who is a prisoner at Iwahig Prison and Penal Farm, a large penal colony about 100 miles from Brooke's Point.

Danny was incarcerated 10 years ago for a crime he didn't commit. The Philippine legal system has no trial by jury, so his accuser influenced the judge to demand a large financial settlement to end the case. Danny could not afford the amount and decided that if he paid, he would be admitting guilt. Therefore, he was sentenced to 20 years.

Sometime before Danny's sentencing, he had attended one of the Brooke's Point assemblies for many years but stopped participating when he became involved with the wrong people. As Arnel shared his father's story with me, it turned out that God had used the incarceration to restore Danny's relationship with the Lord. According to Danny, his son's constant, gracious reminder of what the Lord was teaching him had also helped soften Danny's heart. This experience was not just for Danny's

restoration but a unique opportunity to serve other inmates, or persons deprived of liberty (PDLs). So Danny does his prison time with a passion to use it uniquely for the Lord.

Arnel's request for help wasn't that I appeal for his father's early release, though that is in the legal process, but help a small Bible study of 12 men, which Danny has led for several years.

A challenge worth accepting

To meet regularly in the prison, this Bible study needed to be recognized by the Bureau of Corrections. The protocols for all activities in the prison are strict; several directors must approve the activities. So Danny needed someone to vouch for him.

First, I discussed the matter and prayed with the elders in Brooke's Point. Then, I talked with Arnel, and we scheduled a reading eyeglasses distribution at Iwahig to assess the situation and personally speak with Danny. After, the elders in Brooke's Point decided to vouch for him before the Bureau of Corrections and support the Bible study in an ongoing way if it received approval. They asked me to head up this ministry with





the help of Arnel and one of the other elders, Nilo. We decided to take on the challenge.

After getting a background check with the local government, police clearance, National Bureau of Investigation check, and full medical checkup—all with a lot of prayer—we started the process of submitting all the paperwork to the prison. Our assembly's corporation papers and constitution, the elders' approval letter, and much more were eventually processed and accepted. A personal interview with the superintendent sealed the approval, and I presented him with our Palawano translation of the Bible to bring to his attention the Palawanos incarcerated there.

Now, on the first Sunday of every month, three people from a preapproved list leave Brooke's Point at 3:00 a.m., arrive at the prison gate around 7:30 a.m., and submit our activity approval to the gate security. We are then cleared by a K-9 guard, frisked again at the entrance to the enclosed prison, and admitted to meet with the PDLs from 8:00 a.m. to noon.

Amazing growth

The Bible study group has grown from the original 12 men to 101. The singing is incredible—over 100 male voices. We celebrate the Breaking of Bread each Sunday we visit, and it gives the men the opportunity to fulfill Hebrews 13:15 together: "Offer the sacrifice of praise to God, that is, the fruit of our lips, giving thanks to His name." We pass around a microphone for anyone to share his thanks, and the honesty and deep, heartfelt thankfulness for forgiveness is next to none I have ever heard.

Often, before I speak to other groups in the Philippines, the believers introduce me as having "been to many places in the world." During a recent meeting at Iwahig, I stood up and told the PDLs that of all the places in the world I have visited, my favorite place is there, meeting with them on the first Sunday of every month. And it is.

God's flock within the walls

At a meeting in December, 10 PDLs were baptized by the recognized elders in the prison fellowship. There are four elders inside who know and care for those who attend. They meet with their fellow PDLs on the Fridays of the weeks we don't visit—for prayer, teaching, and overseeing the flock of God inside their walls.

Early in our Sunday participation, I noticed that the majority of the prisoners attending were from the maximum-security compound as they were wearing orange shirts. Maybe three were from medium security—those wearing blue. Together, they packed out the medium-security educational facility we use. The elders told me they prioritize the maximum PDLs on the Sundays we visit because many are older with no hope of leaving the prison. Additionally, both groups may mingle on Sundays, so the maximum PDLs are allowed into the medium-security educational facility. On the other three weeks, when the group meets on Fridays, the elders give more attention to the medium inmates because they are separated from the maximum PDLs and all four elders are in medium security. They show real sensitivity to their fellow prisoners' needs.

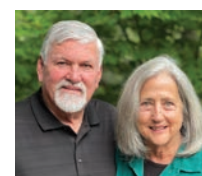
Ripples of the ministry

The assembly in Brooke's Point prays weekly for the work to bear fruit. One of the current elders inside Iwahig, who has no family on the outside to return to, may be released sometime soon. The assembly in Brooke's Point plans to help with his re-entry into society—assisting with employment and encouraging him to continue serving the Lord. Pray for all that goes into this work, both within the prison and outside.

Charita, Danny's wife, visits her husband faithfully. Pray for hope and strength for her. The women from the Brooke's Point assembly always provide refreshments, and sometimes a meal, for all the prisoners who attend our monthly gathering. My wife, Margaret, has talked with the women waiting at the prison gate to visit their husbands. They tell heartbreaking stories of separation, children without their father's presence, and the hardship of moving from other parts of the Philippines to be nearby.

Another burden I have is for the prison officials to be affected by this ministry. The Lord has given me special "favor" with the director of spiritual renewal and rehabilitation. I also feel deep concern over how many cult groups and false teachers have access and aggressively proselytize. Wherever the Gospel is allowed, heresy also abounds. Please pray as the Lord brings this ministry to your mind. ■

Craig and Margaret Sutherland are commended from Asheville Gospel Chapel in Asheville, North Carolina.



Above (L–R): The Iwahig prison ministry has wonderful team members, some of whom are Mercy and Willy, Margaret, Gemma, and Craig; Nilo (second from left) and Arnel (second from right), pictured here at a Christian training facility, head up the prison ministry with Craig; The team enters the prison through this gate once per month.



THE MACEDONIAN CALL TODAY

How an Email Prompted a New Radio Ministry

BY GEORGE & NANCY STURM

Not too far from ancient Troy was the city of Alexander Troas—named after Alexander the Great, the famous Macedonian general. Troas became one of the most important cities in the Greco-Roman world due to its commanding position at the western entrance to the Hellespont, the waterway separating Europe and Asia (now known as the Dardanelles). However, in the book of Acts, the importance of Troas took on another meaning: serving as the “launching pad” for the evangelization of Europe.

After the Holy Spirit forbade the apostle Paul from speaking the Word in Asia and did not permit him to go into Bithynia, Paul arrived in Troas (Acts 16:6–8). One evening, a vision appeared to him where “a man of Macedonia stood and pleaded with him, saying, ‘Come over to Macedonia and help us.’” (v. 9) Immediately, Paul and his companions sought to go into Macedonia, concluding that God had called them to preach the Gospel there.

The Macedonian call still happens today. The God of heaven uses closed doors, seemingly unrelated events, the Scriptures, so-called divine circumstances, spiritual conversations, and the direct promptings of the Holy Spirit to speak to the hearts of true disciples and lead them into their fields of service. He even uses emails.

The call

In 2006, we launched Radio Logos, a Christian radio network of multiple frequencies and antennas in Albania. It has operated nonstop ever since. Some months ago, we at Radio Logos received a “random” email from a Macedonian believer, a person we did not know. He wrote, “Your radio is famous here. I first noticed your radio when going on vacation in Ohrid, and my wife and I enjoyed the beautiful playlist very much.¹ We tell everyone about your radio, and many people know this radio is ‘magical.’ You are doing a great job. Unfortunately, in [North] Macedonia, we have no such radio station.

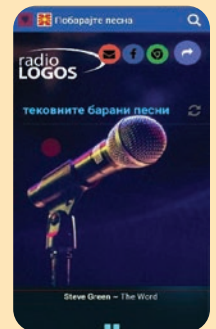


Can you help us create one in the Macedonian language so we can use it to bring the Gospel to the people here?”

Like Paul, we answered the call and immediately set to work. After many months of intensive labor, we now have a two-pronged method for bringing the Gospel to North Macedonia.

The answer

Our first method for gospel proclamation in North Macedonia involves an app we created for smartphones (Android and iPhone). Ryan Jansen, a believer from Countryside Bible Chapel in Boston, Massachusetts, spent many hours developing software that allows a user to choose between the Albanian and Macedonian languages. In each language, listeners can enjoy spiritual music and edifying programs 24/7. Users can even select songs that will then be played on the radio.



One big challenge we faced was the need to produce several new programs in the Macedonian language. One of these programs, which we started broadcasting in January, focuses on the book *One Day at a Time* by William MacDonald.



Our second method involves traditional FM broadcasting into North Macedonia. In Albania, Radio Logos is a large regional network with seven broadcasting sites. Toward the end of 2024, we installed the seventh antenna in northern Albania, and now, three of the broadcasting sites border North Macedonia. This means that our FM signal goes deep

into that country, covering approximately 10 percent of the population.

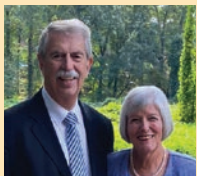
One Macedonian city that our FM signal covers is the regional capital of Dibra. In our recent evangelistic efforts there, the people warmly received us and even invited us into the mayor's office for a meeting. As far as we could tell, there is no church in this city. Pray that, one day, an assembly will be established.

To spread the news of Radio Logos in North Macedonia, we have done some serious outdoor advertising—for example, on the famous Mother Teresa Bridge in Skopje, the capital city. Thousands see our advertisements each day. Pray that they will listen to Radio Logos and hear the Gospel.

Prayers for the future

Obviously, the operation of a regional radio network in two languages is a full-time commitment. Pray that the Lord will give us help and creativity as we attempt to reach the lost.

Finally, we pray that God will raise up missionaries to move into the many Macedonian towns that desperately need to be evangelized. May He use this article as the Macedonian call for some dear reader. Amen! ■

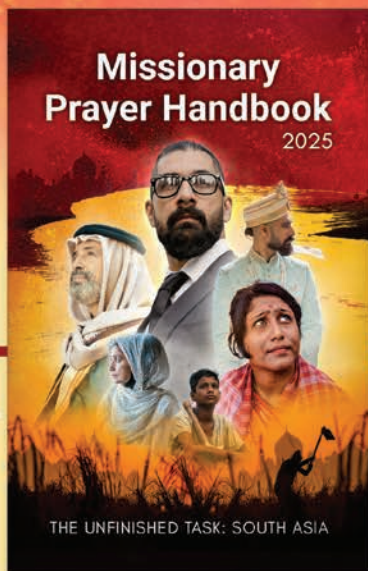


George and Nancy Sturm are commended from Overbrook Gospel Chapel in Greenville, South Carolina.

¹ Ohrid, North Macedonia, sits near the Albanian border—about an hour's drive from Radio Logos in Pogradec, Albania.



Opposite page: (bottom, L-R) Radio Logos has seven broadcasting sites; Its antennas broadcast the Gospel throughout Albania and into North Macedonia; **(top right)** The Radio Logos app brings Christian programming in Albanian and Macedonian to smartphones. **Above: (top, L-R)** An evangelism team shares the Gospel and distributes flyers in Dibra; George and Nancy don traditional Albanian dress at a restaurant; In Dibra, this sign invites people to listen to Radio Logos; **(bottom)** The ad on the Mother Teresa bridge announces: "The radio that you can trust, Radio Logos."



2025 MISSIONARY PRAYER HANDBOOK

The 2025 *Missionary Prayer Handbook* features 36 new missionaries and one new country listing.

To facilitate prayer and communication, this vital tool lists more than 750 missionaries commended from local churches in the US and Canada and includes a description of their ministries and contact information.

**Contact CMML for US orders
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Ask a Missionary

Missions work around the world is unique—different from what friends and family at home encounter day to day. So, to learn about life on the field while getting to know our missionaries better, we asked them to share their firsthand experience or advice.

QUESTION: What is the greatest spiritual need in your country of service, and how can we pray for it?



We need devoted followers of Christ to faithfully share the Gospel; believers forget the need to reach the lost.



Portion intentionally left blank.



Our greatest need is to see fruit from the preaching of the Gospel among those who are close to us and throughout the assemblies in France. We are all praying for lasting conversions. May God move in people's hearts through the work of His Spirit.



Korea's churches need a spiritual awakening—a fresh vision of Christ, who is in their midst, and His opening the Scriptures to them. Pray for a spiritual revival in Korea's churches, that we may "repent and do the first works." (Revelation 2:5) Pray, too, for political stability, "that we may lead a quiet and peaceable life in all godliness and reverence." (1 Timothy 2:2)



Salvation is the greatest spiritual need in this country. Hungary is a very religious nation with a population of over nine million people. According to statistics I have read, however, only one to two percent are born again. Pray that the Lord will wake up the souls of the Hungarian people. Pray that He will burden them to seek the Lord Jesus Christ as their Savior (Ephesians 2:1–3, 8–9; 6:12, 18).

Editor's note: Paul Meehan recently went home to be with the Lord. However, the spiritual need he wrote about before his passing remains.



The spiritual apathy in France is the result of the national education that encourages young minds to reject belief in any creator or ruler of the universe. My work has been to challenge people's assumptions with biblical revelations and realities in science and history. I do not attack their beliefs but challenge adults with reason. No one can deny a personal experience, and they don't. No one can deny what Jesus said, and they don't. When I put the two together, God seems to speak to their hearts. In all reality, the problem is the same around the world. But God's Word opens the mind like no other words.



Poland's greatest need is for people to experience genuine conviction of sin and turn to Christ for salvation and for believers to live sanctified lives. Pray people, saved and unsaved alike, will turn to Scripture for truth and guidance on living.

ASK YOUR QUESTIONS! Visit [CMML.us/askamissionary](https://www.cmml.us/askamissionary) to submit your question—it might be selected for a future issue!

PARLEZ-VOUS FRANÇAIS?

Teaching French Opens Doors with Unbelievers

Image removed for security purposes.

BY BRAD & CATHERINE DICKSON

One never knows how God, in His providence, might use a skill learned at one point in life for His greater purposes. Catherine, who is French, went all the way through law school and obtained her degree. But her secret desire had always been to be a teacher. When we married and moved to English-speaking Canada for three years to do theological studies, the Lord gave her that opportunity. The University of Saskatchewan was looking for someone to teach French as a second language and gave her the job, even though she didn't have specific training as a teacher.

When we returned to France and engaged in planting churches, Catherine was always willing to help refugees learn French. She also did some private tutoring to help our family financially. But neither of us suspected how this skill would blossom when we moved to our present location three years ago to plant a new church.

Setting off a spiritual reaction

Manosque, France, is particularly international because of an innovative energy research project called ITER just 7 miles, or 12 kilometers, outside town. A consortium of seven countries is building the world's largest fusion reactor. This million-dollar-a-day project has attracted over 2,000 engineers and scientists from the member countries: China, the European Union, India, Japan, Russia, South Korea, and the US.

We prayed about how we could contact these people and share the Gospel. We wondered how we could serve

them. The answer was easy. They all needed to learn French to survive in France!

The first year, we offered one weekly class, and about 10 students showed up. We also took them on an outing each month to discover our area's natural beauties, such as the lavender fields in June. Our students were thrilled with Catherine's expertise and fun learning methods. They also appreciated the monthly social event, which allowed them to meet people and explore our beautiful region.

The second year, when we posted the registration form on the internet, we were overwhelmed by 80 students who signed up for the weekly class. This year, we are offering nine different classes. Our social events such as a Thanksgiving dinner and a Christmas party are also well attended.

Memorizing and reading the Bible

We finish each session by writing a verse from the Bible on the board, explaining it, and then learning it together. It is wonderful to see Hindus, Buddhists, Muslims, and atheists writing it down in their notebooks and learning it by heart. At the beginning of the year, we use verses, many from Proverbs, that show God's wisdom and build trust in the Bible. Then, by Christmas, we can share verses about Jesus and why He came. When we reach the next Easter, we can clearly explain the Gospel in each lesson.

But we don't want to turn our classes into Bible studies. We don't want our students to feel as though they are just our projects or targets, because they are not. They are people to

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be loved. We want to help even those who are not interested in the Gospel learn French and adapt to their new environment. They feel our love, and God has given us lots of it for them!

When we notice someone showing particular interest in the Bible verse by asking questions or commenting, we invite them to our home for coffee or a French meal. We offer to read the Bible with them privately to help them find answers to spiritual questions.

Currently, several people are reading the Bible with us. Brad is going through Luke's Gospel with a group in English, and Catherine is doing the same with another group in French. Some have started attending church regularly, been saved, and are preparing for baptism.

For our students who come from countries that place severe restrictions on church activities, these Bible-reading times are wonderful opportunities to discover the Gospel in a safer environment. We must be cautious, however, because they are under some forms of surveillance even in France.

Preparing the soil

We like to say that we have never had more opportunities to share the Gospel with unbelievers than since we moved to Manosque and started our French classes. When we serve people where they have a felt need, love them sincerely, and invite them into our home, the soil is prepared to receive the powerful seed of God's Word. ■



“These Bible-reading times are wonderful opportunities to discover the Gospel in a safer environment.”

SERVING GOD WHILE SERVING IN THE WORKFORCE

Are you wondering how you can serve God overseas by helping in a church-planting project while still working in the secular domain and earning your living? Investigate international job opportunities in France. Some offer good, interesting working conditions and help with obtaining a visa and moving. If you're a scientist or engineer, ITER may be worth looking into. We are seeking committed Christians who would like to explore coming to help us in our international church plant with whatever gifts the Lord has given you. Contact us at bdicksonfrance@gmail.com.



Brad and Catherine Dickson are commended from Fairhaven Bible Chapel in Saskatoon, Saskatchewan.

Above: (right) The group explores a local natural phenomenon: ocher-colored sand pits; **(left)** Thousands of international scientists and engineers have relocated to work at ITER (© ITER Organization, ITER.org).