

May 2026

MISSIONS

CMML Visits the Dominican Republic

Ecuador
A Gift of Words

Interview
A New Life and
Ministry in France

26 Below
Ambassadors
for Christ



The Dominican Republic

A MODEL OF MISSIONS FOR THIS GENERATION

BY JIM & SHARON FLEMING

The Dominican Republic could be labeled the Land of Eternal Summer. Proof? Sharon and I enjoyed falling off paddleboards into the Caribbean Sea one afternoon earlier this year—in the height of their winter! Likewise, Brethren missions analysts could label the DR as an exemplary model of Pauline strategy. Here's the story, then and now:

A century of growth

Brethren missions in the Dominican Republic started in 1920 when Arthur Peterkin and his family arrived and settled in La Vega, in the island's interior. It took nine years to plant the first assembly amid much opposition. Over the next four decades, various dedicated missionaries came from England and Canada, including Duncan and Mary Reid, Asa and Phoebe Moore, Donald and Gwen McIntosh, and Wilbur and Joanna Kent.

R. J. and Marian Carter were the first to have a vision for the capital city, Santo Domingo, which today is home to about one-third of the country's 11 million people and 40 of the over 160 assemblies. Ian and Dorothy Rathie joined them in the 1950s. Ian's La Prensa Bíblica, a Christian printing press, significantly affected assembly growth by producing a wide range of literature, including a monthly teaching magazine.

Jump forward to 2026, and what did we observe on our trip? The magazine is still alive. Only three CMML missionary couples now serve in the country. And only one out of the six, Andre Walker, is a natural-born American; the other five are Dominicans. The more than 160 assemblies are unified. They share speakers, organize regional and national conferences, and have ministries that serve all the assemblies. Bolstering that unity is a committee of respected believers from all regions of the DR

that meets to pray, coordinate the events, encourage the assemblies, and maintain sound doctrine. The assemblies fund their own building projects and are planting new assemblies.

Missionaries pioneered, planted, trained, and replaced themselves with national leadership. The Pauline model has been replicated in the 106 years of assembly life in the DR—a tribute to the foreign missionaries deliberately stepping back in the 1970s. Since the 1980s, most Templos Bíblicos (the Brethren assemblies in the DR) have been led by Dominicans, with foreign workers serving mainly in support or teaching roles. Foreign involvement has largely shifted, while the movement itself has become self-propagating.

Faithful national workers

In 2026, Sharon and I witnessed the fruit of this biblical model as we, in our missionary care role, visited the CMML workers in the Dominican Republic. Here are their stories:

Manuel & Carmen Medina

In 1974, the Templo Bíblico in Villa Francisca commended Manuel and Carmen to full-time ministry. Around 2010, two Spanish assemblies in New York also commended them. Over the 50-plus years, the Medinas, as natural administrators, have organized, initiated, or facilitated many ministries. The most recent key ministry is La Mesa Misionera, the CMML-style missions agency for the country's assemblies. A committee of six raises missions vision among the DR



From top: With its tropical climate and beautiful beaches, the Dominican Republic could be called the Land of Eternal Summer; Manuel and Carmen Medina launched a missions agency for the country's assemblies.

assemblies for workers at home and abroad: one couple in Kyrgyzstan, and 19 couples and singles in the Dominican Republic. Currently, 40 assemblies donate so that each missionary receives a monthly financial gift. They also encourage other assemblies to join through missionary conferences and more communication, such as their yearly missionary prayer and report magazine.

Manuel was a founder of and serves with ACOTEBI—the Spanish acronym meaning “the coordinating association of the Bible temples.” It was set up to coordinate national events, communicate with the assemblies, and represent them before the government as necessary. Also, Manuel was a founding coordinator of their Workers and Elders Congress, another unifying annual event for the assemblies.

While Manuel helps coordinate the DR’s assembly movement, Carmen ensures many of its ministries run smoothly. Enthusiastic and organized, she serves as the administrator of the Santo Domingo churches’ nursing home. And she seems to be involved in the administrative side of every event, from camps to conferences.

When Ian Rathie retired, Manuel took over La Prensa Bíblica, the Christian printing press, to propagate the need for good literature. In 2020, he introduced digital printing, starting with their assembly magazine, *Senda de Luz* (“path of light”).



During our time with the Medinas, Sharon and I participated in the 85th anniversary of the Villa Francisca assembly, which highlighted much of what the Lord has

done through Manuel and Carmen. The event spanned several weekends, including a leaders’ conference, Sunday services, and a lovely banquet. I was one of three speakers each Sunday, representing CMML and the legacy missionaries left there.

Ramón & Elvira Prenza

The Prenzas live in Monte Plata, about an hour north of the capital. Elvira and Ramón grew up there, were saved young, and married in 1971. The Templos Bíblicos commended them in 1976, and in 2024, Capilla Evangélica 116 in New York also commended them. Their story would require a book to explain their dedication, passion, and the many



ways the Lord has used them throughout the country and abroad. Ramón, at 77, suffers from herniated discs in his back. That pain had him bedridden while we were visiting, but it didn’t stop his enthusiastic stories of the Lord’s work over the decades. Nor did it slow a constant stream of people coming from near and far to greet him—evidence of their love and respect.



Ramón had initially wanted to start an orphanage. Canadian missionary Eva May Russell counseled the couple to first start a school for the underprivileged. So, without foreign dollars but with strong faith and a lot of support from Eva, they moved ahead and watched God give them land. Over the years, they constructed buildings one at a time and staffed classrooms, providing high-quality education to 196 students who could not afford school. They named the facility the Eva May Russell School.



Today, the Prenzas’ daughter is the principal, and one son heads up the administration. The students attend Bible class every day. Many are saved each year. The highlight is when older ones get baptized and join local churches. Additionally, a nurse is on staff to provide a nutrition program for those who are not getting enough food at home. Volunteer dentists come in, and every child gets two dental exams and cleanings per year.



Yet the Prenzas’ orphanage vision never diminished. Again, the Lord provided a good piece of property. They got connected with Kids Alive International, a ministry based in Georgia that supports orphanages and schools in various countries. With their financing and teams, Kids Alive has built four homes that can house eight children—each with house parents. The lovely installation, known as Casa Monte Plata, also has an administration building, a multipurpose room, and play areas.

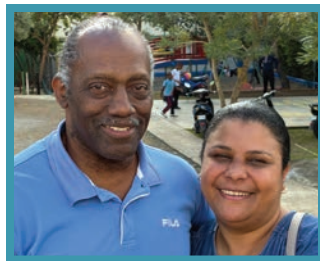
Left (from top): In honor of the Villa Francisca assembly’s 85th anniversary, believers enjoy a fellowship meal one Sunday; Ramón and Elvira Prenza serve in Monte Plata. **Right (from top):** This Templo Bíblico is one of the Monte Plata assembly’s eight extension works, which the Prenzas were highly involved in; The Eva May Russell School serves 196 students; The kids love the school’s playground.

Currently, the home is in transition, with no orphans while it becomes independent of Kids Alive. Elvira and Ramón's eldest son has been commended to lead the Casa Monte Plata ministry. They are renovating the houses while empty and asking the Lord for the right staffing, children, and financing in His timing.



Andre & Yanerys Walker

We met the Walkers for the first time at the airport but felt like old friends by the time we reached their home in San Francisco de Macorís, three hours inland. Andre grew up in Miami, came to the Lord in college, and got involved in Asamblea Evangélica, a Spanish assembly, to learn Spanish. Burdened for missions, he began making mission trips to the DR.



In 1999, Asamblea Evangélica commended him there full-time, and he spent his first year being mentored by Manuel Medina in Santo Domingo. Then, he moved north to Nagua, where he met Yanerys in an assembly, and they married in 2001. They helped those thriving assemblies for almost a decade, lived in the US for two years to obtain her US citizenship, and in 2013, felt led to move to San Francisco de Macorís to pioneer a work.



Left (from top): The Monte Plata orphanage comprises four homes; Andre and Yanerys Walker share a passion for evangelism; Andre shows Sharon and Jim (not pictured) the chapel in San Francisco de Macorís. **Right (from top):** Medical students gather for a Bible study; Sharon and the Walkers learn about Elvira Prenza's family history.

The work has been difficult and slow. But the Lord has raised up a small assembly, and it has a nice building. Kids are central to its outreach, and the believers also have a youth program that reaches teens in their rough community.

Evangelism is the Walkers' passion. We spent one morning with Andre walking the streets of the poor area of their town, just talking to people. Because it's hot, people are always out on the street and happy to talk. We were invited into homes and visited some ill elderly people who urgently need Christ. Everyone in the area knows the assembly, due to how they have served the people: the believers built a huge cistern under the chapel because the town's water supply is very sporadic. So, when the water is off for days, they open it and can evangelize the people who come with their buckets to get free water.



The Walkers host boarders from other cities who come to study at a university in San Francisco de Macorís. One named Emily has been with them for five years studying medicine. While we were there, she invited her classmates over to hear more about the Bible. Nine came! I was commissioned to lead the study that morning. The Walkers loved it when I spontaneously offered a follow-up series of studies, which was enthusiastically received. May the Lord save many of these medical students.

Prayers for the next 106 years

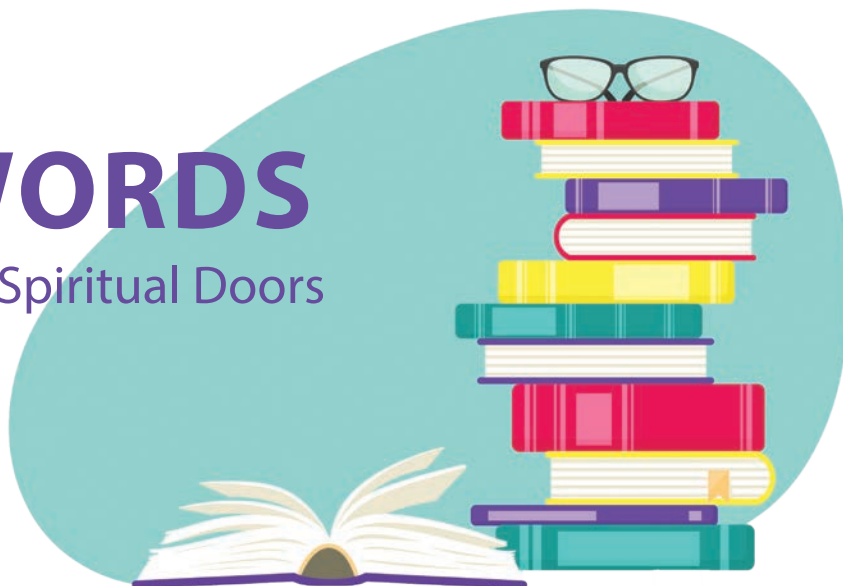
We praise the Lord for how the Brethren missions work has developed in the Dominican Republic since the 1920s. Please pray that more Dominicans will enter the mission field and that the assemblies and La Mesa Misionera will grow alongside the workers they support. Pray, too, that the Lord will enable the Medinas, Prenzas, and Walkers to continue serving Him—in their communities and ministries. We anticipate the next 106 years of the Lord's work through the Dominican assemblies. ■

Jim and Sharon Fleming, CMML missionary care

A GIFT OF WORDS

In Ecuador, a Library Opens Spiritual Doors

BY ALESHA HOLLINGSWORTH



In the foothills of the Ecuadorian Andes, sloping toward the Amazon Rainforest, lies a small community called Shell Mera. Named after the oil company that first cleared the site, Shell sits on the outskirts of the larger town of Puyo. To most of the world, both towns are just a blip of city planning dropped in a sea of green on Google Earth, but to many Christians, the names ring a bell.

Seventy years ago, Shell made the news when five missionary widows waited there for radio contact that never came. Nate Saint, the Missionary Aviation Fellowship pilot who flew in that Palm Beach mission into Waorani territory, had used Shell as his base of operations. In the wake of the tragedy on Palm Beach, many men and women committed to global missions. Some came to Ecuador.

Over the years, Shell continued to be a cradle of evangelistic efforts. MAF pilots continued flying into jungle communities, and some years later, an English-language K–8 school was built for their children and others in the Christian missionary community. The school operated for five decades before closing in 2017. This is where our family comes into the story.

Finding treasure

We moved to Puyo in the spring of 2012. Though we homeschooled our children, we borrowed books in English from the Nate Saint Memorial School library. Even after the school closed, the missionary community was periodically allowed access to the library, and our family saw it as a treasure trove.

December 2022 found us gathered in the old library for an end-of-term celebration with a group of homeschooling families who had formed a weekly co-op. The school property had been sold to another missions organization that, although it valued the books, needed the large library space cleared for use as a conference room. As my husband, Taylor,

watched the families wander through the library, he realized that there was really no other comparable resource in any language in the area.

On the way home, we talked about what it would take to revive the library in another location, hoping to eventually add enough Spanish-language books to make it truly bilingual. This way, it could continue to be useful to the English-speaking community while also being a point of contact with the community at large—both people who want books in Spanish and those who want to practice their English skills. (Proficiency in English is highly sought after and required for certain jobs.)

By July 2023, we had made an agreement with the owners of the property to buy whatever books we thought worthy, always checking for bug damage. (We have a habit of saying, “The jungle



always wins,” and anything in storage tends to deteriorate quickly!) Dear friends in the homeschool co-op helped us rent a couple of classrooms that were not eminently needed, and we spent the summer painting, acquiring bookshelves, and sorting the books.

And sorting. And did I mention sorting?

Our new little library would be primarily used by the homeschool co-op, so we tried to get the children’s section functional as soon as possible. For the next year and a half, the library served a purpose for those families and produced sweet memories.

Changing course

In the course of time and God's all-wise direction, several of those original co-op families moved to other fields of service. We also have moved farther from Shell, remaining in the same general area but leaving the house in Puyo where most of our children grew up. This left us to consider what the Lord would have us do with the library project. We knew we needed to change course but, at the same time, did not feel that we should close it.

The Lord eventually led us to keep our house in Puyo and use the main floor as the library. He also provided a believing couple to rent the upstairs rooms and help with the project. We reopened early in 2025, with the new space divided into the general library, the children's library, and a study area. There is also a guest room that we've used several times this year for a missionary family coming in and out of the jungle.

The books we keep likely look like the types in your home: Some are biographies; others are classic novels or quality fiction. Some are Bible study helps and devotionals; others are personal development nonfiction. Since the library began by purchasing books out of an English-speaking K-8 school, the English side of the library came more ready-made. Over this past year, we have begun building the Spanish side, both through donations and through purchasing books in the capital, Quito. Two of the Christian bookstores there have given us a generous discount.

The new location has changed the dynamics of the project significantly. With live-in volunteers, we can be open four afternoons per week, which brings more foot traffic and more community involvement. Probably less than half of our current patrons would claim to be believers, which gives us the opportunity to serve in an evangelistic way. We are praying about starting a weekly Bible study in the study space; please pray with us to be sensitive to God's leading and joyfully bold to speak words of truth.

We open the library's doors and give people a gift of words. We pray that God will use that to open doors in their minds and in their hearts. We want them to be drawn to true words and stories that capture bits of true beauty. But, most of all, we want them to grow to love God's Word and, through it, to love His Son—the Word. ■



Alesha and Taylor Hollingsworth are commended from Snyder Christian Fellowship in Texas.



Left: That "sawdust" is what's left of book pages after bugs are done with them. **Above (from top):** Taylor stands beside the entrance to the new library in Puyo, which the Hollingsworths call La linterna ("the lantern"); Alesha and her daughter sort books in the new library; The children's library contains this cozy corner.

From One Parent to Another

THOUGHTS ON NURTURING AND CARING FOR MISSIONARIES

BY BOB HAYES

At CMML's 2025 Annual Fall Conference, I was asked to speak as the father of missionaries and an elder of an assembly that has commended missionaries. My daughter, Erin, went to South America in 2008 and served there for seven years. Meanwhile, my son Jonathan (*Missionary Prayer Handbook* Day 2) moved to the foreign mission field too; he has now been serving in the 10/40 Window for 12 years.

The thoughts I presented at the conference—and now present to you—derive from the experience of my wife, Judy, and me: things we have done, things we wish we had not done, and things we wish we had done. They may be helpful for the parents of current or possible missionaries but can also apply to elders in commending churches, family, and friends.

1 Normalize missions in your home

Early on in your family life, emphasize that being a missionary is a normal career path for anyone who has believed in Jesus for salvation and who sincerely wants to serve Him. Prepare your kids and yourselves.

First, be excited about your children's potential—the Lord sure is! I grew up in a religious home but not in a family that knew the Gospel. When I was a young believer, a godly man from my community took a great interest in me spiritually. He is with Christ now, but I still thank God for this amazing man.

One day, he and I spoke of how the Lord uses people in His service. My friend told me that while he was excited about me and my very real potential, he was particularly excited about how the Lord would use my children. I was about 17 at the time and wasn't even dating someone! His point was kids raised in believing homes have been prayed for and have been under biblical teaching for years. And history tells us that while every convert can have years of effective ministry, the children of godly families have carried the weight of ministry throughout the years.

Normalizing missions also involves exposing your children to the Lord's global work and His servants. Judy and I had missionaries in our home whenever we could. (Living near CMML made that easy!) Our kids met missionaries and heard many stories. Part of their bedtime routine involved praying for missionaries. We would spin a globe, and one child would use a finger to stop the spin. Then, we would open the *Missionary Prayer Handbook* to that country and pray for the



missionaries there. Judy or I would pray for the adults, and our children would pray for the kids.

Normalize being a missionary.

2 Ask questions

If your children or the kids in your assembly show interest in missionary work, ask questions to learn all you can from them. But don't hint at any doubts or project the view that "they'll get over it." Don't say, "That's cute"; rather, acknowledge and celebrate their desire.

Parents, let's not be too verbal about our career desires for them; we must carefully manage our preferences for their lives. I must admit I wasn't too successful in this point, but Judy had it down in spades.

“BE EXCITED ABOUT YOUR CHILDREN'S POTENTIAL—THE LORD SURE IS!”

3 Don't fear

Once they're preparing for or on the field, don't allow your legitimate safety concerns to translate into fear for them. This is true for parents, relatives, friends, and elders. Remember that it is no more difficult for the Lord to protect them in the 10/40 Window than it is wherever you live—rural, suburban, or urban North America.

Once, while Judy was visiting our daughter in Ecuador, a taxi driver and his partner pointed a gun at Erin and demanded her and Judy's valuables. In the end, the Lord protected Erin and Judy. At the same time, our son was in West Africa experiencing his share of dangerous situations. Yet our second child, Jim, was living in one of the most expensive ZIP codes in the US: New York City's Upper East Side. (To be clear, he was a graduate student living in highly subsidized housing!)

People who prayed for our kids would often ask which of the two missionaries lived in the more dangerous area. Often, I would answer, "Jimmy." Like his siblings, he loved and served Christ where he was. But he was surrounded by wealth, materialism, and opulence. These things can be more dangerous than anything the 10/40 Window throws at us. We praise God that He has protected all our kids!

4 Remember who saves and calls

Don't view your children's ministries as a means of gaining your own ecclesiastical stardom. Meaning? When the reception line forms for the missionaries, that line should start and

stop at the Lord Jesus. If that line extends to include our kids, the missionaries, make sure it stops there. Parents and elders are not part of it. We parents birthed our kids and hopefully encouraged them to be socially appropriate and good citizens. And we certainly fed them! Likewise, elders nurtured them spiritually. By God's grace, we both may have been part of their learning to walk with Christ. But the Lord graciously saved, called, equipped, and gave them a willingness to be uncomfortable for Him.

My heart can be wicked and opportunistic, so I must be careful. I find it is usually best to let others start conversations about our missionary kids (unless it has to do with the grandkids).

5 Pray

Be their strongest prayer warriors and encourage others—your believing friends and family or your church family—to pray for them. Nothing encourages parents of missionaries more than hearing that people are praying for their loved ones who minister far away. But we ourselves must pray frequently and fervently.

Remember that, often, we must set aside our opinions and feelings regarding our missionary kids or commended missionaries. My wife has an uncanny ability to leave things with the Lord. Never once has she complained that her kids and grandkids are far away. We pray for them, and she trusts God to protect and use them.

6 Be understanding

Love, encourage, and support your kids or commended missionaries on and off the field. Be aware of the potential for cultural, social, and even emotional struggles they or their family may have on the field. When they come home, whether temporarily or permanently, remember that their reentry may come with curveballs, even in the very best of situations. Seek ways to help them.

Never give up

While I've discussed six ways to nurture future missionaries and support current ones, countless more exist. As you pray for missionaries, remember their natural and spiritual families too. Pray that each parent and elder can improve in the areas addressed here and more. May we always strive to normalize missions, celebrate our children's missions interest, trust and praise God, pray fervently, and support sensitively. ■

Bob Hayes is a commended worker based in New Jersey.



AMBASSADORS FOR CHRIST



BY JUANES PINEDA

Since 2006, CMML's 26 Below Retreats have encouraged and equipped the next generation of believers—to root themselves in God's Word, to grow in their faith, and to engage in God's mission locally and globally. Held in the early months of each year, these retreats reach teens and young adults in three US regions: the Northeast, Midwest, and Southeast. This year, they brought together a total of 445 young believers and challenged them to live as ambassadors for Christ.

A building theme

For the last three years, we have drawn our themes from different verses in 2 Corinthians 5, a passage that clearly describes both our identity and our calling. In 2024, our theme was "Identity in Christ," in which we reflected on 2 Corinthians 5:17: "Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation." For many of the attendees, it reaffirmed that their value and purpose begin with their relationship with Him. In 2025, the theme shifted to "His Mission, Your Life." We focused on 2 Corinthians 5:18, which states that we have received the ministry of reconciliation. This theme challenged attendees to see their lives as part of God's redemptive mission in the world.

This year, the theme for the 26 Below retreats was "Ambassadors for Christ." We arrived at verse 20 of 2 Corinthians 5, where we are reminded of a remarkable truth: "Now then, we are ambassadors for Christ." What a profound reminder of the role believers have in representing the Lord in a broken world.

Scripture makes it clear: if we are in Christ, we are His ambassadors.

At each conference this year, I asked the attendees to raise their hands if they were "in Christ." Without hesitation, hands went up across each room. But, when I asked how many saw themselves as ambassadors for Christ, they expressed noticeably more hesitation. This revealed an important challenge: while many young believ-

ers readily embrace their identity in Christ, fewer recognize the responsibility and privilege that flow from that identity. Yet Scripture makes it clear: if we are in Christ, we are His ambassadors.

Our prayer for everyone who attended 26 Below this year was that through the time spent in God's Word, fellowship with other believers, and interaction with missionaries, they would leave with a renewed understanding of the ambassadorship entrusted to them. This role is not meant to feel like a burden or obligation. Rather, it is a gracious privilege given by the Lord—to represent Him and to proclaim His message of reconciliation to the world.

Northeast 26 Below: Speculator, New York

In early January, 150 young people gathered for Northeast 26 Below. Jonathan Hayes (*Missionary Prayer Handbook* Day 2), who served for many years in Niger, joined us as our speaker. His time on the field brought a valuable perspective to the weekend, and he even taught the attendees several songs in the Zarma language, which added a memorable and joyful element.



Jon led four powerful sessions centered on our theme. In the first, "The Ambassador's Citizenship" (Philippians 3:17–21), he reminded listeners that their true citizenship is in heaven and that, as believers, they live on earth as representatives of that heavenly reality. In "The Ambassador's Commission" (2 Corinthians 5:14–21), he challenged the young people to consider how Christ's love compels them to faithfully share His message of reconciliation.

The third session, "The Ambassador's Ethic" (Matthew 5:13–16), focused on living as salt and light in the world so others

Top (L–R): Northeast 26 Below drew 150 attendees; Using the *Missionary Prayer Handbook*, young people pray for missionaries and unreached people groups; The retreats are designed for teens and young adults in their 20s; Group singing starts a session. **Right column:** Jonathan Hayes teaches the Northeast group a song in Zarma.



might see Christ through their lives. Finally, in “The Ambassador’s Power” (John 15:1–11), Jon emphasized that fruitfulness in ministry comes only through abiding in Christ.

Beyond the teaching sessions, the weekend fostered deep fellowship and meaningful connections. During one activity, groups developed practical plans for reaching people from unreached backgrounds who now live in the young people’s own communities.



By the end of the weekend, three people had signed up for Ambassador Opportunities Abroad—short-term opportunities to learn and serve alongside some of our missionaries—expressing a desire to explore how the Lord might use them to serve beyond their local context.

Midwest 26 Below: Dayton, Iowa

At Midwest 26 Below, held in late February, Alaska-based missionary Brad Sturm (MPH Day 30) led our 180 participants on a journey through Acts. Through the stories of the early church, Brad highlighted how God often uses ordinary people to accomplish extraordinary things when they remember that they are Christ’s ambassadors.



With humility and authenticity, he reminded attendees that representing Christ is not something we accomplish through our own strength. Only through the Lord’s power can we faithfully live and speak as His representatives in the world.

From morning till evening, the retreat encouraged spiritual

growth in ways beyond the messages. Morning prayer sessions saw the young people praying for the missionaries and unreached people groups listed in the *Missionary Prayer Handbook*. Then, between the messages and meals, youth groups spent intentional time developing practical ways to represent Christ well in their own communities. Participants discussed how they could share the Gospel with classmates, co-workers, and neighbors and how they might build relationships with people from different cultural and religious backgrounds. Six attendees also either signed up for or expressed strong interest in Ambassador Opportunities Abroad, demonstrating their desire to live with a missions focus.



Southeast 26 Below: Flat Rock, North Carolina

In March, John Kinlaw (MPH Day 3) traveled from Tanzania to North Carolina to speak at the Southeast retreat. He led four sessions that helped the 115 attendees understand what it means to be Christ’s ambassadors. In one called “Clarification,” he reminded his listeners that believers are called out of darkness into God’s light, grace, and fellowship. In “Cooperation,” he emphasized that God is at work through us, inviting us to participate in His plan while we recognize our respon-



Left column (from top): A young woman shares her group’s outreach ideas; Brad and Lindsay Sturm traveled from Alaska to Midwest 26 Below. **Right column (from top):** Two women appreciate the copies of the *Missionary Prayer Handbook* they received; John Kinlaw helps listeners understand what being Christ’s ambassadors means.



sibility and our tendency to fall short. In “Character,” John challenged the attendees to live lives that are salty, weighty, and primed to act for Christ’s sake. Finally, in “Comprehension,” he implored them to understand the urgency of the day in which we live, the Gospel we proclaim, and the spiritual battle we face. They left with

the challenge to faithfully invite others to be reconciled to God.

Besides the ministry, the participants enjoyed daily prayer sessions, praying through several days of the *Missionary Prayer Handbook*. Meals and free time rounded out the weekend: the young people played sports ranging from volleyball to pickleball, talked with John Kinlaw and other missionaries, and built friendships with one another.

A calling for all believers

Our prayer is that every attendee left 26 Below reminded once again of who he or she is in Christ. The calling to represent Him is not reserved for a select few; it belongs to everyone who has been reconciled to God through Christ.

Similarly, the challenge of reaching the unreached is not merely a missionary issue but often an issue of misunderstanding the role we all play in the global spread of the Gospel. Some will go to the mission field. Others will faithfully support and pray for those who go. Many will remain in their home countries yet still have countless opportunities to represent Christ daily. Today, people from unreached backgrounds live and labor right in our own backyards: our neighborhoods, workplaces, and universities.

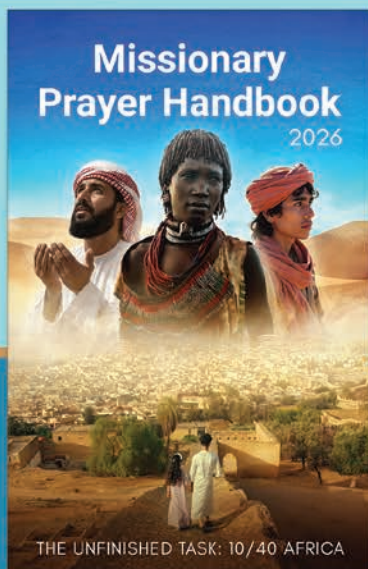


May this generation, and the next, not take for granted the incredible opportunity to participate in the proclamation of the Gospel—the very Gospel that has saved both you and me.

Learn more about the annual 26 Below Retreats on CMML’s website, CMML.us. We have scheduled our next event, a hybrid, one-day conference called Nationwide 26 Below, for Saturday, October 10, 2026. ■

Juanes Pineda, CMML youth engagement representative

Left: A pickleball match makes for a fun break during the Southeast 26 Below weekend. Right: A listener takes notes.



2026 MISSIONARY PRAYER HANDBOOK

The 2026 *Missionary Prayer Handbook* features 25 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.

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