

Lifeline

Keeping the Sunset family connected



Sovereign Peace

-Tim Burow

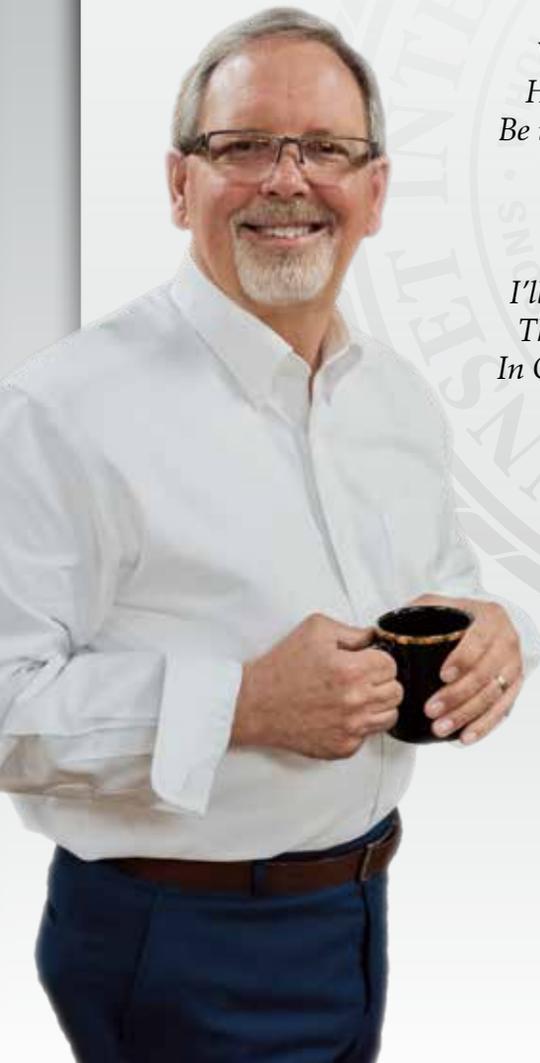
“Let the peace of Christ rule in your hearts, since as members of one body you were called to peace. And be thankful.” (Col. 3:15 NIV)

*There are hearts that ache for souls which have passed,
Memories held precious because dear ones can't last.
Departures kept track of and part of a role
Leave tears, odes, and stories of faith held till the goal.*

*In lands of conflict neath the specter of war,
Where brother kills brother since ties bind no more;
While extremists of faith spew messages of hate,
Justice lies victim as even blood and death cannot sate.*

*Where NOW the peace? Where NOW the joy?
How can one speak of these; what is this ploy?
Be thankful, he says, and let peace rule your heart,
To this you are called in Christ to take part.*

*With Christ as my Savior and fully my Lord,
I'll discover the peace that the world can't afford.
Thanksgiving comes when I count what I have;
In Christ, in one body my wounds find their salve.*



We pray that you are finding peace in our Savior and in his church. We also pray that you are being used by him in ministry to a hurt and dying world. There is so much to be encouraged about in Him, and we pray that you will find encouragement in this edition of Lifeline. If we can help you in any way in your relationship with Him, or in your service to Him, please let us know.

Tim Burow

RAISE THE BANNER

SHOUT HOSANNA

SUNSET
VISION
WORKSHOP
VISION

Save the Date
January 24-27, 2024

In this Issue

On the Cover

AIMer Titus Sheaffer praying with parents, Pat and Malissa, at AIM Send-off Chapel in April. Also pictured are fellow AIMers Ben Holland and Abigail Burns. All three of them will be serving in Mexico City soon.

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Lifeline

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of elders of the Sunset Church of Christ.


SUNSET
International Bible Institute

To Ukraine with Love



For the last year, SIBI has been involved in aiding refugees from the nation of Ukraine. When Russia invaded Ukraine's borders on February 25, 2022, people were forced to flee their homes, their livelihoods, even their families to seek shelter and assistance. Millions of displaced people, mostly women and children, made their way westward to the mountainous areas of Ukraine or into nations nearby, especially Poland, which has harbored perhaps more Ukrainian refugees than the rest of Europe combined. Most traveled with only what they could carry in hope that others would meet them with mercy in some form.

An extension of God's mercy is what SIBI has been sharing with these refugees from the beginning. We have taken very seriously the words of James that pure and undefiled religion is to visit the widows and fatherless. Our efforts are having an impact through the faithful actions of our alumni and donors. We are supplying food, emotional and psychological help, and spiritual care in many places through our Global Relief Ministry so that suffering may be relieved and Christ may be glorified. As a result, at present, over 7,000 people across Ukraine have food every day, plus other necessary living supplies.

Seeing God's Mercies at Work

On January 29, the day after our Annual Workshop, Richard Baggett and I departed early in the morning on flights through Dallas to Warsaw, Poland. There we spent a day adapting to the new time zone and meeting with a few of the brethren. Our plan was to travel south to Lublin and visit a big-box supply store where we would purchase canned and dried goods for transport into Ukraine to our warehouse in the western city of Ternopil. Our driver from Warsaw to the border was a Ukrainian Bible Institute alumnus who had worked in the city of Kharkiv but had been forced at the beginning of the war to seek safer territories for his family and their special needs child. I was very happy to see him and to know of his ministry among the saints and other refugees in Poland. A map and details of the trip are on the following pages.

The overall trip was about 2,200 miles over good, bad, and ugly roads. There were demolished bridges that needed to be circumvented and check points to be passed through, so I would have to say that this was one of the most physically challenging trips I have been on recently, not because of the work that had to be done but for the many hours bumping along in an uncomfortable van with my sciatic nerve and various arthritic joints complaining the whole way. The discomfort of the long days of travel was heightened by the cold while traveling and makeshift meals of gas station hot dogs. I assure you, I am not complaining and would do it all again. I merely want you to understand the "grueling" nature of the travel and schedule. Most days began with an early departure as we tried to keep an appointment in the mid- to late afternoon or to simply travel from city to city to meet with our ministry partners.

Seeing God's Blessings

I made this trip because I needed to verify with my own eyes what I understood to be happening through our Global Relief Ministry during this past year. I felt like I owed it to our board and to our donors to get a first-hand look at the good that is being accomplished as a result of the trust that many people have placed in SIBI in giving money to help in this tragic situation.

Over 6,000 people across Ukraine are fed every day through the combined efforts of Sunset International Bible Institute's Global Relief Ministry and its partners. Significant outreach efforts toward Ukrainian refugees are being implemented in European countries. Food, emotional and psychological help, and spiritual help through fellowship and Biblical messages are being provided in multiple locations.

To truly overcome evil with good in the case of this war in Ukraine, we will need to take a long-term, systemic approach. It is now apparent that this war and its effects will last for years. It will take a generation for things to become "right." We need to respond if we want to impact this important part of the world.

There is so much more that I would love to share that we are faithfully doing day in and day out to aid the refugees and build relationships that lead to a hopeful eternity. We are working to hold camps to meet children and parents. We are also doing what we call *Soul-Aid*, in which we help people heal their internal scars from the war through seminars and our newly published materials. God be praised for His mercy and for allowing us a small window to His great work through what is otherwise an unjust and terrible situation.

Finally, I would share with you my personal musings from my first trip back into Ukraine in a year. My mind was ready for the devastation because I followed it from the beginning of the war as Mariupol, our second home, was dismantled. The scarcity of certain products and electricity blackouts are not unusual to international travelers, and I simply pushed aside the air raid warnings and few missile strikes that happened 'near' me. All of these are material in nature and are simply not the point. The real point is the hurt inside the lives and hearts of people who have been displaced and are simply trying to survive. It is a pitiful and pathetic sight and feeling. You simply want to do more than you are currently doing and find yourself apologizing as people offer thanks and kisses because you and your people alone have remembered them. You also swell with pride as you see our brethren who are so committed to helping others, not just with food but with the bread of life. It reminds me that my teaching among them was not in vain. The humanitarian need is still great; the fields are still ripe. May God grant still more donors, workers, and fruit from our labors.

Tim Burow, President

Watch a video about Tim's recent trip by visiting <https://www.sunset.bible/to-ukraine-with-love> or use the QR code.



1,814,000 Meals

delivered in containers and distributed in Ukraine

25 Drivers

and vehicles to deliver aid and provide transportation

34 Aid Locations

across Ukraine (18 churches and 16 other centers)

>1,000 people

rescued and driven to safety

5 Outreach

programs for refugees in other places in Europe

1 BIG IMPACT



Belarus Беларусь

February 1 – We traveled from **Warsaw** to **Lublin**, to the border and then on to **Ternopil**.

Warsaw

February 12 – We worshipped in **Warsaw** with a primarily Ukrainian congregation made up of refugees. This group has grown to over 100 refugees meeting on Sundays.



February 13 – A group of Mariupol alumni now living in **Sopot, Poland**, visited us in **Warsaw**, and we discussed plans for the future.

February 3 – On the way to **Kyiv**, we traveled through **Zhytomyr** where we delivered aid to a nursing home that we have been helping.



Poland
Polska

Lublin

February 11 – We traveled from **Košice** back to **Warsaw**.

Zhytomyr
Житомир

February 9 – We left **Ternopil** and crossed the border to **Košice, Slovakia**, through the Carpathian mountains.



February 2 – We visited our warehouse in **Ternopil**, made grocery packages for families of refugees, and delivered those packages. Later, we loaded the cargo van with food to take to a nursing home the next day.



Slovakia
Slovensko

Lviv
Львів

Ternopil
Тернопіль

Košice

February 10 – We spent the day in **Košice** planning with **Ukrainian Bible Institute** leadership.



Romania



February 4 – In the morning we visited the work in **Irpın (NW of Kyiv)** and the work with the refugee center. This is one of the networks of UBI alumni-connected congregations. In the afternoon we visited the **Poznyaki** church in **Kyiv** during their weekly distribution of goods and meeting with refugees.



February 5 – We worshipped with the Poznyaki congregation and visited with **Alexander (Sasha) and Natasha Maliuga**.



Kyiv
Київ

February 8 – We visited another children's center in **Kyiv** and then went to **Ternopil** and spent the night near our warehouse.

Ukraine
Україна

Poltava
Полтава

February 7 – We drove to **Poltava** to meet Dema Grishchuk of *Let's Love*, visited a refugee center, and later visited the church. We returned late to Kyiv.



February 6 – We met with a Mariupol alumnus and *Volunteer Brothers* leader Denis, who drove us the next two days. We visited a women's and children's center, then a church/aid shelter in **Zaporizhzhia**.



Zaporizhzhia
Запоріжжя

Moldova



REDISCOVERING INDIA

Once again, I find myself surrounded by praises to God in a language I don't know. The last time, it was Haitian Creole. This time, it's Marathi, the principal language of the Indian state of Maharashtra. I don't understand the words, but I can mimic the Hindi-like sounds thanks to my early education in India. And that's enough to fill me with joy and peace. I'm in a rural part of central India participating in a church retreat. The theme this year: The Christian Home. My three days here are filled with times of singing, fellowship over meals and afternoon tea, and classes by different speakers addressing various aspects of the Christian family. Set on a hill overlooking a lake and green countryside, the venue is perfect. My mission in this picturesque setting: Meet new people and find ways to serve the Kingdom of God in northern India – an historically underserved area of the country.

The peace and tranquility of this retreat belies what's happening in many other parts of the country today.

The Current Religious Climate in India

Religious freedom in India is being eroded in unprecedented fashion, and this once-tolerant nation is becoming increasingly hostile to religious minorities, especially Christians and Muslims. For example, of the 28 states that constitute the republic, so far 11 have passed anti-conversion laws ostensibly to prevent forced conversions of Hindus to other religions. However, these laws contain vague and overbroad language, which critics say is designed to target, harass, and oppress minorities. With the blessing of the party currently in power, Hindu extremist groups are doing just that. Early this year, Christians in the central state of Chhattisgarh came under violent attack, which left around 1,500 of them homeless. The US Commission on International Religious Freedom (USCIRF) summarized the situation in its 2022 report:

The Indian government at the national, state, and local levels continued to promote and enforce policies, including laws targeting religious conversion, interfaith relationships, and cow slaughter, that negatively affect Muslims, Christians, Sikhs, Dalits, and

Adivasis (indigenous and scheduled tribal people). The national government also continued to suppress critical voices—particularly religious minorities and those advocating on their behalf—including through surveillance, harassment, demolition of property, arbitrary travel bans, and detention under the Unlawful Activities Prevention Act (UAPA) and by targeting nongovernmental organizations (NGOs) under the Financial Contribution (Regulation) Act (FCRA).

Religious minorities continue to face targeted violence and discrimination for being perceived as a threat to Hinduism. Authorities, including police, at times assist Hindu nationalist vigilante groups.¹

Recent History

It wasn't always this way, however. People of various faiths had managed to live in relative harmony with each other despite their major theological and philosophical disagreements. Though Hinduism had been a core feature of the Indian subcontinent for four millennia, this

¹ 2022 India Country Update. USCIRF (2022). www.uscifr.gov/sites/default/files/2022%20India%20Country%20Update.pdf

former British colony was established as a secular nation at its founding in 1947². The founding fathers saw India as a Hindu nation but nevertheless made provisions in the country's constitution to protect the rights of religious minorities.

Christianity thrived under these conditions. As recently as a few decades ago, foreign missionaries lived and worked in the country with little trouble. Under the banner of India City Evangelism, for example, people like Gary Walker, Victor Ellison, Paul Wheeler, and many others—from Sunset and elsewhere—planted churches in several major Indian cities. They held gospel campaigns at public venues and distributed evangelistic materials freely. My dad became a Christian because of such efforts, and he was just one of hundreds, if not thousands, who obeyed the gospel in those years. There was occasional resistance to these efforts, but they were largely confined to rural hinterlands where Hinduism held a monopoly on religious belief. But even then, the most ardent Hindus often recognized the peaceful nature of Christians, the quality of Christian educational institutions, and the value of Christian moral teachings.

But those days are quickly fading from memory. So what's next for this country, my native land?

Looking Ahead

India is growing quickly and is projected to surpass China this year as the world's most populous nation. More than half of this population is under 30 years old, and only a quarter is above 45³. Today, around 73% of Indians are literate, compared to just 41% in 1981. Almost 700 million Indians regularly use the Internet, and this number grows by the day.⁴ India's economy is highly diversified and regularly exports products, services, and well-educated professionals. There is also a large and growing middle class with considerable discretionary income that simply didn't exist 20 years ago. All this is to say that Indian society has undergone a radical transformation in the past few decades. This new India has different needs and challenges, and it requires a rethinking of mission and ministry strategies.

Below I propose three areas on which we would do well to focus our attention:

1. **The Internet** — Increasing numbers of Indians are regularly on the Internet and social media. Future mission efforts will benefit greatly from this medium because it provides easy access to large numbers of people, it's cost-effective, and most importantly it's a form of communication that is not as easily censored by the government. Churches—especially ones that engage in work overseas—cannot afford not to have a strong Internet and social media presence.
2. **Equipping** — This is no different from what missionaries have done in the past. However, the object of equipping now seems to be to “equip the equippers” more than ever before. There are at least a couple of

2 “Secularism: Why Nehru dropped and Indira inserted the S-word in the Constitution.” *Indian Express* (2017). www.indianexpress.com/article/research/anant-kumar-hegde-secularism-constitution-india-bjp-jawaharlal-nehru-indira-gandhi-5001085/

3 *India: Demographic trends*. Britannica. <https://www.britannica.com/place/India/Demographic-trends>

4 “Digital population across India as of February 2023.” Statista. <https://www.statista.com/statistics/309866/india-digital-population-by-type/>



The Northern India Church Retreat

generations of faithful disciples in the church in India, and they are facing some new challenges. These men and women require guidance, spiritual support, and mentoring relationships as they help to nurture and mature the flock under their care and cultivate new leaders for their congregations and ministry initiatives.

3. **Advocating** — This refers to finding nontraditional ways of supporting the work of the Kingdom in India. Historically, churches from the US sent missionaries, money, or both. Now, the former is virtually impossible to do (even simple evangelism carries stiff penalties including fines and imprisonment in many places) and the latter is fraught with problems (fraud, government scrutiny, fostering dependence, etc.). Current ways to help might rely more heavily on workshops and seminars that equip Christians and church leaders for the work of ministry in preaching, teaching, counseling, evangelizing, etc. Also, as more Christians face the threat of religious persecution through the judicial system, helping to provide legal resources and support will be important. There are countless other ways to advocate for our Indian brothers and sisters, but perhaps the best way to find out how to help is simply to ask them.

As we renew our focus on India and rethink our mission strategy, I am confident we will leave a legacy of spiritually mature brothers and sisters who are thoroughly equipped for every good work. Good stewardship demands nothing less.

When all is said and done, one question remains: Did I accomplish my mission at the church retreat in rural Maharashtra? Well, I made new friends, met brothers and sisters I didn't know before, and have a much clearer view of the work that needs to be done. So I'd say I've taken the first step.

—Princeton Palmer, Dean of Ministry Training for Asia

A word of caution: Most Indians support religious diversity.⁵ The average Indian, like the average American, likes to be left alone and leaves others alone. Many are opposed to the persecution of religious minorities, and some are actively opposed to the extremist laws, attitudes, and behaviors mentioned earlier. Also, anti-Christian attitudes are not uniform across the country, with states in the south generally being less affected than those in the central and northern parts. All this is to say that **the problem the church is facing in India is Hindu extremism, not the average Hindu**. I pray that India, my birthplace, will once again become an open and welcoming nation to the gospel of peace.

5 “Religion in India: Tolerance and Segregation.” Pew Research Center (2021). <https://www.pewresearch.org/religion/2021/06/29/religion-in-india-tolerance-and-segregation/>

SOLAR MISSION

SEND THE LIGHT

The Solar Mission continues to supply mission points around the world with solar-powered audio players filled with the Bible and Biblical teaching to equip church leaders around the world with teaching from SIBI. Last year several Sunset teachers met Daniel Morgan, a missionary serving in Manaus, Brazil, at the headwaters of the mighty Amazon River. The Amazon is the largest river in the world by volume of water and is second only to the Nile in length, almost 4,000-miles long. Roberval Pinheiro was one of several hundred people who received Solar Players on that trip. Since then, Roberval has been traveling several days by boat to visit remote villages along the Amazon and its tributaries. He has baptized many and planted new congregations using the Portuguese language Solar Player. Most of the people in these villages have no electricity, and many cannot read. Please pray for Roberval and his family as they make the long and dangerous journey to follow up on new converts in many of these villages.



Roberval baptizing a new convert

An Urgent Message from Cuba

Her name is Bertha Carbonell. She lives in Santiago, Cuba, some 600 miles from Havana. In her small congregation she is a teacher of the women of the church. Recently, someone loaned her a Sunset Solar Player. She wrote an urgent letter to us, pleading for us to give her a Solar Player she could keep, to help her in her teaching ministry. She also wants one for her husband, who works in a city near Havana and can only get home about once a month. She wants her husband to be able to study God's Word while he is far away on his job. Her son is a university student in another city and needs a Solar Player to help him study the Bible with his friends on the university campus. Our team of "preacher training" faculty will be in Havana, Cuba, to help in the training of 31 more gospel preachers. They are taking a supply of Solar Players and will see that Bertha, her husband, and her son receive Solar Players in the Spanish language to help them in study, teaching, and evangelism.

We receive many requests for Solar Players from people in many parts of the world. We can't fill all the requests, but this request from a wife and mother whose husband and son are separated from her so much of the time touched our hearts. Please keep our sister Carbonell in your prayers, along with other Christians in Cuba who face many challenges in their personal and spiritual lives.



SOLAR DELIVERIES ARE SCHEDULED FOR DOMINICAN REPUBLIC, HAITI, CUBA, KENYA, SOUTH SUDAN, ETHIOPIA, UGANDA, ZAMBIA, ZIMBABWE, MALAWI, CAMEROON and ANGOLA

By the time you receive this report, some of our team members will be preparing to travel, some will be on the way, and others will already be in the nations listed above, providing Solar Players in four different languages to church leaders, new converts, and truth seekers. Solar Players packed in suitcases are sometimes targeted by customs agents. Please pray that the gospel will not be hindered and that the right people will receive these "gospel tools."

If you would like to send Solar Players, please contact Truitt Adair, tadair@sunset.bible or 806-788-3241.

—Truitt Adair, Chancellor (this report was part of the Solar Mission Update mailed in April)



What a wonderful weekend we had celebrating 50 years of AIM! It was such a blessing to have so many alumni here to share in the festivities with us. We loved reminiscing, hugging necks, and sharing in so much fun and fellowship. God continues to do amazing things through AIM, and we are grateful that so many are a part of that story.

The weekend began Friday night with a night of great fellowship and continued on Saturday with words of encouragement from Joe Bright, a member of the first AIM team, which went to Dublin, Ireland; Nat Cooper; past directors of AIM (Rex Boyles, Jay Jarboe, and Kris Smith); and the current director, Cory Burns. The afternoon concluded with the graduation of the class of 2023. On Sunday morning AIM alumni, current AIMers, CampAdventure students, and children from the Sunset Church of Christ participated in a special flag presentation that filled most of the auditorium (see bottom picture).

May God continue to accomplish His mission through AIM.





AIM HOUSING FOR THE NEXT GENERATION

Last year, the apartment complex where our AIMers live was sold, and the new owners significantly raised the rent. AIM was paying \$82,360 a year, including utilities, for 12 units. This was a discounted rate because the previous owners were members of the church, and they saw it as their way of partnering with the AIM ministry. AIM is now paying \$104,400 a year plus utilities, and the new owners will raise the rent to \$116,000 next year. With rent going up, the time has come to secure our own housing. Having permanent housing will allow us to put our AIM students in higher-quality housing that is in a safer location and closer to Sunset while also saving money in the long run. It will also put AIM in a position where we don't have to negotiate rent year after year with rising prices.

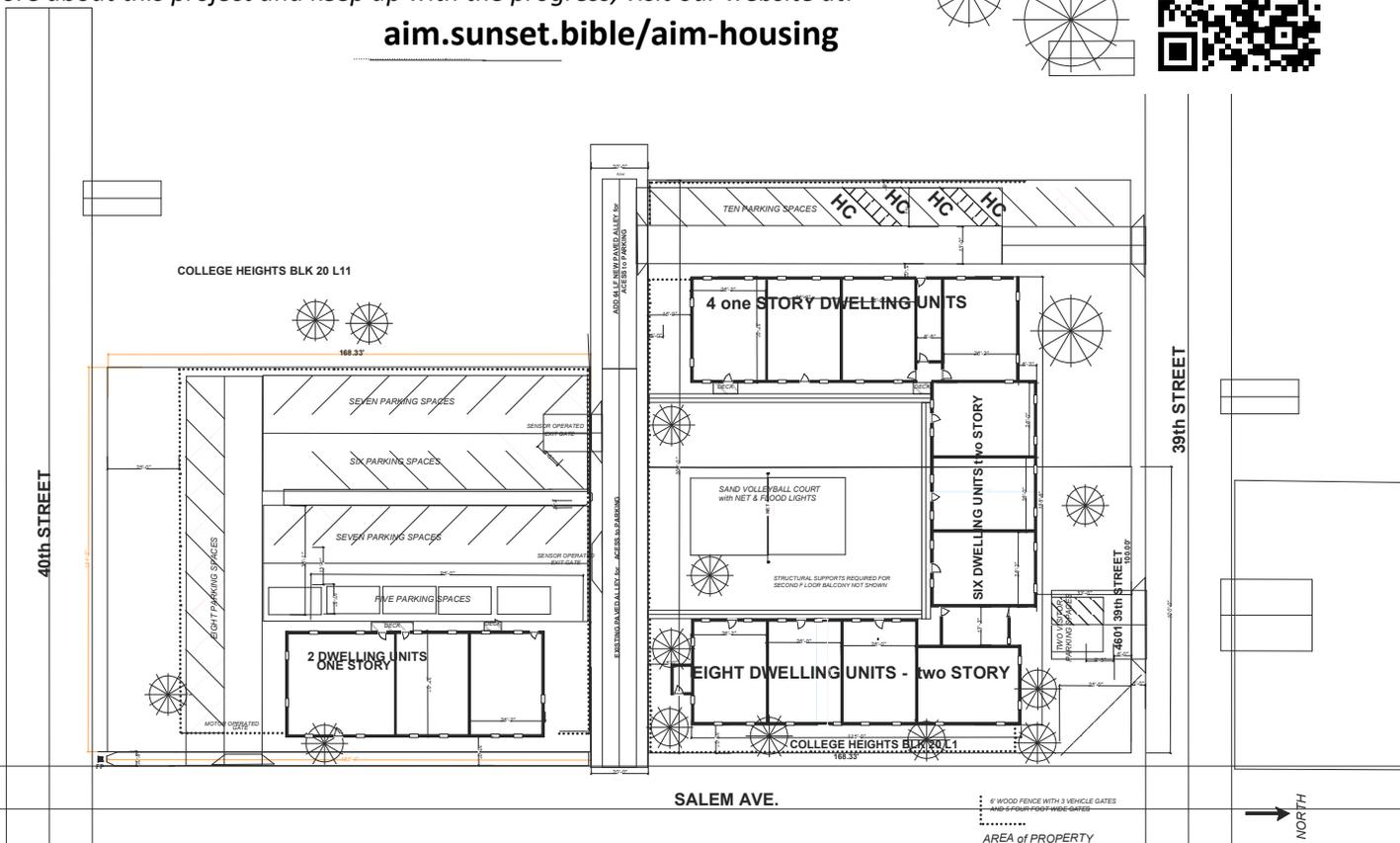
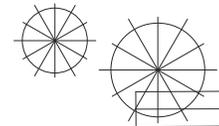
We were blessed to purchase a property within one mile of the Sunset Church of Christ. This is a step of faith. Presently the land on 39th Street and Salem Avenue has been cleared, and we are waiting for the plans and permits to be finalized. We should break ground at the beginning of June. It should be completed by April 2024. *The cost should be about \$4.5 million.* There will be 20 units, which will allow us to have classes of up to 80 students.

While this seems like an ambitious goal for such a short time, we have already seen great generosity from people and are certain that many others will be willing to be a part of this major step for AIM and its future. In November, a generous donor challenged AIM to match a \$500,000 gift before the end of 2022. Many stepped forward and helped provide the first million dollars to get the project going. Please consider giving to help support the new AIM Student Housing. You can use the form in Lifeline to send in a check or give online using the link or the QR code.

–Cory Burns, Director of Adventures in Missions

To learn more about this project and keep up with the progress, visit our website at:

aim.sunset.bible/aim-housing



6" WOOD FENCE WITH 3 VEHICLE GATES
AND 5-FOUR FOOT WIDE GATES

AREA OF PROPERTY
 $135 \times 168 = 22680$
 $100 \times 168 = 16800$
 $100 \times 168 = 16800$

TOTAL AREA = 56280
 40% = 22512

AREA OF BUILDINGS

$137 \times 115 = 4255$	8510
$137 \times 79 = 2923$	5846
	14356

AIM

ADVENTURES IN MISSIONS

Class of 2023



Gabriel Abarca
João Pessoa, Brazil*



Grace Boswell
João Pessoa, Brazil



Samantha Brunson
Apaxco, Mexico



Josey Cheromiah
João Pessoa, Brazil*



Daycee DeWindt
João Pessoa, Brazil*



Maycie Foster
Apaxco, Mexico



Cora Harris
Mexico City, Mexico



Joshua Kite
Albuquerque, NM



Adam Kuenning
João Pessoa, Brazil



Shailey Mahaffy
Apaxco, Mexico



Bethany Montgomery
Mexico City, Mexico



Nicholas Newlin
Apaxco, Mexico



Aidan Perry
Apaxco, Mexico



Natalie Pirkle
Wasilla, AK



Quincy Rush
Mexico City, Mexico



Anna Grace Russell
Apaxco, Mexico



Gracie Schelbrack
Wasilla, AK



Sarron Simpson
Albuquerque, NM



Cameron Stark
Mexico City, Mexico

These young men and women began AIM in August 2020, completed eight months of training in Lubbock, completed their field time, and graduated from AIM in March 2023.

* Due to visa issues, part of the João Pessoa team also served in Sulfur, Louisiana, with Churches of Christ Disaster Relief Effort with Brian Spicer (AIM '89).

YES, I/we will help. Enclosed is my one-time gift in the amount of \$ _____.

YES, I/we will help on a monthly basis in the amount of \$ _____ per month.

Please use my money for:

Global Relief Ministry AIM Student Housing Student Scholarships Anywhere it is needed

You may also give online by clicking the "Donate" button at www.sunset.bible

Name: _____ Email: _____

Address: _____ Phone: _____

City: _____ State: _____ Zip: _____

Credit Card Number: _____ Expiration Date: _____

Credit Card Type: Visa / Mastercard / Discover _____ CVV/CID: _____



MEMORIAL & HONOR GIFTS

July 1, 2022 – March 31, 2023

In Honor of

Adair, Truitt
 Adair, Truitt & Kay Adair
 Akin, Laura
 Anderson, Bob
 Anderson, Neil & Glenda
 Armstrong, Ann
 Baker, Kevin
 Black, Tom & Cheryl
 Bridges, David & Judy
 Cooper, Nat & Jean
 Eddleman, Charlene
 Evans, Johnny
 Evans, Johnny & Cynthia
 Foster, Mary Alice
 Fox, Ron & Patti
 Habashy, Hala
 Harber, Christine

 Henderson, Keeci
 Huntley, Terry & Janet
 Johnson, Lowell & Orpha
 Jones, Stuart & Cecilia
 Kearney, Margaret
 Kiker, Joyce
 Langhans, David & Nettie
 Marcum, Kent & Sharla
 Pettyjohn, Monty & Diana

 Roberts, Sammie
 Rush, Carolyn
 Shank, Harold & Sally
 SIBI Employees
 Smith, Mary Ann
 Southerland, Delores

Given by

Royce Sartain
 Gary Dodd
 Michael Sikta
 Ron Bontrager
 Gary Dodd
 Gary Dodd
 Phyllis Cox
 Bob & Jan Crockett
 Terry & Janet Huntley
 Joyce Brown
 Phyllis Cox
 Phyllis Cox
 Carolyn Rush & Family
 Joyce Brown
 The Mac Farrar Family
 Bob & Jan Crockett
 Debbie Earl
 LaMoine Harrison
 Joyce Brown
 David & Judy Bridges
 Joyce Brown
 The Mac Farrar Family
 Phyllis Cox
 Phyllis Cox
 Gary Dodd
 Gary Dodd
 Phyllis Cox
 The Mac Farrar Family
 Phyllis Cox
 Joyce Brown
 Gary Bodine
 Gary Dodd
 Phyllis Cox
 Joyce Brown

In Honor of

Sturdivant, Carolyn
 Turner, Gwen
 Van Slyke, Steve & Leona
 Wagner, Hank & Linda
 Yedor, Bernie

In Memory of

Adams, James Etta
 Albert, Mary

Alford, Don
 Anderson, Louise

Anderson, Rosalee

Given by

Joyce Brown
 Joyce Brown
 Gary Dodd
 The Mac Farrar Family
 Walter & Mary Gale

Given by

Bonnie Douglas
 Carolyn Bell
 Mike & Mary Wischkaemper
 Truitt & Kay Adair
 The Mac Farrar Family
 Amy Leeburton
 Andrew Tanner
 Ann Wright
 Bob & Jan Crockett
 Bonnie Douglas
 Carolyn Bell
 David & Vi Turnbough
 Earlene Johnson
 Ernestine Maynard
 Leslie & Debbie Bills
 Mike & Mary Wischkaemper
 The Mac Farrar Family
 Tim Tanner
 Truitt & Kay Adair
 Wynelle Wagon
 Bob & Jan Crockett
 Dr. Al & Iris Sneed
 LaMoine Harrison
 Cheryl Evans
 Darla Fleece
 Delores Southerland
 Don & Phyllis Williams
 Gwen Turner
 Jack & Keeci Henderson

In Memory of

Anderson, Rosalee

 Anderson, Rubye

Aranda, Ruben
 Armstrong, Lee
 Baker, Kevin

Baker, Linvel
 Bardell, Valerie
 Barr, Addie
 Bates, Harold
 Beadles, Bob
 Beard, Kevin
 Bela, Vincenta
 Blanco, Simon and Mary
 Boucher, Janis

 Boyd, Glen
 Brandon, Bob

Given by

Lawanna Smith
 Mike & Mary Wischkaemper
 Terry & Jean Hines
 Bob & Jan Crockett
 Brian & Joyce Allamon
 Carolyn Sturdivant
 Delores Southerland
 Gwen Turner
 Johnny & Kay Shepard
 LaMoine Harrison
 Luciana Murphy
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David Anthony Swinford was born in Wichita Falls, Texas, on June 28, 1941, to Oley and Hazel Swinford. He passed peacefully into the arms of God on Saturday, December 31, 2022, at the age of 81. David attended Frenship High School, South Plains College, and Texas Tech University, where he achieved a BS in Agriculture Education. David married Joyce Swinford on June 19, 1964, at the Wolfforth Church of Christ. Shortly thereafter, they moved to Dumas, Texas, and made it their home. In 1965, their son David Christopher Swinford was born, and in 1967, they welcomed Melissa Rae Swinford Bates. Beginning in 1991, David served in the Texas House of Representatives for almost 20 years.



David was a devoted Christian. Not only did he love serving the congregation where he and Joyce worshiped, Sunray Church of Christ, but David helped facilitate the spreading of the gospel all around the world through his partnership with the Sunset International Bible Institute in Lubbock. He served for many years on the Sunset Council for SIBI, helped with capital campaigns, and helped initiate the process for SIBI to offer religious degrees in Texas. His tireless support and facilitation of a matching grant program from Sunray Church of Christ for SIBI's Solar Mission helped deliver the word of God to thousands around the world.

At the SIBI Vision Workshop in January, David was honored with the Truitt & Kay Adair World Changer Award for his contributions to spreading the gospel around the world. David's children, Chris Swinford and Melissa Bates, accepted the award on his behalf.



DEPARTURES

Louise Anderson ('91), 92, of Lubbock, Texas, passed away on August 19, 2022. The most important part of Louise's life was her faith in God. She was very active in the church, teaching Bible classes to all ages and, following her marriage to Bob, working with the deaf ministry. She supported many missionaries she met through Sunset and several AIM students.



Kevin Baker, 88, of Lubbock, Texas, passed away on January 16, 2023. Kevin was a compassionate friend to many. Kevin and Ann were honored by the Adventures in Missions program for their generosity and dedication to spreading the Gospel of Christ to the world.



Mike Biggs ('79), 79, of Lindale, Texas, passed away on August 14, 2022. "Mike's preaching always stayed true to scripture and he touched many hearts and souls for Christ. Even with his last breath, through his sufferings, Mike's faith never faltered". Joy Biggs (wife)

David Boyles ('95), 48, of Lubbock, Texas, passed away on November 3, 2022.

Bill Bradley (WFR '84), 95, saw his Savior face to face on February 14, 2022. Bill was born on June 26, 1926. Bill was a Navy veteran who spent two years on a destroyer during World War II. At age 58 Bill graduated from the White's Ferry Road School of Biblical Studies in West Monroe, Louisiana, began an inner-city ministry at Park Avenue Church of Christ, assisted with the prison ministry at Westlake Church of Christ, and authored three books.



Sandra Brough, 79, of Woodward, Oklahoma, passed away on January 24, 2023. Sandra was the wife of **Terry Brough ('82)**. She selflessly served right beside Terry as he preached for the churches of Christ in Raton, New Mexico; Sturgis, South Dakota; and Gilbert, Arizona.



Guy Burkett ('82), of Hermitage, Pennsylvania, passed away on July 12, 2022. Further details are not available at the time of publication.

Justin Carroll ('06), 42, of Sulphur, Louisiana, passed away on January 26, 2023. Left to cherish his memory are his wife Ashley, five children, his parents, and four siblings.



Norman Clayton ('84), 80, of Lubbock, Texas, passed away on September 21, 2022. He owned and operated Norman Clayton's Guide Services at Lake Alan Henry, where he enjoyed sharing his love of fishing with his friends and clients. When



he wasn't fishing, he could be found reading his Bible or a good Western novel.

Betty Childers, 89, of Katy, Texas, passed away peacefully on January 5, 2021, after a long and courageous battle with cancer and vascular dementia.

Stan Cook (WFR '85), 62, of Gadsden, Alabama, passed away on September 18, 2021. Stan and Lisa both attended the White's Ferry Road School of Biblical Studies. Upon completing studies, they moved on to several places where Stan served as a full-time minister in the Churches of Christ.



Jim Dando ('65), 91, of Springfield, Missouri, passed away on March 22, 2022. He was in the first graduating class of Sunset International Bible Institute in Lubbock, Texas, and was proud to have preached the Gospel for more than sixty years.



Boyce Edwards ('70), 79, from Temple, Texas, passed away on September 11, 2022. Boyce studied at the Sunset School of Preaching in Lubbock, Texas. Boyce served as a minister at the Killeen church of Christ for 34 years before retiring in 2020.



Einar Engøy, 91, from Norway, who studied at Sunset School of Preaching from 1971-1972, died peacefully on January 30, 2023. He was converted in 1958 and was a faithful disciple of Jesus, a student, and a teacher of God's Word until his death.

Mary Flanary, 79, of Lubbock, Texas, passed away on October 12, 2022, in the presence of her children. Mary was the wife of **Sammy Flanary ('73)**. Together, they were a dynamic missionary couple and devoted themselves to the ministry of the gospel of Jesus throughout the world.



Nita Fondy (AIM '79) The school has been notified that Nita passed away. Further details are unavailable at the time of publication.

Brenda Fox, 68, of Groesbeck, Texas, passed away on February 11, 2023. Brenda was the wife of **Clifton Fox ('79)**. Early in life, she and Clif chose to serve Christ in ministry for the Church of Christ, and they both entered Sunset International Bible Institute in Lubbock. She served the Lord faithfully with him through college and during 40-plus years of ministry as a marvelous preacher's wife.



Glen Gray ('67), 81, of Chattanooga, Tennessee, passed away on December 3, 2022. Glen graduated from the Sunset School of Preaching in 1967. He spent his entire adulthood preaching the life of his Lord, Jesus Christ. Glen and Anne worked as missionaries in New Zealand and ministered in Louisiana, Colorado, Texas, Nebraska, Iowa, and Tennessee. Glen's life and art were focused on imitating God's greatest art, Jesus Christ, throughout his life and ministry.



Hala Habashy, 53, of Cairo, Egypt, passed away on November 24, 2022. Hala was the wife of **Alfred Habashy ('11)**. Together they served as missionaries in Cairo. Hala was a mentor to younger women and a servant to her elders. She will be greatly missed by all.



Don Hatch ('71), 84, of San Antonio, Texas, passed away on October 17, 2022. Don was loved by all who knew him and he will be greatly missed.

Randy Henderson, 73, of Lockney, Texas, passed away on March 6, 2023. Randy was a member of the Main Street Church of Christ in Lockney. Randy took great pride in his relationships with students in Lubbock's Adventures in Missions (AIM) program.



Karen Johnson (AIM '80) The school has been notified that Karen has passed away. Further details are not available at the time of publication.

Melburn Johnson, 91, of Clovis, New Mexico, passed away on January 25, 2023. Melburn was involved in many aspects of the work at 16th and Pile Church of Christ; he served as a Deacon for years and then as an Elder for 32 years.



Aline Kelly ('01), 85, of Enis, Texas, passed away on March 10, 2023. Aline was a Country Club Church of Christ member and had been a missionary to Mexico.



Jack Mattingley ('11), 55, of New Harmony, Utah, passed away on April 8, 2023. Jack came from Alaska to study at SIBI, where he met and married Belinda, then returned to Nome. Jack suffered from a rare form of dementia.



Ken Miller, 89, of Temple, Texas, passed away on February 18, 2023. Ken was passionate about spreading the gospel of Jesus Christ through education ministry to children and adults.



Duane Morgan ('70), 79, of Taman Saga, Malaysia, passed away on February 11, 2023. Duane was a missionary in Papua New Guinea, Indonesia, and Malaysia.



Andy Rogers ('70), 87, of Antlers, Oklahoma, passed away on May 18, 2022. After attending Sunset School of Preaching, he became known as the Cowboy Preacher.

Loveta Sartain, 84, of Beaver Falls, Pennsylvania, was called to her eternal resting place on April 14, 2021. Loveta was the wife of **Royce Sartain ('71)**.



Terry "Shelly" Shellcrosslee ('71), 77, of Colorado Springs, Colorado, passed away on January 20, 2022. He felt a great calling into the life of ministry. Upon graduating from Sunset School of Preaching in 1971, Terry ministered in several states for the Church of Christ. He was a missionary in Fort Defiance, Arizona. He learned the Navajo language and established a church that is still in existence today.



Gary Smith ('75), 73, of Fort Worth, Texas, passed away on January 10, 2022.

Delores Southerland, 87, of Lubbock, Texas, passed away on January 21, 2023. Delores managed the funeral meals held at the Sunset church of Christ for over 35 years. She served in the Extension Office of the Sunset School of Preaching with the Tape of the Month Program for 6 years.



Mack Thompson ('67), 81, from Phoenix, Arizona, passed away on October 4, 2022. Mack was a faithful man of God for 56 years, developing and delivering mature sermons, teaching lessons biblically based, "sound in doctrine." His goal was to provide answers from the word of God for the problems and crises facing the brotherhood.

Dwight Whitsett ('67), 81, of Abilene, Texas, passed away on February 20, 2023. After graduating from Sunset, Dwight served as an evangelist in Adelaide, South Australia. After returning to the United States in 1976, Dwight continued to develop churches and leaders in the Oceania region. Dwight worked as a missionary trainer in the SIBI School of Missions and as the Dean of Ministry Training for Oceania from 2003 until 2011 when he retired to take care of Brenda as her health declined. *"When a great work and an equally great person come together there is promise of much good. Dwight has a passion for ministry in the South Pacific, tempered and enriched by three decades of fruitful experience. As a gifted speaker, writer, and church planter he has provided superb leadership in recruiting, in ministry training, and mission encouragement. He is genuine, entirely trustworthy, and dedicated."* — Truman Scott



Brenda Whitsett of Abilene, Texas, passed away on April 4, 2023. She was the wife of **Dwight Whitsett ('67)**.

Barbara Williams, 77, of Highlands, Texas, passed away on April 3, 2022. She was the wife of **Earl Williams ('72)**. She married Earl at the age of 16 and became a mother at 17. Afterward, she dedicated her life to serving her family.



Earl Williams ('72) of Highlands, Texas, passed away on March 31, 2023. He loved God first. He walked with God, talked with God, talked about God. He served as an evangelist for many years traveling in the Three Unusual Days Ministry. He also served as a missionary in India, the Philippine Islands, Hawaii, and over 25 missions to Ukraine.



Ruby Wilson, 94, of Lubbock, Texas, passed away on February 25, 2023. Ruby was the wife of **Norman Wilson ('71)**.

Ken Young ('81), 77, of Maple Grove, Minnesota, passed away on April 29, 2021. After graduating from the Sunset School of Preaching in Lubbock, Texas, he served as the pulpit minister in Braman, Oklahoma; Lewisville, Arkansas; and Linden, Texas.



Correction: In the previous edition of Lifeline we incorrectly stated that David and Vicky Finch went to Africa before moving to Taiwan. The Finches only did mission work in Taiwan and never went to Africa.

More Than Just

PRECIOUS MEMORIES

By Gary W. Dodd, Advancement Representative

Originally published in the spring 2023 issue of *Abundant Living Magazine*.

“How long are you going to leave her pictures on the mantel?” “Are you still sleeping in your husband’s pajamas?” “When will you quit wearing your wedding ring?” “It has been six months. Shouldn’t you be over this by now?”

These questions are a sample of some that grieving people have shared in bereavement therapy groups I have coordinated. These questions left them feeling misunderstood and inadequate, and they did not feel encouraged or helped by attempts to tell them how to handle their grief.

This article is not based on my own scholarly research. While I have read and studied other people’s research, I want to share what I have learned through the course of my life. My family, the culture in which I have lived, my education, my spiritual influences, my work in palliative care, my connections with past generations, and my personal experiences with death inform this article. I acknowledge that my experiences with death and grief may overlap or differ in part or extensively from yours.

TO BREAK OR NOT TO BREAK?

When someone you are connected to dies, suddenly or over a period of time, you emotionally and physically experience the breaking of those bonds in your life and heart. Whether you have had a healthy or unhealthy relationship with the deceased, the initial reality of your physical loss and separation will impact you in ways that are both unique to you and similar to others at the same time. As the shock of death lessens, the reality of your multiple losses increases. The predominant expectation for most of the past century in Western culture was that those who experience grief and mourning need to “let go” in order to move forward and not get “stuck” in their grieving process.

Elizabeth Kubler-Ross, a Swiss-American psychiatrist and pioneer in near-death studies, defined five stages of

grief that people often experience during the process of dying and death: denial, anger, bargaining, depression and acceptance (*On Death and Dying*, 1969). While it is helpful to recognize these stages, we must avoid a tendency to reduce them into a linear process through which all people move seamlessly. People that have dealt with grief and mourning will tell you that you do not climb a proverbial staircase, successfully navigating the stages of grief by getting over denial, stepping up to the next stair to overcome anger, etc. What we find when we approach the end of life or deal with the death of a person to whom we are attached is that we can move back and forth between the stages of grief. The stages can differ in their intensity from one person to another, and the stages can overlap each other. Well-meaning people may tell you that you need to move through these stages, release yourself from a relationship that is in the past, and advance into a new relationship, but that might not be true for you.

In 1996, Klass, Silverman, and Nickman, three psychologists who specialize in grief studies, edited a book that compiled data from research gathered by 22 authors among numerous populations dealing with death and grieving, entitled *Continuing Bonds: New Understandings of Grief*. The data they present refuted the idea that appropriately staying connected with a deceased person is unhealthy or pathological, and determined that people do remain attached at varying levels to people that die. The editors reveal ways that bereaved people seek resolution to their grief by continuing bonds with people that pass away based on their culture, personal values, varying philosophies, and/or spiritual beliefs.

TO MOVE ON OR CONTINUE BONDS?

Do you have a choice to not completely break the bonds you shared with another person, or may you choose to continue those bonds in healthy ways? This question expands our thinking on how people experience loss and how they respond to it. And the truth is that some cultures' practices have emphasized for a much longer period of time the value of continuing bonds with those that have died. Disparities in dealing with grief raise the question, “Is the bereavement process more than just breaking away from the person that has died and moving on?”

The Bible acknowledges and teaches the value of remembering. It goes beyond the sentiments of precious memories and reveals the power of memory. When God instructed Adam and Eve to “be fruitful and multiply” (Gen. 1:28; see also Gen. 9:1), His intent was that they would teach their children to remember God’s love for them and to love Him in return. God instructed Israel to remember His grace and delivery of them from Egyptian bondage by celebrating the Passover, and to instruct their children to do so as well (Exod. 12).

Likewise, Jesus instructed His disciples to partake of weekly of symbols of His body that would be offered and the blood He would shed on the cross, and to remember and to proclaim His death until He appeared a second time (1 Cor. 11:23-26). And in Revelation, Jesus commanded the church in Ephesus to remember the spiritual heights from which they had fallen and to repent so that their relationship with God could be restored (Rev. 2:5).

When you remember those with whom you have had bonds in your life, those memories can help in resolving your grief. If you have ongoing issues with the deceased, it is fine to see a therapist and to learn helpful techniques to address the “unfinished business.” If you had a healthy relationship, you should feel natural in talking about it and sharing stories with others. It is not unusual to sense the presence of the deceased when you are engaged in activities you once shared, such as worship, holidays, mealtimes, and special events. It can be helpful to plan and participate in rituals to honor or memorialize the person. You can plan and participate in legacy projects that memorialize the deceased, such as releasing butterflies or balloons or joining in walks or races. You may choose to display symbols that remind you of the person’s character and values or significant moments you shared together.

FIND SPIRITUAL RESOURCES

You are not alone in your grief. The “God of all comfort, who comforts us in all our troubles...” is with you always (2 Cor. 1:3-4). We see throughout the New Testament that Jesus experienced grief and compassionately involved Himself in the lives of people during His earthly existence. His mercy and grace are available to help us in times of need (Heb. 4:14-16). The Spirit of God Himself intercedes for us with “wordless groans” (Rom. 8:26-27), and members of the family of God comfort one another as well (2 Cor. 1:4).

Our experiences in life, including our experiences with grief, interconnect with all of the things that shape us. This is true of our connections, or lack thereof, with our families of origin and our relationships with our neighbors, our culture, our spiritual heritage, our faith, and our perspectives on life. When we listen and learn, we know we are not islands.

I do not believe that time is a healer. But I do believe that time allows us to heal and to move forward. Many approaches exist to help you deal with grief, and I want to encourage you to acknowledge the bonds that exist between you and people that have died or will die. Bonds are dynamic and can change in many ways. You may choose to address ongoing issues with the deceased, which will hopefully lead to peace in your heart. You may also discover the value of continuing those bonds in different ways and find that they are more than just precious memories.

Gary Dodd works with Sunset International Bible Institute, speaking on their behalf at churches and lectureships. He also works as a nurse practitioner in Tennessee, where he lives with his wife, Faith. They have two adult children and five grandchildren.





HAND-COPYING THE BIBLE

By Jon K. Smith
AIM '83 • SIBI 2017

It began as a curiosity, changed into a hobby, and eventually became a labor of love and learning.

While a Bible major at Lubbock Christian University in the 1980s, I was enrolled in a course entitled History of the Bible. This included the history of the transmission of the Biblical text, which, prior to Gutenberg's printing press, was done by hand. At some point I began to wonder, "How long does it take to hand-copy the entire Bible?" During the 1990s, while serving as a youth minister, I began to copy the New Testament in the NASB, and then much later the Old Testament. Since I was inconsistent in my pursuit, this took about a decade. Later I decided to once again copy the Bible, this time in the ESV. Because I was more diligent and methodical, this round took about 4 to 5 years to complete.

My copying technique was simple: I used college-lined notebook paper and ballpoint pens, copied word for word, and compiled these pages in 3-inch binders. It takes four binders, three for the Old Testament and one for the New Testament.

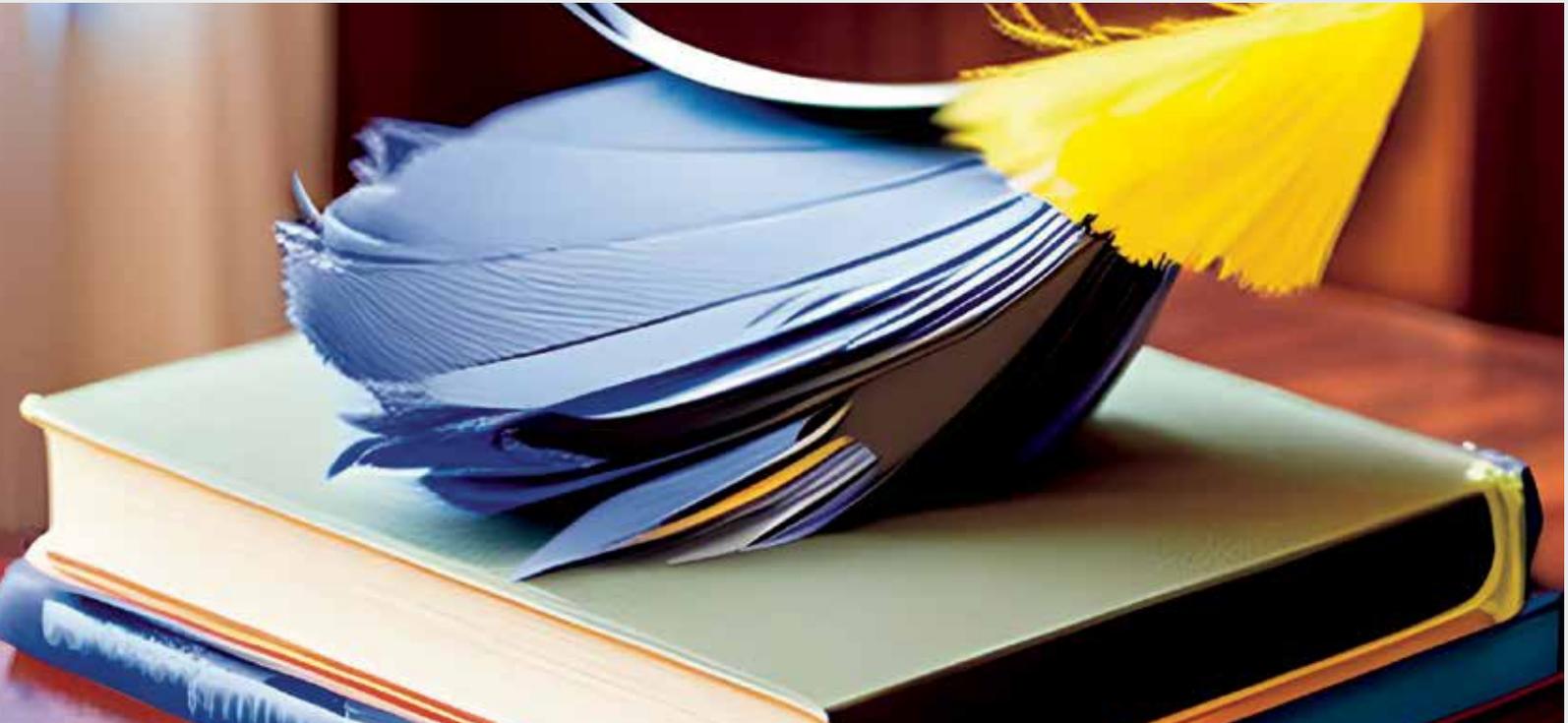
Over the course of time, this work became a devotional exercise for me. It transitioned from a curiosity project to a treasured work of love and discovery. Working through the text word by word has helped me "discover" previously unknown words, phrases, concepts, etc. I liken it to a person who commutes to work each day over the same streets in his car. However, one day his car breaks down, and he is forced to walk that route. Due to the slower pace, he begins to notice details along the way: flowers in windows, unique colors of houses, sidewalk drawings by neighborhood children, and many other such things. Though these things had always been there, the speed at which he drove by each time kept him looking elsewhere and missing so much of the rich treasure he traveled through. So it is with the Word; it could well be that too often we read the Bible too quickly, skimming along and missing so much detail and depth.

Upon completing my second time copying the Bible, I said to myself, "Whew, that was good, but I'm never going to do that again." Six months later I began round three, which is due for completion later this year. I have been deeply blessed by this experience, and I highly recommend this somewhat unusual exercise for anyone who wants to "stroll through the Word" and seek its treasures. Your writing hand may never speak to you again, but deeper insights, stronger faith, and greater love of the Word await you down the road.

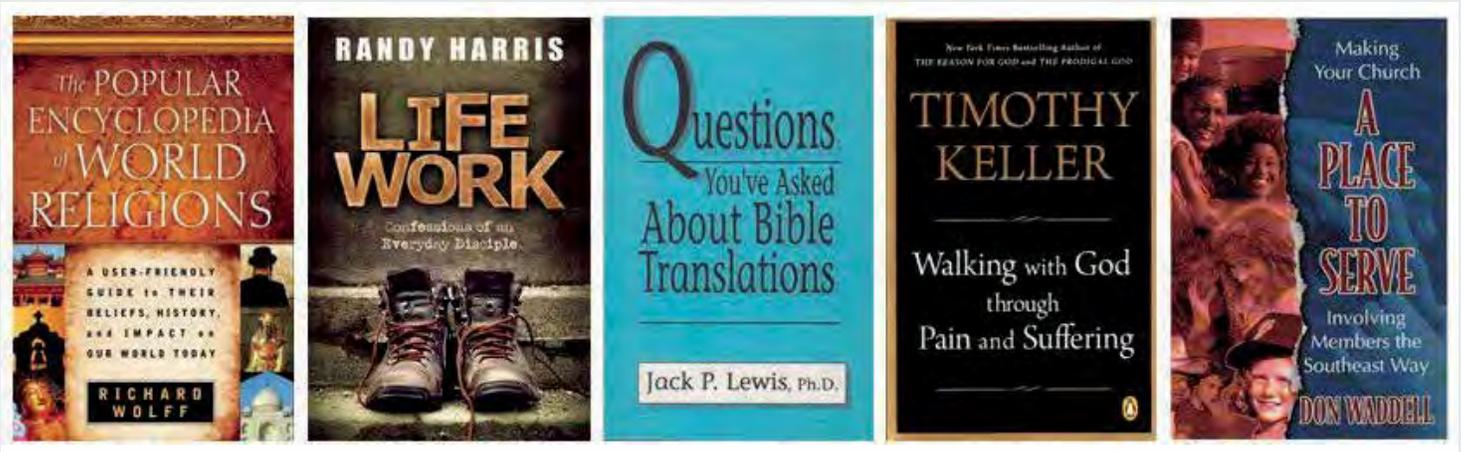
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