

# The Missouri Missionary Baptist

“Holding Forth the Word of Life” – *Philippians 2:16*

Volume LXXXV

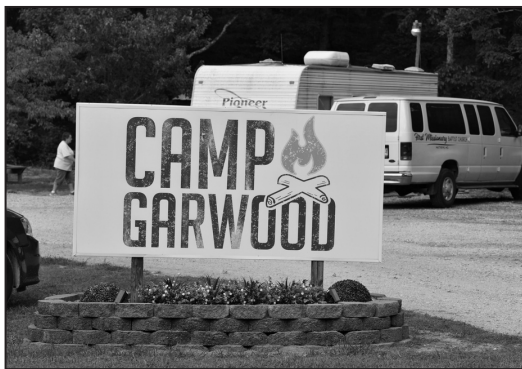
St. Louis, MO • August 15, 2023

Issue No. 8

## Gateway to God

Chris Polk

Camp week 2023 was held July 30-August 4. We had 16 professions of faith and a total of 207 campers. The attendance breakdown was roughly as follows: adults – 87; teen boys – 35; teen girls – 28; 10-12 year old boys – 9; 10-12 year old girls – 18; 8-10 year olds – 11; 6-7 year olds – 10; 4-5 year olds – 7; and 0-5 year olds – 5.



We created a new class this year for young adults age 18-25. Easton May held the inaugural class on

Thursday morning and plans to resume this teaching position next year. We are excited to see this new class take form. Thanks to Joe McElroy for the suggestion.

Other than a couple plumbing issues and one A/C malfunction during camp, the week was fairly quiet. I can only remember one other year where I was able to attend every worship session.

We had two hornet stings, one twisted ankle, and one non-camp-related medical emergency. All are recovering nicely.

Unfortunately, due to threat of rain we did not raise the camp flags. We probably could have a couple days, but between the radar and cloudy skies we decided to simply hold the flags on stage for the pledges.

The food was outstanding. Bro. Melvin and Sis. Maggie provided great meals and even saved money on the overall food bill this year! Taco Tuesday was a hit, and the pulled pork on Wednesday was fabulous, so I'm told.

I can't begin to thank everyone who makes camp possible. So many people came in at the last minute to clean up and set up everything. Yes, my family spends countless hours working at camp, but it could not happen without many, many other folks stepping up!

For various reasons I found myself on stage with a microphone a lot this year – more so than ever before. It wasn't planned, but I ended up telling “camp stories” each day, everything from when I faced dozens of copperheads at once to crying out to God in great fear and desperation while fighting a fire on the hill above the volleyball pit. The Lord has blessed in so many ways over the years. The stories seemed to be a hit. We may try to plan them in next year.

Camp Story 2023: The phantom mattress truck! We had been promised a truck load of mattresses at no cost to the camp. The deal was I didn't have time to run them down, so they had to deliver. The original delivery date was Tuesday "sometime." We had all the teens on point to meet the truck and help unload. It didn't show. They called: can we deliver tomorrow? Sure. No show. Can we deliver Thursday? What is the latest we can deliver? 8 pm. OK, we'll be there by noon. No show. We're on the way, be there by 4. No show. If you arrive between 7-8 the driver will have to wait until after the evening service. No show. They call on Friday morning. We're loaded up and headed your way. No thanks. Everyone is gone. I can't unload

• See *GATEWAY TO GOD* page 3 •

## Church Camp Reports

## Lord Kurios Reigns!

Molly Kingston

Jesus Camp 2023 at the Meramec Retreat Center was a resounding success for the churches in the Meramec Association and ultimately a mighty display of the glory of God.

The theme for the camp this year was Lord Kurios, one of the names in the Bible to refer to Jesus, found in Luke 19:30-34. Throughout the week our pastors delivered messages from the Word on how Lord Kurios draws us, saves us, disciplines us, sends us, is our identity and is always with us.

The Lord moved mightily through these services, and 16

precious souls were saved! Not only was the presence of the Lord felt in the services, but a sweet spirit of

fellowship was shared by all while eating delicious food, landing the coolest tricks on the dive board, busting knees and wallowing in mud during recreation time or scarfing down candy and soda from the snack shack.

As always, a huge thanks to the Camp Committee and all the wonderful volunteers who make Jesus Camp possible! As Pastor Ben Kingston says, you have earned extra jewels in your crown for your faithful service to the Lord's Kingdom.



For more Jesus Camp pictures, see page 8.

## Meramec Landmark Baptist Association Annual Meeting

Westview Missionary Baptist Church  
1036 LoMo Drive, Jefferson City, Missouri

September 22, 2023 – 10:00 A.M.

## Baptist Missionary Association of Missouri Annual Meeting

Bethel Baptist Church  
128 5th St., Sikeston, Missouri

October 14, 2023 – 9:00 A.M.

## State Missions

Dear BMAMO Churches,

Well, camp season is done for both Garwood and Meramec, and by all appearances it was one for the history books!

This is a trying time for all things church and youth ministry, with the culture going so anti-Bible and Christianity. But the souls that were brought to Christ through each of our camps this year is a good indication that Christ is still on His throne.

I am not going to steal Bro. Chris's thunder, but I have heard from him that there were several saved at Garwood this year, as there were at Jesus Camp. So, praise God and may He continue to shower His Missouri churches and beyond with heavenly blessings.

As missions-minded churches, it is so important now with these children to counsel them and their families to follow the Lord in baptism and discipleship and to reach the maturity of a believer to reproduce themselves in other people. We don't want to grow by addition, but by multiplication.

It is our only hope as an association and her churches that we grow in this biblical manner. Every year that we allow to pass without implementing the biblical mandate to make disciples is an indictment to our middle name. Let's recommit ourselves to this most important commission. And thank you, Jesus, for the souls that were saved this summer through VBS ministries, special days and camp ministries.

Please be praying for our WMA conference that will be happening soon.

I was with Stony Point on July 26, and we had a great time. I am always encouraged when I go to Stony Point. They take the assessment each year and have been blessed in their missions efforts. Special thanks to Bro. Claude and Bea for their leadership. They are excited about missions and are seeing growth in multiple areas as a result.

I will be at Mt. Olive Baptist in Salem this Wednesday, August 9. I'm looking forward to that as well. They are a joy to present to and are very involved in missions. Bro. Larry Nash and his wife are very well loved and faithful to that church and to missions.

In closing, if you have not read *Scrappy Church* by Thom Rainer, I highly recommend that book. One of our challenges in BMAMO is the health of our churches, and one of the main areas of health is growth. Healthy churches grow, and once they grow it's simply a matter of time until reproduction of churches happens. This book will at the very least get the conversations started on what growth might look like in your respective church.

May the Lord richly bless you all is my prayer.

Bro. Ben



### MISIÓN BELÉN (Bethlehem Mission)

Juan Fernandez  
pastorjuanfernandez@gmail.com • 618-581-8056

*But after that the kindness and love of God our Savior toward man appeared, not by works of righteousness which we have done, but according to his mercy he saved us, by the washing of regeneration, and renewing of the Holy Ghost; which he shed on us abundantly through Jesus Christ our Savior. (Titus 3:4-6)*

#### Praises!

- Prayer Network: Share with our #prayernetwork #redeoracionmissouri your prayer request and receive prayer requests by texting 618-581-8056 as the LORD leads you. We need to continue making prayer our main purpose and plan to continue doing God's work, God's way. Every day at noon we pray for each one of our contacts. We are reaching out to unchurched folks in our daily prayer and daily walk among the different neighborhoods in the following cities: Ballwin, Ellisville, Chesterfield, Clarkson Valley, Overland, St. Ann, Maryland Heights, and recently Granite City. God has led and prepared divine appointments in order to have spiritual conversations with dear people whose language is Spanish, or English as second language.

- Bible Outreach: Every Saturday we hand out Bibles and gospel tracts in businesses where most Hispanic families visit during the weekend. We have flyers to invite our friends to join us for Discovery Bible Study Sunday at 6:00 pm or to start a Discovery Bible Study in their home. Most of the contacts the Lord has led us to meet are not settled. Therefore we continue praying that we are faithful to plant the seed of the gospel with each one, even if it's a short interaction.

- Sending missionaries: Last month one of our home Bible study members, Roberto, moved to New Orleans. We met Roberto last year through our Facebook Live ministry. February 2023 we met in person and started to get together once a week in Kirkwood. The Lord has been sending Roberto back to Missouri. We hope to resume our Bible study and prayer time. Ever since he moved he has recommended our ministry with Mauricio and his friend to start learning more about how to become kingdom laborers. Through your gifts and generosity, we were able to purchase a Bible for Mauricio. Lord willing, we will get together on Wednesday for Bible

• See MISIÓN BELÉN page 7 •

### FINANCIAL REPORT BMA OF MISSOURI MISSIONS

July 2023

<u>Checking Account:</u>	
Balance June 30, 2023	\$ 16,809.39
<u>Income:</u>	
Missions	\$ 2,739.10
Total Income	\$ 2,739.10
Total Available	\$ 19,548.49
<u>Expenses:</u>	
Director, salary	\$ 450.00
Secretary, salary	200.00
Juan Fernandez, support	2,333.33
Brad Miller, website	61.97
Total Expenses	\$ (3,045.30)
Balance July 31, 2023	\$ 16,503.19
<u>BMAMS Revolving Loan Investment:</u>	
Balance June 30, 2023	\$ 113,916.26
Interest	1,217.70
Balance July 31, 2023	\$ 115,133.96
Total in All Accounts July 31, 2023	\$ 131,637.15

## WMA

### 2023 MO WMA SPONSORED RETREAT

Drury Plaza Hotel Cape Girardeau Conference Center  
3351 Percy Dr. • Cape Girardeau, MO

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Friday, September 8th

3:00pm – Rejoice and Praise Through Music  
4:15pm – Short Break  
4:30pm – Afternoon Session Continues  
5:30pm – Dinner Break  
7:15pm – Evening 1st Session – Christy Horton  
9:00pm – End for the Night

-----  
Saturday, September 9th

7:00am – Breakfast  
9:00am – Morning Session Begins  
10:15am – Break (Check Out of Rooms)  
10:45am – Morning Session Continues  
12:00 Noon – Lunch  
1:00pm – Afternoon Session  
1:50pm – Break  
2:00pm – Auction Closes  
3:30pm – Preliminary Count of Auction Proceeds and Closing Prayer

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*This is the basic schedule to give you an idea of the starting (on time) and ending times. There are lots of fun activities planned that you do not want to miss out on.*

## The Missouri Missionary Baptist

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• GATEWAY TO GOD from page 1 •

them myself. But we have it loaded and ready to head out. No thanks. We told you by Thursday or we can't receive. Our guy was there at 6:45 last night and no one was there. Ummm, that was service time. Everyone was here. Let me check. Our driver says he couldn't find it and turned around. He can head that way now. No thanks – it's Friday and everyone has gone home.

All week we had put the teens on point. It's coming, be ready. It'll be here, watch for it! For whatever reason the mattresses were a no show. We have to trust there is a reason for these type frustrations in life. We may not know why. But our Lord does. He not only knows, He plans all our days. Maybe the mattresses had bedbugs? We will never know.

Our speakers, Bro. Caleb Houston (am) Bro. Jordan Bowen (pm), did an outstanding work of presenting the Gateway to God to our campers. And our campers were exceptionally attentive during the services.

We say this most years, but it truly was a great week! It goes by so fast.

On Wednesday night Laura and I were presented with an abundance of cards, gifts, notes, cash and an outpouring of love. We have not been able to respond to each one, but please know we felt your love and appreciation this week!

We are already working on next year. There will be some changes to be announced later. We have our speakers set – Bro. Caleb Houston and Bro. Aaron Russell. We are working on the theme and should be ready to announce that by the annual meeting.

Within the next few weeks we will begin remodeling dorm 7 (the old dining hall). If you remember, the year we moved into the new dining hall we quickly added the current restrooms with the intention of it being a temporary setup. It's been almost 20 years; I'd say that's temporary enough. We have been given a gift to get this project well underway but hope our campers will acknowledge the need and help us get it completed. Once that is completed, in the 2025 season we hope to build a new nurse station/evangelist cabin that will also serve as our check-in building. We are hoping to use the funds given at the semi-annual meeting for this project, assuming our regular giving continues and everything else holds together.

These are big plans and we are looking forward to some great things! But what is on my mind the most is our slacking attendance. The low camper numbers make for easier weeks of camp, but my heart's fear is that these numbers reflect struggling churches, either the struggle of gathering campers or the struggle of having adults willing to bring them. I pray for our churches. I pray the professions made at camp manifest into committed church members. I pray that in some way our new young adult class helps our college-age campers see their value in the church. I pray we see an increase in attendance at camp next year due to an increase in attendance across the churches of the BMA of Missouri.





# Updates from Our Churches



## Kewanee, Kewanee

Greetings from Kewanee Missionary Baptist Church.

What a wonderful, spirit filled week at Camp Garwood! We had just a little over 30 people attend camp from KMBC. Charlie Beth Sutton, daughter of Marcus and Cyd Sutton, was saved at camp! Praise Jesus!

Caitie Cox traveled to Romania in the middle of July and had a great trip. From English camp to Bible camps, she and her team were able to minister to hundreds. They report that three individuals gave their lives to Christ. We praise the Lord for this.

Bro. John David Smith was here for revival. We had a great week learning from God's Word and worshipping with him.

The DEWR's retreat will be held August 18-19th at Camp Garwood. If you are a DEWR, you may attend this retreat. To be a DEWR means that you give \$75 or more to camp each year. This money is used for expenses to keep camp going.

The women's retreat will be held September 8-9, 2023 in Cape Girardeau. Get registered and get your room booked if you plan to go.

We will celebrate our church homecoming on Sunday, September 17, 2023.

Please join us if you are in the area.

The next SEMO Associational WMA meeting will be held on Tuesday, October 17th at 1st Baptist Matthews.

Please be in prayer for all of our teachers and students as they are returning to school.

Please "like" our Facebook page, Kewanee Missionary Baptist Church, to keep up with future events.

*Dan Wisely, Pastor  
Lisa Cox, Reporter*

## Oak Hill, Alton

Hello to all from Oak Hill.

Sis. Haley and Sis. Kaylee learned a lot from their missionary experience in May, how people live and how they experience life from different views.

We had a great Vacation Bible School (VBS) at the end of June and July 1st. We had a very good turnout of kids because our church is not in town. We closed our VBS with a fish fry on Saturday, July 1st.

In July there were five Sundays and on the 30th we had dinner like we always do.

Bro. Ed and Sis. Theresa left and went on a little vacation in Branson at the end of July and the first few days of August. They really enjoyed their time in Branson. He

mentioned going to see a play or reenactment of Queen Esther. He was very impressed and said that if you have a chance to see it, he would recommend it.

The Lord has blessed us this summer with rain when we needed it.

Bro. Chad has to take Carstyn to St. Jude's August 8th for his check-up and has his scan on August 9th to make sure his tumor/cancer has not come back. We hope and pray that they have a safe trip and great results from his scan.

Thank the Lord we got another sister, Tatum Finley. The Lord saved her August 6th. In two weeks, Bro. Ed is going to baptize her, and she will become a new member at Oak Hill.

Until next month I hope I will have some more good news to tell you but until then we will be praising and honoring our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ!

God Bless!  
*Edward Casey, Pastor  
Jennifer Williams, Reporter*

## Bethel, Sikeston

Greetings to our sister churches.

The first of the month we had the privilege of having Bro. Jordan Tew, Executive Director of the publishers of our Sunday School literature. He brought a very inspiring message from Romans 1:15-18: "I am not ashamed of the gospel of Christ." He also gave us updates on changes they are making for Sunday School literature and that witness tracts are also in the

plans to be published. We are so thankful for him and the work he is doing for our churches.

We have our shoeboxes completed and ready to send off by the first of August. We are praying that they will be a blessing to the children that are receiving them, that they might feel the love of Jesus by receiving them, and that they will come to accept Jesus into their hearts.

On the evening of the 16th we had a prayer service, a time to pour out your heart to God and to pray specifically for something that was burdening their heart, a very humbling time.

In our business meeting on the 23rd we had a vote on getting chairs to replace our pews, which some wanted and some didn't. Keeping the pews had more votes than did the chairs, so we will be keeping the pews. Our plans are to replace the carpet sometime in September.

We had our 5th Sunday night singing with fellowship afterwards with snacks. What a great time in the Lord we always have!

Some of our youth and adults headed to camp on the 31st and were looking forward to a great time. They reported back to us that two of our own made a profession

of faith, Matthew Nolen and Mila Sisk. Praise be to God! May God bless these and all the others that made professions of faith. Our God is an awesome God! Please be in prayer for all of our youth as Satan desires to have them!

Some of our members went to the theater to watch "The Sound of Freedom." It was very eye opening as to what is going on in this world, all the child sex trafficking, how evil and sick is this that is going on all around us! Please pray for these children that are being victims to this horrible sin! God's children are not for sale!

*Billy Davis, Pastor  
Joan Wood, Reporter*

## Abundant Life in Christ, Charleston

We are thankful that three kids we met through VBS have continued to come weekly since that time and have sometimes brought others with them. Our overseas ministry continues to face difficulties in having public meetings, but yet our people there continue on steadfastly.

*Rodney Dunlap, Pastor*

## Ohlman, Bunker

Ohlman had the largest group at camp this year.

*Terry Sharp, Pastor  
Janet Widger, Reporter*



## ~ Upcoming Events ~

**DEWR Weekend** – Aug. 18-19; 7 p.m.

Fri. – Sat. afternoon; Camp Garwood

**WMA Sponsored Ladies Retreat** –

Sept. 8-9; Drury Plaza Hotel Cape

Girardeau Conference Center

**Meramec Association Annual**

**Meeting** – Sept. 22; 10 a.m.;

Westview, Jefferson City

**BMA of Missouri Annual Meeting** –

Oct. 14; 9 a.m.; Bethel, Sikeston

**SEMO Assoc. WMA** – Oct. 17; First, Matthews

**Washington County Local Assoc.** –

Oct. 21; Charity, Bismarck

**Celebration 2023** (formerly the

National Senior Adult Conference) –

Nov. 28-30; Chateau Resort, Branson

*Send event info to mmbpaper@gmail.com.*

## CBC Announces Academic Achievements

Central Baptist College announced the Spring 2023 President's and Dean's Lists, which included:

### President's List

Caroline Byers  
Kennett, MO

Heidi Maxwell  
Saint Clair, MO

### Dean's List

Michael Kelley  
Poplar Bluff, MO

Ashlynn Pratt  
Sikeston, MO

## Some Observations from the Camp Check-In Station

Pam Burke

From the time we moved to Missouri in 2004, I have heard lots of praises and great memories shared from Camp Garwood – from both the young and the young at heart. Before this year I had paid one-day visits to camp a couple of times as well as attended for the full week in 2006 and again in 2010. But thirteen years later in 2023 I discovered that I had missed a lot of blessings by waiting so long to really be actively involved with Garwood.

This summer I decided to accompany Don to camp but had no kids to supervise or any other specific responsibilities. So, kind of last-minute I contacted Bro. Chris and told him I would be glad to lend a hand at camp. When we arrived on Monday, he asked if I would help at the check-in station, where folks arriving and leaving during the week check in and out. My task was to help cover when things got busy or the ladies there needed a break.

After my first couple hours, I told Chris he had given me the perfect job. I really had to do very little work, and I had the opportunity to spend time getting to know a couple of the neatest ladies I have been around in a while. Karen Magee and Shelia Polk were an absolute joy to spend time with. They are two hard-working ladies with a heart for God, a passion for Camp Garwood, and a love for all the folks that make their way into camp.

As I watched and listened from the check-in station – as well as from the dining hall, the tabernacle, and other places around Camp Garwood – I made some pretty amazing observations. If you have been to Garwood, you probably

already know these things. But if you are one of the folks like me who have spent little time there, you may not have experienced these blessings for yourself.

There are folks in our BMA of Missouri who work diligently to serve the Lord and His people in big and small ways at Garwood. When there were jobs that needed to be done, I saw both young and old jump in and do the work. That awesome group of people is led by Bro. Chris Polk, who works harder than any one person should be capable of and seems to do his best to avoid recognition for it. His wife Laura and other family members, as well as many other hard-working folks, join right in. That work goes on 24/7 during camp week, and who knows how many days, weeks, or months beyond that.

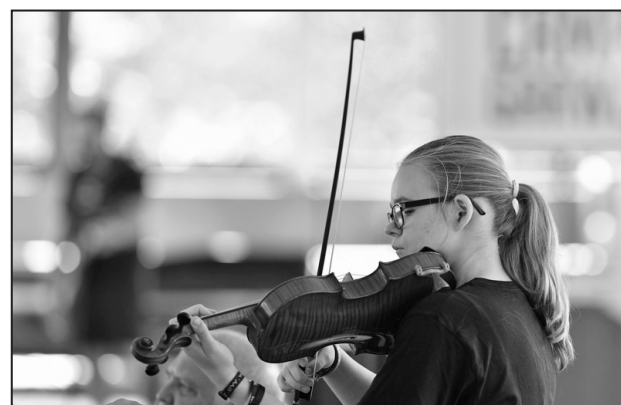
That all the Garwood folks make up a family is something I felt right away. Titles like “Grandma,” “Grandpa,” “Aunt” and others might or might not indicate blood kin, but they definitely indicate family. I didn’t come close to learning all the actual family connections – and will certainly not remember many of the ones I

did. But the main things I learned about the Garwood family were that it’s a real thing . . . and that newcomers are welcome to join.

In all that work and family interaction, God’s love shines through. People young and old are shown the way to God and encouraged in how to live the life He has for them. Camp Garwood is indeed a place I look forward to visiting again, especially if Chris sends me back to the check-in station.



*More from  
Camp  
Garwood*





Editor's Note: This is a recent post from the National WMA blog. For additional similar content, you can go to <https://www.nationalwma.org/blogs/>.

## The Yoke

Judy Wallace

The young ox had watched the process for a long time. He was fascinated that the older oxen came directly to the Master as soon as they were summoned. They knew exactly what to do; it was as if they were directly connected to Him. He would come forward slowly, speaking gently to them as He approached. They responded accordingly.

The Master brought a yoke with Him. It was plain. Rough. Massive. Most viewed it as a symbol of slavery, subjection, and servitude as with it came images of heavy burdens and long, hard hours of labor. The juvenile calf also thought it to be a thing of dread and despair. But the older animals showed no sign of fear, nor did they cower as He lowered the yoke: first fitting it over the shoulders, then around the neck.

What came next was hard to fathom. Instead of choosing a second animal to harness to the first, the Master Himself went under the weight: the lowly ox on one side, the knowing Master on the other. The beast shifted its body to adjust to the fact that the load seemed suddenly lighter, more manageable than before. The command was given to move forward and instead of a clumsy lurch that would have been expected, a slower, more purposeful gait was taken.

The calf found itself watching only the Master instead of the ox that was with Him. With each step forward, He was constantly interacting with the animal. With each step forward, He was giving instructions, pointing out pitfalls. With each step forward, He was explaining the goal and constantly calling the animal to follow His lead and learn from Him. The ox still had the same load, the same burden; but it seemed not to notice since it was now a shared load. The fact that it was watching closely, listening carefully, and engrossing itself deeply in the wise words it was being given, thoughts of self and the burdens it carried were no longer dominant. The emphasis now was on learning about the Master and from the Master. With the concentration on His instructions, attributes, and characteristics it dawned on the calf... that was the true yoke! It wasn't an instrument to be feared after all, but one that kept the eyes and the heart where they should have been all along...only on the Master. Now the ox became humble, teachable, at peace.

The calf continued to observe, thinking that the sooner he matured, the sooner his time would come to take up His yoke. But then the truth became very clear; the sooner he humbled himself to take up His yoke, the sooner he would mature.

## SCRIPTURE

Matthew 11:28-30: *Come unto me all ye that are weary and heavy laden and I will give you rest. Take my yoke upon you and learn of me for I am meek and lowly in heart; and ye shall find rest for your souls. For my yoke is easy and my burden is light.*

What are the three commands?

What are the two characteristics of Christ mentioned here?

What is said about the yoke and the results of taking it on?

Philippians 2:5-9: *Let this mind be in you, which was also in Christ Jesus: Who, being in the form of God, thought it not robbery to be equal with God: But made himself of no reputation, and took upon him the form of a servant, and was made in the likeness of men and being found in fashion as a man, he humbled himself, and became obedient unto death, even the death of the cross. Wherefore God also hath highly exalted him, and given him a name which is above every name.*

What is the command?

List all the examples of what could be considered Christ's yoke given in this passage.

How did He respond to these?

Go back to the command. What is the key to emulating these characteristics?

What do you learn from the first word, 'Let'?

## RESPONSE

LEARN CHRIST! TAKE ON HIS YOKE DAILY! HE IS SHARING THE LOAD WITH YOU!

RENEW yourself in Christ daily.

RENEW by being in the Word daily.

RENEW by meditating on the characteristics of Christ daily.

RENEW by worshiping at His feet daily.

## PRAYER

"Father, help me to learn *You!* Not just about you or of you but learn *You!* Help me focus on how you acted in your daily walk; how you interacted with those closest to you; how you responded to all the people around you. Help me be humbled before you, compassionate toward others, and keenly aware of the opportunities you place in my path and then help me to take them!"

"Behold Him! Look at Him! Just be occupied with Him!... Come to the Word for one purpose and that is to meet the Lord." – Norman Douy

## Reflections from Romania

Caitie Cox

Hello, my name is Caitie and I am here to tell you about my mission trip to Romania!



This summer I had the opportunity to serve in different parts of Romania with the Risner family and Candra Barnett. Upon arrival, I met some pretty amazing people who work side by side with these families as

Change Maker missionaries who live in Romania. My team of 9 worked very well with each other and, we quickly discovered our strengths and weaknesses through leading an English camp

at the Agape Church plant in Oradea, Romania. Essentially, it was run like a Bible school with lessons that not only taught the gospel, but also included short English lessons which were actually made to be conversation starters. Our goal was to start conversations with the Romanian kids, most of whom could speak a little bit of English.

Each day in the afternoons, we traveled to different gypsy villages all around Romania. We presented the story of Zacchaeus to each village, played games with the kids, and made crafts. We wrapped up our week traveling to the mountains in Romania, visiting a waterfall, and hosting a youth camp at the hotel in the mountains. The teens were able to swim at the hotel which they very much enjoyed and delighted in a big barbecue cookout that we provided for them. We sang songs in both English and Romanian and Bro. Bryson Haden, from Arkansas, who was a part of our group, gave a message in English that was translated to Romanian. This was followed by some words from Bro. Bryan Risner and Bro. Dani Bagosi. That night alone we know of at least 3 salvations within the teens!

Please continue to pray for all the seeds that were planted in the Romanian people while we were

there and for the work that the missionary families will continue to do since we "Americans" have all returned home.

If you are interested in joining a VSM team for 2024, get in touch with Mrs. Angela Rice at the missions office. You will not regret going and serving. The best way that I can describe the



experience is to say that I left a piece of my heart in Romania with all the friendships that I made and all of the children that I met. We all arrived as strangers, but we all left as a family.

• **MISIÓN BELÉN** from page 2 •

study. He has a hard time reading. Pray for a special ability and interest in him to read and understand God's Word for his life. Noe is another young man who surrendered to the Lord last December. He had to move to Indianapolis. We have had the privilege to hear from his labor of faith as he continued growing and learning about the Lord Jesus Christ. Last Sunday of the month he was baptized and introduced to a local church in Indiana.

• VBS laborers coming to support and celebrate with us our second summer VBS: Thank you for taking time to drive over to the Overland area and be a blessing for our family and friends. We are hoping to continue reaching out to these kids throughout the rest of the year. We are praying that parents of Anthony, Jorge, Genesis, Mia, Madison and Lucas step up to join us for worship Sunday evenings.

• Discovery Bible Study in Clarkson Valley: The study has been a challenge and blessing for this household. This 40-year-old man has entered into a commitment to share our Bible study with his friends and family. His understanding of the first chapters in the book of Genesis have impacted his concept of God and plan for his life. He is one living example of God's grace. His desire to continue learning and sharing is amazing. We meet on Monday at 4:00 pm. In the beginning we met for an hour. As of the last week of July, we were blessed to expand the learning process to almost 2 hours. He asked God's grace for salvation and to have his name written in the Book of Life. To God be the glory!

• A new family from Colombia: We also have been blessed with these who are seeking to learn what our ministry is about. They have worked very hard in this area. Now they are business owners, and they have a high reputation among our Hispanic community since they treat employees as family members. We are getting together the third Saturday of the month of August to have lunch. Pray for this couple's salvation and for each one in their family. They hired our family that gets together for Sunday family worship service in Bethany's building. This family continues inviting them to start the discipleship process we are offering for those who desire to be on God's agenda.

• ESL throughout the summer: We have been serving in Faith Baptist church of St. Charles where Pastor Tom Ausburn and his wife Janette recently became pastor for this congregation. We are so thankful for pastor Tom and his dedication to labor in this city. We have so many contacts in this area. We have been serving them for almost two years. Pray that soon we can recover and resume our relationship with the families we served. We continue praying

that the Lord allows us to reconnect. They are also settled families in the city of St. Charles, and they have a very strong Catholic background. Jesus also died for Catholics, right?

We are blessed to continue celebrating family worship service Sunday at 6:00 pm. Join us for potluck the first Sunday of the month. Or you can come and share your talent with our family and other families who are learning about BMA in Missouri. Bring your guitar, microphone or just your heart available to share your testimony with our Hispanic friends, translation is provided...I know the Lord can bring each one of His people together to continue expanding His kingdom within our Hispanic ministry and the churches already established. To Him be the GLORY!

• Sunday Morning: We are willing to come and visit your church or Sunday school to pray with you and if possible, share our ministry. We hope to line up visits every other Sunday or every Sunday accordingly. We are not seeking to be famous or reinvent the wheel on what Christianity is. We know so many churches are praying for us, and we are excited to come and share our ups and downs for encouragement and support to continue doing this pioneer ministry among our Hispanic families. The Lord is coming soon! Shoot me a text to 618-581-8056 or email me at [pastorjuanfernandez@gmail.com](mailto:pastorjuanfernandez@gmail.com) to arrange fellowship with me and my family. We need your prayers, your support, your friendship. Together we can serve much better and more effectively in the fulfillment of the Great Commission of our Lord Jesus.

• ESL: We will soon resume our English as second language class as well our class to learn Spanish. Pray for God's direction and provision. We are in need of a building that is near families in our Hispanic community that is safe, comfortable and within walking distance to join our efforts in carrying out our ministry, that we can become more effective and fruitful for the Lord and our BMA mission commitment. We are no longer looking to purchase a home; we are in search of a building that we can rent, lease, or borrow to use as a multipurpose building for worship, personal office, outreach (classroom) area for kids, nursery, etc.

Above all we are looking for a place close to our Hispanic neighbors and following God's lead to provide for a core team that will partner with us to expand our missionary effort among our 80,000 Hispanic population in the area of St. Louis. We will do this with God's help and God's grace and God's power and provision. To Him be the glory for ever and ever. Amen.

In his service,  
Juan Fernandez.

## Chaplain Ryan Burchett and Operation Border Health Preparedness

Operation Border Health Preparedness (OBHP) took place from July 23-29 along our southern border. OBHP is an annual humanitarian mission offering a variety of medical services to the public in six different border towns. The



goal is to prepare citizens for hurricane season. As the season ramps up, the risk increases for displacement which escalates the potential for disease to spread. OBHP functions to prevent that spread.

Chaplain (1LT-TXSG) Burchett recently served the OBHP mission at Rio Grande City and Hidalgo, both in Texas. Tasks

included patrolling the extremely long lines of people waiting for services, providing spiritual and mental/emotional counsel as needed, and offering a presence in uniform to deter any criminal activity. Being a joint operation, Chaplain Burchett, serving the Texas State Guard, worked alongside the Texas Army National Guard, Border Patrol, local law enforcement, FEMA, and some from the Chilean Army.

In a five-day span, all six checkpoints combined saw over 5,000 people; some were citizens, but many were not. Of those 5,000+, checkpoint Hidalgo, Chaplain Burchett's primary station, saw around 3,500. Needless to say, the border and those border towns are busy places.

With everything going on at OBHP, God allowed Chaplain Burchett a very unique opportunity to turn the operation into a mission trip, of sorts. During the course of OBHP, he was able to hand out 300 Gideon Bibles to those willing to take one. The Gideon New Testaments were offered in both English and Spanish. One praise to be noted was a Mexican vendor who passed through and noticed the Bibles. She asked Chaplain Burchett if he had any spare Spanish Bibles to donate to a church in Mexico that desperately needed them. He was able to give her a box of 100 Spanish New Testaments to be taken across the border. God is good!

Along with handing out Bibles, God allowed Chaplain Burchett multiple opportunities for spiritual conversations with fellow troops and local law enforcement. He provided spiritual/biblical guidance, as well as marital counsel and sharing the Gospel during those conversations.

All service members, including Chaplain Burchett, received commendations for their efforts on OBHP '23, including the State Guard Association of the United States Meritorious Unit Citation and the Humanitarian Service Medal.

Chaplain Burchett serves as the pastor of Walnut Street Baptist Church, Winnsboro, TX, and as the President of the BMA of Texas.



## Former Missions Director Called Home

Pastor Danny Ray Kirk, of Bella Vista, Arkansas, departed this life on Saturday, July 22, 2023, having reached the age of sixty-seven years. Danny was born in Belleville, IL on August 26, 1955, son of Grover Jethro Kirk and Marie Todd Kirk.



Danny is survived by his wife, Carolyn Kirk who was the delight of his life for over 47 years. He is also survived by three children, Amy Perry (Kevin) of Bella Vista, AR; Angela Cox (Brandon) of Rogers, AR; and Joshua Kirk (Caron) of Phoenix, AZ. In addition to his children, Danny is survived by eight grandchildren and one great grandchild.

Danny is survived by his brothers, Jimmy Kirk (Tami Ellis) of Rochelle, IL; Jeffrey Kirk (Dori) of Las Vegas, NV; Clifford Kirk (Cheryl), of Jewel, IA; Roger Kirk (Tammy) of Clinton, IA; Todd Kirk (Wendy) of Huntsville, AL; and Roy Kirk (Arieta) of Orlando, FL; by his sisters, Rose Gordon of Clinton, IA and Lisa Brady (Matthew) of St. Charles, MO.

Danny was preceded in death by his sister, Mary Jane Kirk; parents, Grover and Marie Kirk; and by one son, David Kirk.

Danny was a faithful follower of Jesus and gave his life to sharing the hope and redemption that can be found in Christ. He served as a pastor and church planter for 42 years in TX, IL, KY, MO, and AR. He served the BMA of MO as Missions Director from 2000-2015 and also coached and mentored pastors and church leaders all over the world.

One of Danny's greatest desires was to make a difference in his community by showing up in the lives of those who were hurting, marginalized and in need.

After retiring from vocational ministry, Danny's church membership was at New Heights in Bentonville where he led a community group, which brought him and Carolyn great joy. He enjoyed woodworking, cooking, fishing, and gardening. Danny was an avid reader and loved to spend time at his cabin.

## Deaths

**Betty Geneace Rawlins Kingston**, 83, of Alexander, Arkansas, slipped into the arms of our Lord on June 10, 2023. She was the widow of Duane Kingston, pastor of various BMA churches in Arkansas and Tennessee. Betty was also the mother of Ben Kingston (BMA of Missouri Missions Director and pastor of Bethel, Lonedell) and the grandmother of Brian Kingston (pastor of Ozark Heights, Potosi).

**Imogene Silvey Pittman**, 90, of Potosi, went to her Heavenly Home and was united with her Savior, Jesus Christ, on June 30, 2023. Imogene was saved as a young girl and was a lifelong and faithful member of First Baptist Church of Potosi. At the time of her death, Imogene had been a member of that church longer than any other current member. She served as church organist for sixty years.

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