



# the **REAPER**

**VOL. 68, NO. 1 | Spring 2023**

## **THE FAITH OF A MUSTARD SEED**

**MATTHEW 17:20**

**OFFICIAL PUBLICATION OF SOURCE OF LIGHT INTERNATIONAL MADISON, GA**

**Source of Light Ministries International** is an independent, faith mission that exists to bring people of every nation, language, and ethnicity into a mature relationship with Jesus Christ and into fellowship with a local church family.

**SLM** is a world-wide, disciple making, church planting ministry that uses the medium of Bible lessons for all ages in both printed and electronic format to achieve its goals. The International Headquarters in Madison, Georgia, its Discipleship Training Branches (DTB), and Associate Discipleship Schools (ADS), distribute lessons throughout the world.

**Representatives and Missionaries** of SLM are available to present the ministry to churches, missionary conferences, and other groups. Contact the **SLM PR OFFICE** for scheduling.

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# EDITOR'S ARTICLE

A letter from the Editor



Photo from Unsplash.com

In the year of Source of Light's 70th anniversary, we have been celebrating God's goodness. He has taken this little ministry from Madison, Georgia, started in the second floor of a building right in the heart of Madison, and spread its influence all around the world. If a missionary hasn't gotten there yet, the materials have been paving the way for their arrival someday!

For sure, the "Harvest" has truly been plentiful, and the laborers are still too few. God has blessed and multiplied the efforts of the SLM missionaries, current and past, and much has been accomplished, but there is yet so much more to do.

Season after season, we have seen God's hand on that current harvest, but we never stop planning for the next. Celebrating 70 years of God's blessing and harvest at SLM only reminds us to be preparing for the next.

Zechariah 10:1, "Ask ye of the Lord rain in the time of the latter rain; so the Lord shall make bright clouds, and give them showers of rain, to every one grass in the field." KJV

We know it's time again for SLM to be asking God for rain for this next season. There is so much yet to do: creating and designing new courses, translating into new languages, going into new regions, organizing ourselves logistically for growth, positioning the facilities for expansion, training new leaders and missionaries, improving our publications capabilities... The list could go on and on and sometimes seem overwhelming. But... God...

Besides the challenges of venturing into new areas and expanding the current, we have the added element of the enemy seeking to keep any of this from happening. We fully expect and are prepared for the "thunderstorms" that come when we pray for the rain. God has been

faithful through the storms of the past, and He will see us through them again.

For me, growing up in Tampa, Florida, considered to be the "lightning capital of the world," I rather enjoy a good thunderstorm. There is something about having so many of your senses alerted during the storm that wakes you up! The flash of the lightning, the noise of the thunder, the boom in your chest from the rumble that follows, the warm humid air that rolls in simultaneously, only to disappear almost as quickly as it arrives, breaking way to the sun shining brightly once again, with skies quiet and calm. That's what serving God is like, and it's exhilarating.



Crowds Gathering to Hear the Word Preached in Refugee Camp — Photo by Ron Barnes

Those who serve at SLM do so certainly at great financial sacrifice. I remember one of our MKs sharing with me that it wasn't until he went to college and applied for student aid that he realized he grew up "poor" according to their rubric. But as he went on to get to know other



Doors Opened Wide for SLM in the Refugee Camps — Photo by Ron Barnes

classmates outside his circle of MK friends back home, he realized his life was richly blessed. Money didn't define his experience; it was serving the Lord.

The same is true at SLM in the ministry sense. For 70 years, the small size of our mission and our annual budget has neither defined nor limited our ministry. In fact, I believe it expanded it! My grandfather, Glenn Dix, used to put it this way in a song from 1924 by Kittle L. Suffield: "Little Is Much When God Is in It."

When Matthew says in chapter 17 verse 20 that faith the size of a mustard seed moves mountains, it becomes clear that it is faith, not size, not money, not polish, not strategy, nor any other vice that has allowed SLM to see the kind of fruit God has blessed us to see. So when we ask God how to move forward, we don't pretend to even know how to do so apart from faith! Faith and faithfulness.

We will continue to seek God's direction moving forward, not walking ahead of Him and being faithful with each next step He illuminates. It doesn't mean we don't plan, strategize, and develop vision, it just means we do so in faith, by faith, and through faith . . . and prayer!

I tell people often, when I get off a plane overseas, there are things that I anticipate happening and can plan for them, but perhaps the greatest ministry opportunities I have had have come through the thunderstorms on the trip. The unplanned interruptions have been the greatest opportunities for ministry by far. Through my wrongful arrest, SLM was given unfettered access to immigrations camps on the border of Sudan. An unplanned invitation to a prison in South America opened the door for high security access to prisons around that country. A simple mention of SLM led to introductions of key leaders throughout Europe seeking resources "just like SLM's" to disciple their denominations.

And I'm just a simple man; nothing special about me. Just being in the right place, put in the right place by being yielded to God's plan over my own. These opportunities and so many more I could have never planned. But when we ask God for rain, we can expect thunderstorms . . . if we are not afraid.



Chaplain Training Graduation in Chile  
—Photo by Ron Barnes

This *Reaper* is devoted to some new and exciting things God is doing for us. Many new places and faces will be introduced. We have faith that God is going to continue to lead us to new people, new places, and new and expanded ministry, and that He will provide for each step.

**Expansion and updating are on the horizon for SLM and will require an amount of faith that we have never had to experience before . . . the faith of a mustard seed.**



After years of serving as a church planting missionary, **Dr. Ronald J. Barnes Jr.** now serves as the President & CEO for SLM. Follow me [@RonBarnesJr](#)

# EXPLORE THE UNEXPLORED: MOZAMBIQUE

Ron Barnes

For a few years in a row, the SLM Director from South Africa, Fanie Buys, requested materials in Portuguese. It was an unusual request since South Africa is not generally a Portuguese-speaking country, but we accommodated his request because it was such a small order.

As the years progressed the order grew larger and larger, and I began to ask some questions. It turned out, the order was coming from a Paulo and Julia Naene in Mozambique, and we decided perhaps, for the size of the order, we should consider having them apply to become a more official partner with SLM—an Associate Discipleship School. This would give them access to the lessons, not as an official Branch, but at a greatly reduced cost. That was before I discovered Mozambique was listed as one of the poorest and least developed countries in the world.

We began to correspond back and forth and eventually set up a Zoom meeting so we could meet face to face, and I felt compelled to further see this relationship developed. Paulo and Julia Naene

grew up and met in church, but not a Bible teaching one. That is, until an American missionary came and began to teach them God's Word. The lessons he brought with him were the SLM courses in Portuguese.

Paulo described that both he and his wife were fed and grew under the teaching of the SLM lessons. They were saved, and given the foundation for their eventual marriage through courses like "Love, Dating, and Marriage."

His pastor trained him, and eventually Paulo became the pastor of a church plant where he found himself ministering to youth . . . a lot of them. Over half of the population of Mozambique is under 17, many left as orphans due to the high percentage of deaths from HIV. Four out of every 10 Mozambicans have HIV or AIDS.

He and his wife became burdened for these youth and how to reach them, and particularly addressing the issues of sexual relations in light of the HIV epidemic. He wished that the missionary who first introduced him to the SLM course, "Love,



Pastors Gathering for Training — Photo by Paulo Naene



Bible Study in the Village — Photo by Paulo Naene



Ladies Group Receiving Bibles — Photo by Paulo Naene

Dating, and Marriage,” was still alive to provide him with those courses, along with others for his church. He thought perhaps he might find someone else who could provide him with the courses.

An Internet search revealed a missionary in South Africa, just a few hours away, who provided the courses. Paulo began to reach out to this missionary, named Fanie Buys. Since it meant extra cost to further ship lessons from South Africa to Mozambique, we decided to find a way to ship them directly to him. Then, as we continued to communicate with Paulo, I decided to visit him, who by then had expressed interest in a deeper relationship with SLM. So, I boarded a plane toting three lesson-filled suitcases and made my way to Mozambique.

Paulo was as pleasant and kind as I had envisioned through our Zoom meetings, but also had a zeal and a passion to reach his people with the Gospel, see them disciplined, and

particularly see the leaders and pastors of his country better equipped at using the Bible. This is no small feat since only 1% of the 30 million Mozambicans have attended higher education, and only 5% of pastors even know how to read or write. But he seemed undeterred, despite the odds, and at every new revelation about the resources available to him in Portuguese became even more confident about joining SLM.

When I interview potential teammates, there are certain things that separate the “wheat from the chaff,” and the number one thing is money. SLM doesn’t pay anyone a salary; every single person who joins is a missionary and secures their own support. Hearing this, Paulo didn’t flinch. No reaction, no surprise, he just continued with the same momentum as before.

We decided to start the lengthy application and reference process with him, which also involves providing him with a supply of courses and

seeing how he uses them, through various forms of accountability, and of course through the lengthy application and references.

We hope that by the time this *Reaper* hits the presses, Mozambique will have become the next SLM official Discipleship Training Branch, with Paulo as its director. Paulo has been faithfully keeping us updated with his reports, and it has become clear God has been using him greatly and he has a great big Mozambique-sized faith. We believe God could use him and SLM together to reach his country with the Gospel. Pray that together Paulo and SLM will seek to “Explore the Unexplored.”

**PAULO’S VISION INCLUDES:**

- ◆ Promote and train churches and schools to use SLM’s evangelism and discipleship courses
- ◆ Continue to plant churches and train church planters
- ◆ Train current and future leaders and pastors

- ◆ Train youth and children’s leaders
- ◆ Expand ministries to orphans
- ◆ Host pastors’ conferences
- ◆ Start the World Wide Bible Institute of Mozambique.

**PLEASE PRAY:**

- ◆ That God would meet his support needs as well as those for the running of the Branch (currently \$1,000)
- ◆ For a good-running personal vehicle (\$8,000)
- ◆ For protection for him, his wife, and two daughters from those who oppose the Gospel being preached
- ◆ For the expansion of a network of churches and schools to utilize the SLM lessons
- ◆ For Mozambique to be reached with the Gospel



After years of serving as a church planting missionary, **Dr. Ronald J. Barnes Jr.** now serves as the President & CEO for SLM.

Follow me [@RonBarnesJr](#)

# COASTAL, GOSPEL RICHES: COSTA RICA

Miguel Díaz

It may be that Costa Rica has before been desired for its “rich coast,” but its potential connections and overall position for the sake of the Gospel are unquestionably infinitely more valuable. Originally an Associate Discipleship School directly linked to headquarters in Madison, their status now as an official Discipleship Training Branch and further relationship with additional countries is both encouraging and exhilarating. We rejoiced to formally introduce SLM Costa Rica and raise their flag at headquarters in 2022. Read on for more from National Director Miguel Díaz:

“We have led the Fuente de Luz (Source of Light) ministry in Costa Rica since July 2014. I am an electronics engineer and my wife is a journalist. We felt the call of God, and we were obedient. We resigned from our secular jobs by faith to dedicate ourselves completely to the ministry. We are also graduates of the Baptist Biblical Seminary in Costa Rica and currently pursuing a master’s degree in theology.

Our full-time calling with Source of Light Ministries has been a great

blessing to our lives. Here we find a very fertile ground where children, young people, and adults study and memorize the Bible in a disciplined and orderly manner, growing and thus fulfilling the Great Commission from the Lord Jesus Christ. God has blessed us and has opened the doors for us to spread the seed of His Word, which has allowed us to develop the ministry in more than 50 congregations in the country from border to border. In the different churches, we have more than 100 collaborators, and currently we have expanded into other countries such as Nicaragua, Panama, and Cuba, including regions of small towns of indigenous people where the Fuente de Luz ministry is currently active. Soon Belize will also be part of this group.

My wife and I train leaders so that they can develop the ministry of Source of Light, true disciples who week-by-week are accompanying people in their spiritual growth, enrolling students, checking assignments and verses, graduating students, and guiding them to the next course. It is wonderful to witness the decisions



Students Who Have Finished an SLM course at a Graduation and with a Certificate of Completion  
— Photos by Viviana Diaz

made by many children, youth, and adults, not only for salvation, which is already a great blessing, but also sanctification for their lives through what they have learned in the light of His Word, the holy Word of God.

Every week for eight years we have visited each of the places where God has allowed us to establish the Fuente de Luz ministry, encouraging collaborators and carrying out the graduations, establishing new places where the Word of God is scarce. It has been quite an adventure, and it certainly has not been easy. Satan is not happy and has sometimes

created difficulties so that the work of the Lord does not advance, but we are still standing.

**We are convinced that Jesus is the true and only solution for this fallen world, and it is for that we are prepared to wear out ourselves for His work. God has been good, and we ask God to be able to be part of the machinery of the Great Commission every day a little more, until He comes back.**



Students Who Have Finished an SLM course at a Graduation and with a Certificate of Completion  
— Photo by Viviana Diaz

**Our ministry includes:**

- ◆ Training for leaders of the Fuente de Luz ministry
- ◆ Evangelism and discipleship
- ◆ Facilitation of courses for children, youth, and adults (taught in person or online)
- ◆ Ministry in schools and colleges
- ◆ Small group studies and Bible clubs
- ◆ Training for children’s teachers
- ◆ On-site or online discipleship of the Fuente de Luz courses
- ◆ Graduations of the students of the Fuente de Luz courses
- ◆ Student registration, exams, and decisions made

**“Your prayers for us are our greatest gift.”**

Now I beg you, brethren, through the Lord Jesus Christ, and through the love of the Spirit, that you strive together with me in prayers to God for me (Romans 15:30 NKJV).



**Miguel Diaz** serves as the Director for SLM Costa Rica, which was officially introduced as a DTB in 2022. He and his wife, Viviana, left careers in engineering and journalism to serve full-time in ministry.

# GLOBAL REACH, MIGHTY PLANS: EAST ASIA

By T. & C.N.

*Man & Mop on Cold City Street in East Asia*  
— Photo by T.N.



The N. family has been very connected with East Asia for many years, T. has led a dozen or so short-term ministry teams there, while C. and the rest of the family joined in when possible. Most recently, C. had the privilege of working in East Asia as a first-grade TESL (*Teaching English as a Second Language*) teacher. However, her time was cut short due to the lockdowns of the COVID-19 pandemic. This became a major obstacle in family plans to live full time in this coastal city and work with the underground church and other ministries throughout the region.

T.’s background started with working at a major university in Virginia as a leader of many overseas mission endeavors, which developed into

also becoming a professor of Global Studies. He was able to lead groups of university students to other parts of the world, changing lives with a broader worldview, one through God’s eyes. He became the Executive Director of this department, and throughout his 19 years of employment there saw many students devote their lives to Christian ministry all over the world. After a slight career change and major move to Colorado, T. was asked to serve as a director alongside a team of mobilizers for an international missions organization. T. helped develop mobilization strategies for the organization in his first two years and then was tasked with the responsibility to revamp the mentoring and training of the long-term appointees. “It was during



Ron B., N. Family, and College Group in the Forbidden City — Photo by Anonymous



"Colorful Proteins at Food Stand in Beijing" — Photo by T.N.

that time," T. says, "we realized what God wanted us to do next: commit ourselves to full-time ministry in East Asia, utilizing our experience in education and ministry to make disciples for Christ amidst some of the least reached in the world. We have been pursuing this calling ever since."

C's backstory starts with going back to school to earn her master's degree in education. After her children were of school age, she earned that degree and began teaching. C's teaching experience in Virginia and Colorado spanned all the way from elementary education through high school. She has experience and certifications to teach English and the Arts at all grade levels. C. has taught in both private and public-school systems and shortly before departing for East Asia taught English as a Foreign Language online to East Asian students for several months. This specific experience further burdened C's heart for those in Asia and was a big part of what God used to give her a glimpse of what He has called her

to do. In 2019, C. applied for several international teaching jobs and was accepted as a Primary Teacher at a bilingual school in a major coastal East Asian city.

After her first semester was over, the COVID-19 pandemic struck. The timing could not have been worse for the family, as T. was in the process of finishing his responsibilities in Colorado and downsizing possessions so that he and their son could move to join C. on dependent visas through her place of work. The government in East Asia continued to wrestle with the pandemic and while doing so kept adjusting processes for visa approvals. This resulted in the family being separated half a world away from each other for over a year. With no change in sight after one year of separation, they were advised to cut C.'s contract short and return stateside to reunite the family while awaiting the Lord's next steps for them.

"Now," T. shares, "with the pandemic in check and growing more distant, as well as our children being grown, we are excited for the new ways in which God can use us in East Asia. While living in another, perhaps 'more flexible' part of the region, the work that the Lord has called us to may now come to fruition in East Asia." While C. works as an educator, T. is excited to fill the role of Regional Director of East Asia for SLM!

"We are thrilled for the days ahead and the opportunity to spend many years devoted to the direct mission and ministry of SLM. While in East Asia, we will be able to help DTBs with discipleship (2 Timothy 2:2), theological training of church leaders (2 Timothy 2:15), and the mobilization of His church (Acts 1:8) throughout East Asia.

**T. continues:**

"We know that this calling from the Lord is not an easy one. However, we only need to look to the Scriptures to see how God provides and cares for those that are called by Him. His continued providence and strength through the last 3 years of transitions and uncertainty is evident every day. Whether it be finances, jobs, opportunities to gain important certifications, or connecting with family, God has truly provided everything needed along the way. He has strengthened our faith in immeasurable ways.

"Many may like to know of an exciting new partnership that has recently formed for SLM in East Asia. The partnership is with a ministry based out of Singapore called Global Reachout (GR). GR has a strong footprint of work amongst Chinese in Singapore, in mainland China, and throughout other portions of East Asia, with a focus of spreading the Gospel through media resources. Their mission is: "Gospel through new media anytime, anywhere."

"This partnership with Global Reachout has been formed to further disseminate Gospel literature in Asia. Together, we will further accomplish our mission by reaching more Chinese with our Gospel literature in efforts to evangelize the lost, edify believers, and work to strengthen and establish local churches. Join with us in praying that joint efforts with GR will carry God's Word to the millions within Asia who desperately need to learn of Jesus Christ and grow in a mature relationship with Him."



**T.N.** serves as Regional Director of East Asia for SLM. Utilizing experience in global studies and TESL, he and his wife, **C.**, seek to make disciples for Christ among the least reached.



# THE PRINTED WORD... STILL CHANGING LIVES, CONSIDER BECOMING A PAPER PARTNER!



Weighing up to **1,100** pounds, an **\$800** roll of paper yields **18,000 to 20,000** Bible lessons. A **\$50** box of digital quality paper can produce about **1,250** Bible lessons. Source of Light material is used in Christian and secular schools, church planting, Bible studies, and even prisons around the world. Translations include languages such as French, Spanish, Tagalog, Hindi, and Japanese among several others available in Madison and abroad.

One of SLM's goals is to enable our international missionaries to produce the lessons on their own soil. However, many cannot because of the high cost of paper. Your generous gift will reach people in the US and overseas.

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...an investment which yields eternal results!

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[sourcelight.org/donate](https://sourcelight.org/donate)



# GLOBAL OUTREACH FUND



Source of Light International in Madison, Georgia operates and ministers to each of its missionaries without any administrative fees charged. We rely solely on gifts and regular donations in the same way as any of our missionaries, purely by faith. In order to continue to operate this way, we are asking God, by faith, to raise up new individuals, churches, and foundations to support the work of the home office through the Global Outreach Fund.

**Would you prayerfully consider partnering  
with SLM through the Global Outreach Fund?**

# THREE CONTINENTS, ONE MISSION

By Kimberly Thigpen

of Light through his longtime friend Jorge O., who had become Director of SLM Argentina. Jorge O. suggested using SLM materials in the new work in Spain. It was, Jorge V. says, “an answer to prayer, because we really need something like Source of Light in Spain.”

There are entire cities without even one church, particularly in the north where they serve. The average number in the churches that are there is 20 or 30 people.

Jorge and Olga’s goal is evangelism and discipleship. They are distributing literature and also working with churches to distribute in other locations. The regions of the area are quite independent, proud of their individual cultures. Local leaders are needed to share the materials within their own cultures, erasing that additional “foreign” barrier in a land already one of the hardest to reach in the world. Jorge seeks to find leaders in each of these regions who will distribute materials and start churches, shepherding them into an eventual fellowship that breaches regional boundaries.

Jorge’s favorite parts of ministry are preaching and teaching/training. When asked what is difficult about working there, he says, “Each place has its difficult side and its opportune sides! But I think that the most difficult thing is to place ourselves in the thoughts of people, respecting and understanding their worldview, and from there strategically starting

Jorge drove the streets of Spain, looking for the address of the church. This turn. This stop. Finally, he arrived at . . . a Catholic church building? He checked his GPS. It said he had arrived at his destination. What was happening? How did he end up here?

Jorge Vecchiarelli grew up in Argentina, where at age 13, he received Christ as Savior. He went on to attend seminary, where he met, as he says, “The most beautiful woman in Argentina.” He and Olga were married and finished seminary study together.

Jorge and Olga’s original ministry expanded throughout Latin America. They also took trips to Spain, where they saw incredible need in Spain’s post-Christian culture. In time, they felt God’s call to leave their home country to become missionaries there.

Back in seminary days, they had been friends with another Jorge (Ovando) and his wife. Over the years, Jorge V. had heard of Source



Paulina Recently Did a 2-month Internship at Source of Light in Madison — Photo by Brian Thigpen

a friendship relationship that will eventually cause these people to meet Jesus.”

He asks prayer for his children and grandchildren, for wisdom and ability for the ministry in Spain, and for provision, including the funds needed for a ministry car.

The Vecchiarellis are blessed with the addition of Paulina, their 28-year-old daughter, who has joined them in Spain in the work. Paulina, also currently raising support, has skills in social media and online marketing, equipping her to share the Gospel over the Internet and help with the church website. Her outgoing personality is a great benefit to their work with the youth.

Paulina is already a youth leader and discipling one young woman. Another significant contribution is her involvement with SLM’s Advanced Studies program in Spanish online. Advanced Studies already has courses in use in Latin



Ray Walker, Who Has Served 61 of SLM’s 70 years, Prays for New Partners Jorge and Olga — Photo by Kimberly Thigpen

America. Lord willing, online lessons in Spanish will also spread through Spain and beyond.

Jorge and Olga seek to go personally to the small churches in the area and share about SLM lessons. That was why he accepted a missionary’s invitation, followed the GPS, and ended up at a Catholic church.

Jorge called the missionary to explain he must have made a mistake, but the missionary said, “Wait! Don’t be afraid! Don’t leave!”

They discovered the Catholic church had been abandoned for over 45 years, one of many abandoned church buildings. The mayor of the area had told the missionary to ask the bishop, and maybe the bishop would give him the building. He did!

The missionary has painted and renovated it, and it is now a Baptist church where, Lord willing, SLM materials will be used and many saved and discipled.



Rosa Gomez Visiting Peru's Beaches on a Cold Day with Dalila Correa and Enrique Machado — Photo by Brian Thigpen

As it turned out, in many ways, Jorge had arrived at just the right place for God's work.

Mexico Director, Rosa Gomez, accepted Christ at age eight, after a Sunday school lesson from the book of Revelation had her wondering if her name would be in the Book of Life. Rosa has long been connected with Source of Light. For many years, she has distributed lessons provided by SLM Mexico. "I like to be able to help people who are interested in learning more about God," Rosa says, "and I also like to learn from each of these different cultures, since at the moment we are focusing on the city as well as the rural locations."

It may seem strange to be a "foreign" missionary within one's own country, but Rosa is, traveling long distances and witnessing in cultures very different from her own. "The difficult thing can be the access to some places in the rural localities, since



SLM's Spanish-Speaking Team, with Ministries Spanning Three Continents — Photo by Brian Thigpen

some of them are long distances of three to four hours and there is almost no transportation to those places." But it is worth it to experience what she states is her favorite part, "when I read some news that someone has given their life to Christ through the use of the courses, as well as when they give their thanks for the Source of Light lessons."

Distributing lessons is Rosa's sole ministry. Now 32 years old, single, she has been serving the Lord for seven years "by the grace of God."

Rosa hopes in the future to be able to bless others' ministries financially, as she has been blessed. She tells of a time when, studying at seminary, she needed a certain amount to pay the rest of her monthly tuition. "I had no money and neither did my parents. During the morning that was the due date to make the payment I was worried, and I was asking God if He could touch someone's heart to make me a loan." A Christian brother came to tell her the amount was

paid. "I asked him if someone had told him something and he said, 'God put in my heart to help you this day.'"

For Rosa, "it is worth walking with God." She asks prayer "that God will always be present in my life and give me wisdom and direction."

Like Rosa, Carlos Aranguren has also served the Lord since age 25. Carlos and his family are Colombian but have served in Argentina since 2014. Carlos says that, since his conversion at age 14, "I had a fervent desire to know and serve God and to live for His glory."

Carlos knew SLM missionary Graciela Guerrero, and she introduced him to Jorge Ovando, the same Jorge who introduced SLM to the Vecchiarellis. "The same day," Carlos says, "he asked me to consider praying about the idea of replacing him."

Now age 55, and a pastor, the decision to take on the directorship of SLM Argentina was a big one, but Carlos said he is "convinced SLM materials are going to be a strategic way to feed the flock of God."

Carlos and his wife, Constanza, have three daughters, two of which are planning to be married this spring. He desires prayer "for our faithfulness to the Lord; for wisdom from God to administer our time, and for our daughters' decisions."

With 30 years of ministry experience, Carlos is well-equipped for his new position as Director of SLM Argentina. Along with experience, however, is the value of his love for God and His Word. He says, "I believe the Word of God must move us to make decisions about how, where, and when to serve Him. There is a passage from the book of Acts that touches my heart to serve with Source of Light in Argentina: "...Understandest thou what thou readeest? And he said, How can I, except some man should guide me?" (Acts 8:30-31). The answer that Philip received, from an Ethiopian reading Esaias the prophet, has spoken to my heart about the need to provide, to believers and churches, aids to study and understand the Word of God. Most of the time, a person just reading cannot understand; help is necessary. I consider the Bible courses of Source of Light as a powerful help for God's people studying the Scriptures. The Lord has guided us to be a part of this task; it is an incomparable privilege."



Kimberly Rae Thigpen is Source of Light's Literature Coordinator and homeschool mom of two great kids.

# THE FUTURE OF SLM IN THE DIGITAL REALM

By Ronnie Barnes

Source of Light has come a long way in the last decade. In missions, there is often the mindset of finding the most economical way of doing things. But the Bible actually speaks to that:

**“If the iron be blunt, and he do not whet the edge, then must he put to more strength: but wisdom is profitable to direct.” (Ecclesiastes 10:10).**

Ministries far too often have applied more strength, used blunt objects, and not achieved their true potential. We understand that we must be wise stewards of our resources, but far too often we consider the financial resource at the expense of the people resource. “Whetting the edge” at Source of Light has meant significant and strategic but modest investments in the SLM infrastructure. Ironically, the expense of whetting the edge of newer technology hasn’t been nearly as costly as was once thought. At the same time, productivity has soared.

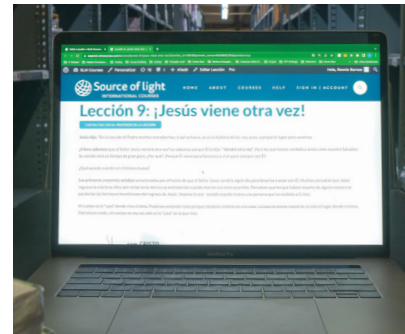
Through the implementation of upgraded equipment, the latest in

standardized software and storage, and training to go along with each addition, SLM, through the Media and Marketing Department, led by Ronnie and Ron Barnes (son and father), has moved into a more productive season electronically speaking.

We have also implemented electronic, online enrollment of students for both basic SLM courses as well as the World Wide Bible Institute, which is now in Spanish online also. These were hurdles SLM feared clearing for years but have now become a reality.

Our missionaries are in better, more regular, more personal connection with their administrators and each other than ever before, with resources available in “real-time” online at the stroke of a key. This has reduced the scores of back and forth for information, files, tracking of funds, and donors, saving significant time and money.

Our online presence through our website, social media, online videos, and livestreamed training events has



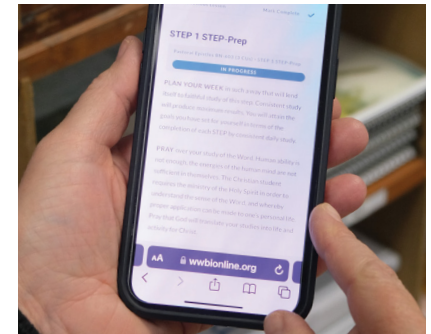
SLM Lessons Online in Spanish — Photo by Ronnie Barnes

expanded the ministry beyond what previously our financial constraints would allow, and has opened doors far beyond what we could have imagined.

But we must not rest here, or else we fall behind again. Moving forward, 2023 will be another challenging year as we anticipate the need to secure several new and better pieces of equipment and software. Communication and collaboration are keys to effectively running any business, and now that SLM has access to some of the best internet access in the area, we can take advantage of some newer, and cheaper, ways of doing our work.

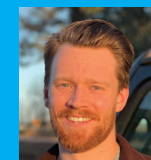
***It will come at some expense, so we are trusting God to provide in each of these endeavors and ask you to pray along with us for the following things:***

- ◆ Upgraded servers and licenses – \$20,000
- ◆ Replace switches – \$4,400



World Wide Bible Institute Online in English and Spanish — Photo by Ronnie Barnes

- ◆ Replace phone system – \$5,000
- ◆ Search for fully integrated software system for all SLM processes
- ◆ Training for using newer systems, software, and technology
- ◆ PATIENCE . . . If you have ever had to call for tech support, you know what to pray for



**Ronnie** serves as the Media Outreach Coordinator and has served with SLM for 10 years.

# FORWARD FOUNDATIONS OF OPERATIONS

By Bruce Dare

Having just celebrated our 70th year as a ministry at Source of Light, we have been thinking often about foundations. As we do so, we are thinking not just about the past on its own, but rather how it relates to our future, how the legacy of SLM prepares us for and propels us into a vision for what God will do. So, it's not just a foundation. It's a way to move forward. A forward foundation (Hebrews 11:9–10). As we look with anticipation for God to bless the next harvest, we do so with confidence in His favor shown over all these years and with the necessary preparation today of inclining our hearts to His will.

No department at headquarters knows more about physical foundations than Operations, as this team knows best not only the technicalities of buildings and the history of projects, but also how God can create something out of little or nothing. In fact, some in the group can see this in they themselves, coming first as volunteers that maybe came to SLM on one trip but then came

year after year until they gave of their whole lives and careers to serve God as an integral and critical part of the staff here. The Lord started a good work in their hearts and built upon it the opportunities, thoughts, acts, and desires that became part of His direction for their lives. He planted a seed that was ready for the rain.

Such is true even for the Director of Operations, Phil Winder, who doesn't take long to recall stories, miracles really, of God's faithfulness over his decades serving at Source of Light. Situations such as one of his first assignments where he became scribe for a retired electrical engineer who could no longer write legibly but had a mind to conduct an electrical survey. This man's former company then brought a team to rewire a significant portion of our main building, eventually turning their work and much of the material into a donation. Such a story became more current last year in the Print Shop, as another retired electrical engineer turned pastor laid out the plans for



Volunteer Hanging Lights in the then New Print Shop — Photo from SLM archives

a lighting upgrade, while a separate volunteer group brought skilled men who even stayed an extra few days to finish the install and get the job done, one traveling to store after store to procure the necessary materials.

Or there's the story Phil often shares when he gives a tour of headquarters about an elevator needed to access the then new second floor, quite necessary for certain staff members who are often retired missionaries and could not otherwise access each of our departments. Back when the need arose, prayer for the elevator on Thursday turned into a check to pay for it that came on Tuesday. It's been pointed out the check probably preceded the prayer, but that's just how God provides, possibly before we even know we have a need but then just in time to meet it.

It is with this heart that the Operations Department envisions their work. As Phil aptly put it, "We are serving one another so that we can better serve the Lord." There may be no better



Volunteers Installing New LED Lighting in the Print Shop — Photo by Phil Winder

way to view the oftentimes unsung and sometimes unnoticed work of maintenance or ministry of helps. Those on the team now can answer the same call as those gone before: "through love serve one another" (Galatians 5:13). The previous generation of Operations did this so well, all for the Lord. And how could they not for He who was "among you as the One who serves" (Luke 22:27). The faithfulness of Jesus, and those in times past who have faithfully completed their course for Him, propel them on.

As we look to opportunities for eternal investment from a physical needs perspective, we do so with this heart of service. We have a heart to serve with our facilities, not only in general upkeep and cyclical improvement of our current homes, but also for a new structure that will include a small apartment. This would provide sufficient and affordable housing for staff often in the process of raising support or in unique support situations. It could also act as

another central hub and place of rest for foreign missionaries reporting to churches or church groups coming to work as volunteers. These homes are often places where God implants His vision and increases His heart in His servants, as a first exposure to SLM that grows into a host of prayer partners or paper partners (see pp. 16 & 27). Some volunteer churches or couples have become unofficial reps of Source of Light in their home areas, simply due to the investment they've had personally in the work, how they've been a part and the ministry has become a part of them.

We also have a heart to serve with our fleet. Three of five current vehicles, including ones needed for regular aspects of ministry, are nearing unreliability. We believe it would not serve our missionaries or donors rightly to be well within the possibility of a breakdown on a standard trip and are praying that God will provide the machines or funds to adequately meet the needs. The vehicles we have are well-utilized and often are a way to save compared to more expensive alternatives, whether it be the trucking of this *Reaper* mailing and larger equipment, or airport runs and deputation travel. Their purpose is to serve our missionaries in serving the Lord, and we wish them to do that well.

**God does not call us to give Him everything that is needed; He calls us to give what we have.**

**For you, this could mean giving up your lunch or taking someone to lunch. For others, it could be spending part of their lives or giving all their lives to missions.**

God could be calling you to be part of another building or vehicle story-miracle at Source of Light, but rest assured that He already has called you to be a vehicle of blessing in His service. Let's move forward from that foundation. Let's stand together in the storm, ready for the spring of His blessing.

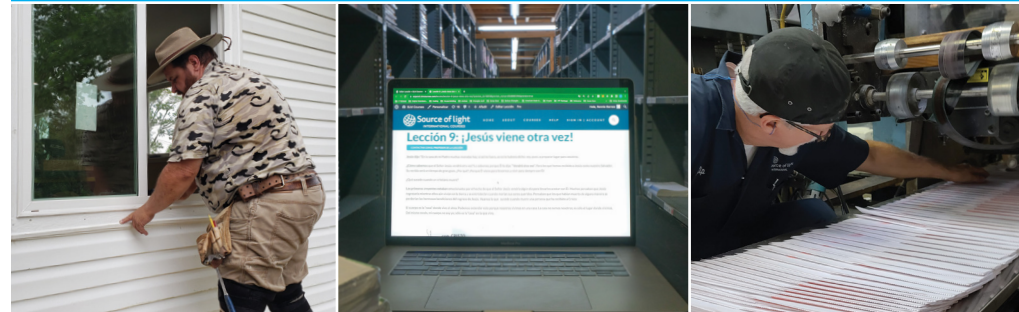


**Bruce Dare** serves as the newly appointed Director of Publications at SLM. He and his family are grateful God opened this place of ministry full-time in 2021.

# LOOKING FOR A CHANGE?

CONSIDER SERVING WITH SLM IN MADISON

COME SPEND A DAY, A MONTH, OR A YEAR WITH US



An expanding ministry means expanding needs and expanding opportunities in Madison. We are seeking work teams, visitors, retirees, and experienced missionaries. Every skill level is welcome- what we are seeking most is willingness.

CONTACT [HR@SLMIN.ORG](mailto:HR@SLMIN.ORG) TO FIND OUT HOW TO GET STARTED.

## SLM IS LOOKING FOR:

- ◆ Receptionists
- ◆ Hostess
- ◆ Housekeeping
- ◆ Maintenance
- ◆ Mechanic
- ◆ Small engine repair
- ◆ Construction
- ◆ Carpentry
- ◆ Landscaping
- ◆ Accountant
- ◆ Finance clerk
- ◆ Data entry
- ◆ Office administration
- ◆ Administrative assistants
- ◆ Chaplain
- ◆ Discipleship
- ◆ Web design
- ◆ IT
- ◆ Social media influencers
- ◆ Marketing
- ◆ Graphic designer
- ◆ Pressman
- ◆ Prepress
- ◆ Orders clerk

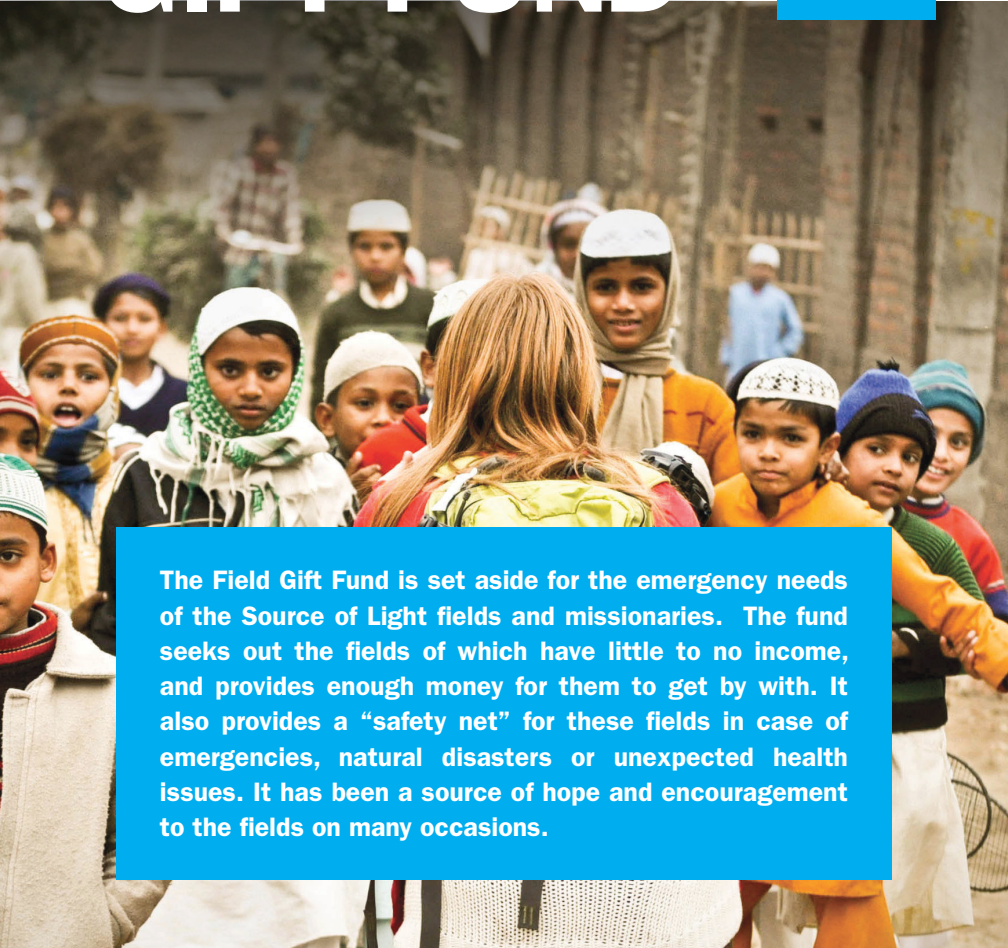
## PRAYER

- ◆ Daniel Sappor, our SLM National Director in Ghana, asks us to pray for his wife, Gifty, who must leave home between 4:30-5:00 a.m. for work. She has been robbed twice. Please pray for Gifty's security. Also, pray for Daniel's ministry secretary, Lolorny, who recently lost her brother. The brother's wife had already passed away, and they have school-aged children who need care givers. Please pray for this family.
- ◆ Recently the SLM materials were presented to about 200 pastors in the coastal region of Kenya. Please pray that fruit will come from this endeavor. Also, the Branch in Kenya asks us to pray for their school ministry. New time restraints are creating challenges for the SLM ministry to students.
- ◆ The political climates in Haiti and Myanmar remain quite unstable. Please pray for our missionaries serving in those areas that God would protect their families and ministry associates and for provision of their needs during these difficult days.
- ◆ The doors are wide open in many of our fields for the distribution of the lessons. Please pray that the financial resources will be available for printing so that we can seize each of these opportunities.
- ◆ Bolivia is facing new restrictions on preaching the Gospel. Open-air meetings have been banned. Please pray for our ministry there.
- ◆ The Director of SLM India's ministry in the Central Zone, Pastor W.D., is praying that God will provide the funding needed to print *New Life in Christ 1, 2, & 3*, *Explorers 1 & 2*, *Practical Christian Living*, *Understanding True Love*, and the children's courses in Telugu.
- ◆ Pastor H.Y. in Japan shares that a few years ago a new version of the Japanese Bible was published that is a much better version. They are currently going through all the Source of Light courses (about 200 lessons) and are updating the Scripture to this better translation. Please pray for this huge undertaking!
- ◆ In June, a small cyclone hit the building of the orphanage operated by Pastor P.T. and SLM Myanmar. They received funds that enabled them to repair the roof of the building, but \$2,000 is still needed for brickwork and molding.
- ◆ In areas around where Source of Light Pakistan Pastor B. ministers, 543 families were recently impacted with flooding. They need assistance with food, tents, clothes, blankets, and drinking water.
- ◆ Pablo Correa was using glaucoma drops to treat ocular pressure in his eyes. However, they were not helping, so he had laser surgery on both eyes. Please pray that the surgery will be effective and stop the progression of the glaucoma.
- ◆ Our Print Shop staff are currently doing research concerning an upgrade in our print shop equipment to a full-color press. The current press has been a huge blessing for many years, and they ask for prayer that God will give them wisdom in making the right decision in choosing a press that will serve the ministry well for years to come.
- ◆ Please pray for strength for our SLM Staff who are aging and facing health issues. Pray for their healing from various surgeries and treatments and that God will send replacements for their positions when they can no longer serve.

## PRAISE

- ◆ One of our Branches in India finished construction of a smaller scale model of the Old Testament Tabernacle. They praise the Lord for the vehicle that God has provided for them to be able to transport this important visual that they use in sharing the Gospel.
- ◆ We praise the Lord for a large donation of \$32,000 that was received for the printing and shipping of Bible lessons to Uganda in 2023. This Branch was also discouraged about a problem with thievery in their new ministry facility, but God enabled them to quickly put up a brick wall that we hope will help resolve the problem.
- ◆ Enrique Machado, Source of Light Peru's National Director, recently received news from one of their Associate Discipleship Schools that 11 children who were studying the Source of Light courses were saved. This Branch is also rejoicing that five new regions have started using the materials. Their goal is to reach all 24 regions in Peru.
- ◆ Pastor K.J. in the Northeast Zone of India praises the Lord for a recent family conference that was held with 16 couples in the Calcutta church. One of the couples who attended were separated but have repented, and their relationship has been restored. He also reported that five souls were saved and baptized after doing *New Life in Christ 1 & 2* in the Assamese language in village churches.
- ◆ Brian and Gwenda Trapp praise the Lord for the success of their sixth annual "Trapp's Puzzle Fundraiser" for 2022 and for the matching contribution of \$10,000 that was given to benefit some of our international Branches.
- ◆ Pastor H.P. in the South Zone of India preached and taught 22 young people in an area called Chikkanayakanahalli using the SLM courses, and they accepted Christ as their Savior. He also shares that he has been teaching 25 young people via Zoom using the Practical Christian Living lessons and materials from our World Wide Bible Institute.
- ◆ Pastor S.P., who serves with SLM in Odisha, India, is excited that God has provided support for 10 evangelists to work for one year among a special people group they have targeted. These evangelists have already been appointed and have completed a two-day orientation program.
- ◆ Discipleship Training Branch Director, P.A., in Indonesia, praises the Lord for free airtime on the government radio that has been allotted to their ministry to preach on Sunday evenings.
- ◆ Virgie and Faustino Espinas, who serve with Source of Light in the Philippines, are thanking God for preserving Virgie's life. She started having heart pain, and testing revealed a 90% blockage in an artery. She was treated through angioplasty. They give testimony to God's love, care, and provision in meeting all her medical needs.
- ◆ Pablo and Dalila Correa praise the Lord for the SLM Retreat that was held in Lima, Peru, for the Source of Light Spanish-speaking National Directors. They enjoyed fellowship, participated in training, and were encouraged in their ministries with Source of Light.
- ◆ The Operations Department is praising the Lord for new church groups who came to volunteer at Source of Light in 2022.

# FIELD GIFT FUND



The Field Gift Fund is set aside for the emergency needs of the Source of Light fields and missionaries. The fund seeks out the fields of which have little to no income, and provides enough money for them to get by with. It also provides a “safety net” for these fields in case of emergencies, natural disasters or unexpected health issues. It has been a source of hope and encouragement to the fields on many occasions.

Would you prayerfully consider partnering with SLM through this Field Outreach Fund Campaign? There are many ways to help.

To partner with us today, go to  
[sourcelight.org/donate](http://sourcelight.org/donate)

## IN MEMORIAL



Source of light  
INTERNATIONAL

### GIFTS IN HONOR OF...

**Byron and Sheila Shupp by**

Gary and Joanne Silverman

**Dave and Allene Giles by**

Stacy and Lynn Barnes

**LaVon Jarrell by**

Robert and Martha Williams

**Bill and Marianne Rosenberger by**

Allan and Sue Reichenbach

**Charlotte Mattocks by**

Allan and Sue Reichenbach

**Bobby Tahaei by**

Jeanne Barnes

### GIFTS IN MEMORY OF...

**Spencer Bradley by**

Jerry and Melinda Spivey, Jr.

**Hugh Jarrell by**

Robert and Martha Williams

**Herb Pollard by**

Sylvia Pollard

**Patricia Wood by**

Paula Ghorley  
Marty Hills  
Penney Mitchell

**Myron Mattocks by**

Allan and Sue Reichenbach

**Marguerite Potter by**

Lillian Knowles  
Nancy Nydam

*Dear Friend,*

*Let's remember His words...*

Lay not up for yourselves treasure on earth ... but lay up for yourselves treasure in heaven... for where your treasure is, there will your heart be also. (Paraphrase Matthew 6:19–21)

*...for in heaven we will be glad we did.*

*Yours for the harvest,*

Dr. Ronald J. Barnes, Jr.  
President & CEO

**Give Online at:**

[sourcelight.org/donate](http://sourcelight.org/donate)

**By Phone:**

**706.342.0397**

Each gift will be used as preferred with the understanding that when any need is met, the remaining gifts will be used where most needed. Gifts are acknowledged and receipted with an official receipt for income tax purposes.

***We are grateful to you for being a part of the ministry of Source of Light through your prayers and financial support.***





**Source of light**

INTERNATIONAL

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