



# the REAPER

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I WILL GO

ISAIAH 6:8

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.

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**the REAPER**

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*Editor*

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**Corrections & Clarifications**

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# I WILL GO

By Ron Barnes  
A letter from the Editor

## Isaiah 6:8 I'll go.

“Jess” could have been considered more or less your average Bible college student, maybe even your average church member. Her application to come on a trip with me through her college mission’s department was rather unremarkable, so unremarkable that it actually stood out. In the section where she was to fill in her spiritual gift or what she could contribute on a ministry team, her comments were along the line of “N/A” and “don’t have any.”

I’d never seen anyone fill out the application that way before. Generally, students tended to oversell their ability. Certainly we would be amiss to not snatch up that kind of talent! It wouldn’t take very long into the trip for most of us to realize they might have exaggerated or misunderstood their abilities. But with Jess, she could only have improved on her initial assessment of her abilities. She set the bar low!

With such a large team, we had a couple of days where we needed to split up the team so that we wouldn’t overwhelm the smaller outreaches.

One of the outreaches our ministry in Czech had was to a hockey preparatory school for middle and highschoolers. In the Czech Republic, hockey is big! But the big money is not made by playing in Czech but rather by playing in the United States or Canada. So, this school taught them in their normal school requirements how to play hockey and to learn English. Only ... the teachers could hardly speak English well themselves, which isn’t too uncommon.

This open door came as a result of an English outreach in that city, a preliminary outreach tool to start a church plant. One of our TEFL (Teaching English as a Foreign Language) students happened to be an administrator at the school and asked if we would be able to just come talk to the kids, perhaps to get them to practice their English. It wasn’t easy. After all, teens don’t like to be embarrassed, so for a while it was more talking at them than with them, but as they became more comfortable, they would speak. Except for when I brought in a stranger, it was usually back to square one.

When the time came to split up the group, I gave them a chance to volunteer, but the pizza and coffee shop outreaches we planned were a lot

more popular. So, when we came to the school option, the room got quiet ... real quiet. Until Jess spoke up. “I’ll go,” she said, and then she cackled in her normal insecure laugh. “What do I have to lose?” A couple of friends she made on the trip begrudgingly agreed to join her, so I decided with this lackluster, less-than-enthusiastic crowd, I might have to join this team.

We arrived at the school, and I split the students into small groups, each with one American. It wasn’t going well. The Americans said a few things, some of the cues that I gave them as conversation starters, but the teens weren’t joining in. I started interjecting myself into the small groups, hoping a trusted face could get some of them speaking, when suddenly, I heard a commotion to my back. I turned around just in time to catch Jess, not at all athletic, three quarters of the way through a summersault on the floor.

The room erupted in laughter, and she said, “Roll, that’s what the word roll means.” Next thing I knew, they were talking. They were off script, talking about music and TV, from their age’s perspective, and then the other groups joined hers and they were all talking, Jess, the loudest and the most. She had broken the ice and was getting really in depth by the end of the hour.



Part of the University Team in the  
Airport Ready to Go  
— Photo by Ronnie Barnes

On the trip back, the group that was with me was giddy about the whole experience. They couldn’t wait to go back and tell the others about it, and they did! Suddenly, there was a little jealousy from the others about the outreach that no one else wanted to go to.

At the meal, I sat near Jess and started to debrief, something I always did with students throughout each trip. I said, “Jess, you just found your gift! It’s unusual; it’s special!”

She teared up for a moment and said, “But I was just being goofy. You mean goofy is a gift?”

I said, “You were brave, you were yourself, and you weren’t ashamed. I think those were qualities that made Paul a gifted evangelist.”

She wiped her tears away and said, “Can we go back?”

I told her there wasn’t time, the trip was almost over, and the class was only once a week. Then she paused a moment and said, “How about this summer? Can I come back and do my internship here with you?”

Another student nearby chimed in and said, “Can I come too?” By the end



Hockey Players Learning English with Ron  
—Photo by Ronnie Barnes

of the week, three students in total committed to come serve with us in the Czech and served that summer. I believe it was directly related to that most difficult step of all, the first ... to GO

Jess' experience of taking that first step in "going" not only led her to "go back" again, but along the way she discovered her gift and some strengths, and that inspired others to "go with" her.

**“Also I heard the voice of the Lord, saying, Whom shall I send, and who will go for us? Then said I, Here am I; send me.”  
Isaiah 6:8**

Without a doubt, the hardest step in fulfilling the Great Commission is the very first step, and yet that first verb in the Great Commission makes very clear: no fulfillment will ever be had without “going.” It is not a challenge to a few select—the evangelists, missionaries, and pastors—but rather for every single

one of us. The challenge is for each of us to GO MAKE DISCIPLES! And our response should be “Lord, send me. I’ll go!”

This *Reaper* is filled with examples of people who have done just that. We hope their experiences intermingled with opportunities to “come along” will inspire you to join us in fulfilling the Great Commission. 🌿



TEFL Class in Cesky Krumlov —Photo by Ronnie Barnes



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

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## We Will Go

By Kimberly Thigpen

Sharing the Tabernacle Message Inside Churches —Photo by H.

*A true story from a resistant land. Names are altered and locations hidden to protect their security.*

H. had married less than two years earlier and was a new father. He had a solid job as an electrical engineer. His culture’s ideal was to have a positive relationship with the community, earn money, and take care of parents and in-laws in their old age. He even served the Lord during his free time, helping his father’s ministry with Source of Light.

H. remembers clearly the Saturday in 1988 when, at a 10-day discipleship training camp, the Lord called him into full-time missionary work.

“Enough of working in the world,” the teacher had said. “I want you to work for me.”

H. was confused why the teacher was calling them until the teacher clarified that he meant working for the Lord. “And at that moment,” H. says, “the Lord impressed upon my heart that He would

be calling me into the ministry. The call was definite.”

He went home and told his wife. Through the rest of that weekend, they prayed. At one point, they laid their baby on the bed and knelt together, hand-in-hand, and committed their lives and their child and any future children to God.

Monday, H. says, “I resigned and never looked back again. I went in an engineer and came back an evangelist.” The next day, he received his first call to come share the Gospel.

His wife, A., told him she had prayed for this day for a long time. Through the many trials and blessings over those difficult years of poverty and resistance, she never wavered.

At times, they had only rice and sauce made from boiled soup cubes to eat. Some days, they did not have the equivalent to a dollar or even fifty cents, but they never told their difficulties to others. “We knelt and prayed.” H. says



Setting Up the Life-Size Tabernacle —Photos by H.



they had hard questions, both of them, but they brought their needs to the Lord and made the choice not to complain. During the season they had no money for medicine, their baby was not sick once.

After a time of theological training in a college that taught him both in positive and negative ways, they returned to their area, burdened for the many millions desperately needing the truth of Christ.

Around that time, A., well-educated with her own job that paid the essential home bills like rent and electricity, was led to join as partner with H. in full-time ministry. She shared her calling with H., who supported her decision, saying, “God will be happy when we are obedient.”

Their decision was not celebrated. Her boss tried to talk her out of resigning. People in their circles criticized their choice, saying they were supposed to go up the ladder not down it. Nevertheless, despite the opinions of others, they became full-time partners together in God’s work and have remained so ever since, relying on the Lord for provision.

A. was asked by the Bible Society to oversee a team of theologically-trained linguists in coordinating the first ever

study Bible in their local language. “She’s very good with writing,” H. says. “It has become phenomenal by the grace of God. Hundreds of thousands have been sold.” H. gave the example of its impact, saying a rural village pastor with no Biblical training might read a passage, not understand the cultural context behind it, and preach an incorrect meaning. “This Bible became a great, great help for all the pastors in the villages.” He continued that when the Bible came out, A. wept to see the result of her choice to resign from a successful job in the world and choose to be successful in heavenly ways instead.

God provided in creative ways. Once, H. enrolled his little daughter in a painting class for one week. However, she ended up traveling to visit family



Items in the Life-Size Tabernacle — Photos by H.



H. Now Shares Using a Mid-Size and Miniature Tabernacle — Photo by H.

and, since H. did not want to waste the small fee he had paid, he asked if he could finish the class himself. The instructor was surprised he was willing to join the elementary school children, but he came and sat in the back and before the week was over, the teacher said he was finished and had a future in painting. Soon he was selling paintings.

Once, a man came to H. needing a certain amount of money. H. gave him almost everything that A. had saved to pay the rent, due in ten days. As H. was riding on his bicycle, trying to sell paintings, he came upon the house of a wealthy man who asked him to paint a mural on an interior wall. He wanted it done for a guest event—the next day! H. went home and told his wife, “You pray; I’ll paint.” He returned with materials and worked and worked and finished it on time. They had not discussed payment, but when he got home later and opened the envelope he’d received, it contained exactly the amount he had given away and spent on the paints for the mural, exactly what he needed for the rent.

Over time, H. became so well-known as an artist, he had to back off from the temptation to put too much time and effort into something that pulled him from the ministry. “I didn’t call you for business,” H. says the Lord impressed upon his heart. H. had answered God’s call to go. His wife A. had answered God’s call to go. They continued to stay committed to that choice year after year, through good times and hard times.

And God led. Through a series of circumstances that only God could orchestrate, H. sat one night at his dinner table, his wife on one side and his father on the other, and he told them of his vision to build a life-sized model of the Old Testament Tabernacle. With it, they could lead people in a tangible and visible way through the message of redemption and salvation only found in the perfect sacrifice of Jesus Christ.

He finished his explanation but shared that he had no idea how they would pay for it. Immediately, his wife removed her gold earrings and set them on the table. “This is my first offering. You start with this.” He looked to see his father

was crying. The father stood and left the room, returning with the necklaces and bracelets that had belonged to his deceased mother. “This is Mom’s contribution,” he said. Both gave up what probably were the most valuable items in their possession, just as the children of Israel had done so many years ago.

It took years, but through the gifts of God’s people, a new member of their church who was a carpenter, and much work, the Tabernacle was complete. Over thirty thousand people have walked through it, and more than three thousand have received Christ. “And then, the real work begins,” H. says, with follow up and discipleship. At times, he says with a laugh, “Our house is like a call center.”

This large and highly visible Gospel tool has had to be scaled down, literally, due to reasons the reader can surmise. In replacement, they have made a middle size version that can fit inside churches and even a miniature one they take to large personal gatherings. Many more have received Christ, and H. has expanded to training others how to teach the Tabernacle message, spreading the potential impact beyond his own region and language. The need is so great, and the invitations to show the Tabernacle and share its message are so numerous, H. struggles not with the temptation to do too little, but rather doing too much and facing burnout.

God has blessed their willingness. As restrictions have tightened in his country, H. has still been allowed entrance into locations foreigners are no longer allowed, able to give the Gospel

to his own people. When Covid shut down church gatherings and they were forced to meet online or not at all, God increased their numbers.

They have encountered intense spiritual warfare. The enemy has fought their calling, their family, their ministry and their impact for more than three decades. But when H. and A. said, “I will go,” they meant it. God has sustained them and given victory in the power of Christ’s name. Those of us on this side of the world who cannot go can pray for strength, spiritual nourishment, provision, enough rest, and more laborers to help share the burden and blessing as they continue for the Lord. 🌿



— Photo by Kimberly Thigpen

**“And they came, every one whose heart stirred him up, and every one whom his spirit made willing, and they brought the LORD’s offering to the work of the tabernacle ... And they came, both men and women, as many as were willing hearted, and brought bracelets, and earrings, and rings, and tablets, all jewels of gold. (Exodus 35:21–22)**



**Kimberly Thigpen** is a homeschool mom, teacher, and author. She serves as SLM’s Literature Coordinator.

# GO WHERE GOD OPENS DOORS, EVEN WHEN THEY’RE CLOSED

By Brenda Barnes

In the initial development of the SLM Advanced Studies Department here in Madison, Georgia, it was the passion of the founder, Dr. Bill Shade, that anyone interested would have affordable access to take their discipleship to the next level with advanced studies, college-level courses, to go anywhere in the world.

God has answered our requests and taken this curriculum far and wide, in dangerous and restricted places. One of the most dangerous and restrictive might surprise you, and yet it is where the courses have been greatly used: prisons and jails around the globe.

Our Advanced Studies curriculum of the Ezra Institute and the WWBI is being allowed and used in some of the most restricted high security prisons in the United States. Because of the way it is designed, it is perfect for correspondence, especially for prisoners.

Among the requirements of each World Wide Bible Institute course are “In-Service” Projects, which are a variety of written reports designed to assist the student to process and apply the information learned in

the course to life and ministry. The following “ISP” is from a student in WWBI. The project was to write a letter to a Christian friend who is discouraged because they feel they have sinned and failed the Lord to the extent of being without hope. The following is our student’s letter, and may you find encouragement through the words he shares:

- **Paul T.**
- **July 9, 2023**
- **The Epistle of Romans – STEP 2 ISP**
- **Hello, my friend. I heard that you are down because you have sinned and feel that you failed our Lord. Do not lose hope or your faith. I want to get with you and talk, but until then I will tell you and remind you about our teaching we have gotten: stand fast (2 Thessalonians 2:15).**
- **You know we are in a fallen**

- world and everyone sins. Satan just waits for you to become weak, and he can throw some doubt into your mind about God. Satan is just like a lion waiting to devour us (1 Peter 5:8). Satan has one goal and that is to destroy our relationship with God. Satan will use anyone to do this, so always test what you are told by His Word. Never follow or listen to someone whose words are different than God's.

- God says not to let anyone lead you astray (2 Thessalonians 2:3).

- God never guaranteed or promised us an easy life in Christ.

- I have been praying for you daily when I heard and will until we meet. I want to tell you a few verses that I believe fix this problem.

- God will forgive any sin; all He wants from us is to ask for forgiveness; repent (1 John 1:9).

- God is always there for us, and He will never change (Malachi 3:6, John 10:29).

- Even when we feel discouraged or think we have lost all hope and faith, God's love remains strong for us. God has forgiven all of our sins (Hebrews 10:10, Jeremiah 31:34).

We have learned in our journey together that God does not want anyone to perish because of sin (2 Peter 3:9, Ezekiel 33:11, Ezekiel 18:32).

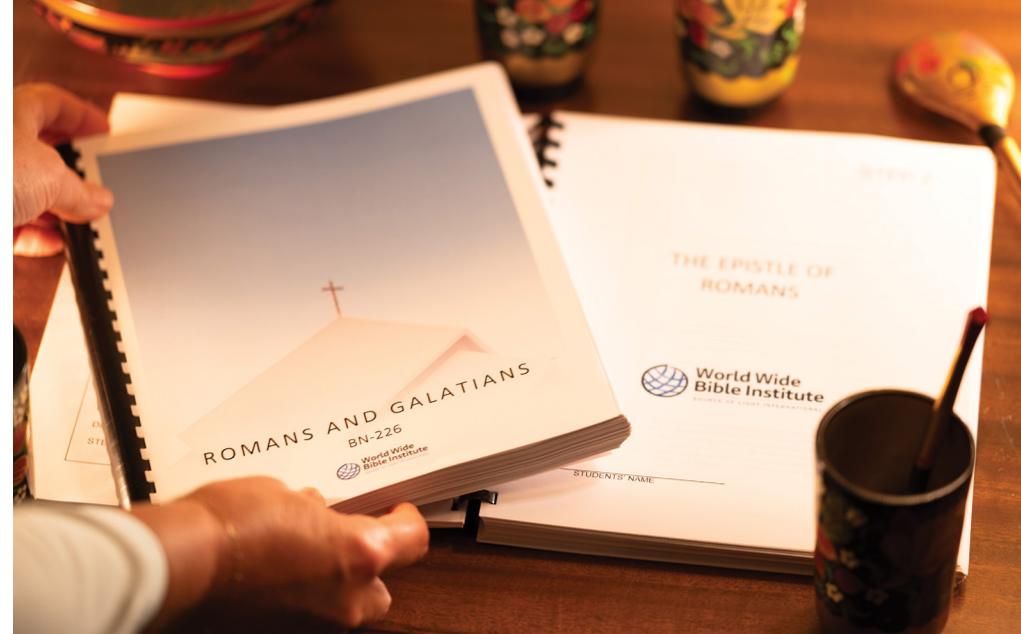
God is ready right NOW to forgive you, and when He does all the angels will rejoice (Psalm 86:5, Luke 15:10). We have been sealed with the Holy Spirit; you have just walked off God's path a little (Ephesians 1:13).

When this happened, you may have said, "Why did God let this happen?" We talk about how God didn't do this - you did - God always gives us a choice.

Sometimes we will face consequences because of our own foolish or sinful choices. Every day we fight two natures that are in us. One good and one evil. The Spirit will always help us overcome evil if we let Him.

Sometimes God will let adversity come our way. God is not being mean, but to test us. God wants us to ask for help, lean on Him. God is there for us always. God wants to hear from us not just in bad times, but in good times.

God's purpose isn't to destroy us but rather to stimulate our spiritual growth (James 1:4).



WWBI Course Romans and Galatians — Photo by Ron Barnes III

- Remember that when we are in the grace of God, He will love us no matter how many mistakes we make. God sees the big picture. He loves us more than we can imagine.

- I have a few questions for you to think about:

- *How do you feel right now?*

- *How did you feel before you sinned?*

- The last question:

- *How do you want to feel?*

I want you, as soon as you finish reading my letter, to get down on your knees and pray to God for forgiveness for your sins. He will forgive and forget.

Get that good and warm feeling that we have when we are close and comforted by God.

I will get with you for that long overdue sitdown, and then we can pray and talk together.

Your brother in Christ,

God Bless,

Paul T.

We were impressed with his project, and it was written with such care that we asked if we could share it. A couple weeks later we received permission to use this ISP, and this is what he wrote:

**Hi. The In-Service Project letter I wrote came from my heart. It was about 22 years ago or more; I was the one that I wrote it to. I wished someone would have written or told me the things I wrote. I believe that I would not be in here right now. I do give you my permission to use it any way you see fit. I think that it is a great honor that you think it may help your mission. If it just helps one person—well, that would be great.**

**Thank you for letting me keep doing the studies when I get out. Be safe.**

**God Bless,**

**Paul T.**

The World Wide Bible Institute is free through an Advanced Studies Scholarship Fund for those who are incarcerated and have completed the required free basic courses that we offer and want to continue to study God's Word on an advanced

level. All of our prisoner students who receive this scholarship have been so grateful, consistent and dedicated to their studies, and it has been a blessing to work with them and see that they are growing in their faith and sharing their faith with those around them even while in prison.

We have a couple of prisoners who have served their time and will be getting out soon. Paul is one of them, and it was our pleasure to tell them that they will continue on scholarship to do their Advanced Studies courses even when they are released so that they can continue their study of the Word while they assimilate back into society, find a church family, and follow God's leading in their lives.

**The Advanced Studies Scholarship Fund gives an opportunity for you "to go" by sending, to allow SLM to continue to reach prisoners who want to study the Word of God in a deeper way.** 🌿



**Brenda Barnes** has served as a missionary in Hungary and the Czech Republic as well as having home schooled all three of her children. She serves at SLM as the Director of the Advanced Studies Department, WWBI Registrar, Reaper staff, and Hospitality Coordinator.

# A MINISTRY IN NEED OF A MINISTER

By Rowley Hayner

Correspondence from Chaplain Gene & Carol Brown, From Crime to Christ Prison Ministries — Photo by Bruce Dare

In today's culture, there are many different people who are looked to as heroes. These individuals come from a variety of backgrounds including professional sports, Hollywood, the music industry, politics, the health profession, and others. Often overlooked are the unsung heroes of our day. These include workers who spend their days attempting to restore men and women who find themselves in our nation's prisons. One such hero is Chaplain Gene. He has spent a lifetime ministering to the souls of men and women who made the wrong choices and ended up behind bars.

In a letter from 1994, he stated, "I am continuing to preach at several of the largest prisons in Maryland on a regular basis, and we are seeing souls won to the Lord Jesus Christ on a regular basis. When that happens, we try to immediately get them involved with the 'Source' Bible study lessons." He goes on to say that as the official chaplain of the county detention center, where they house about 500 inmates, "we have about a third of the prison population taking the lessons."

Chaplain Gene's partnership with Source of Light Ministries began in July of 1984, when he submitted his

application to start a discipleship ministry. He has faithfully discipled hundreds of inmates with SLM resources for 39 years. Recently, however, he shared in an email, "I am 86 years old, and it's time to shut down my lifelong prison ministries (From Crime to Christ Prison Ministries). There will be no one to take over, so I am asking if I can return those packets of lessons ..." He continues, "I am no longer able to physically manage the work of walking those cement floors in the many cell blocks with my arthritis, etc." Speaking about Source of Light Ministries, he says "You have been a faithful source of material for many years, and I appreciate you folks dearly." How blessed we feel to have co-labored with this special servant of God!

The question we have is, "What's next?" Who is going to meet the spiritual needs of the inmates at Chaplain Gene's prison? Maybe God is calling you? 🌿



**Rowley Hayner** serves as the North America ADS Coordinator and supervises the Orders Department. Previously, he and his wife, Sandy, served in short-term missions in Alaska, Jamaica, and South Africa.

# 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 **\$75** 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 United States and overseas.

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...an investment which yields eternal results!

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[sourcelight.org/donate](http://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?**

# GET IN THE WAY

By Danielle Dare

“There is so much excitement in the air, Mom. I love seeing all these people around!” These were the words of my nine-year-old daughter a few months after we moved to Georgia to join the full-time staff here at Source of Light. She was right! The energy and extra productivity brought by the large team of volunteers from a partner church in Pennsylvania was felt. This group had been coming to serve for years and their familiarity and organization allowed them to tackle some large projects set aside for many hands. They were willing to do particularly dirty and difficult jobs as well as embrace some of the seemingly mundane ones, like making meals for the rest of their group. Even more notable than the tasks they completed was the impact of the joy they brought with them.

Many of our volunteers come year after year, and the love they have for the ministry here has grown through a sense of belonging and investment. Long-time volunteer, Ricky, from North Carolina, shares his experience, saying, “We feel that we will make a difference in thousands of people’s lives as these lessons are received around the world.” The mutual edification of continued friendships is a valuable oasis and a catalyst for greater impact. Equally as refreshing are first-time volunteers. They may have heard about the printing press, lessons, or global impact from a Source

of Light missionary or a friend, but when they have the opportunity to see with their own eyes and participate tangibly in the work, they realize more fully the scope of all that is done. Many times we have heard, “Wow, we didn’t realize you did all this right here,” or “I didn’t know you print in so many languages.” They carry fresh enthusiasm back home with them, often recruiting others to join them the next time.

God has provided solutions to many needs through both the skill set and generosity of these faithful partners in ministry. There is something for everyone to do when they have a genuine heart to serve. From praying for our students by name, counting inventory, painting, packing lessons, or purchasing equipment they noticed was needed, God uses His people to do His work through the specific gifts He has



*Ricky & Mary Beth Streifert Have Helped to Send Countless Lessons across the Globe — Photo by Ricky Streifert*

given them. Director of Operations, Phil Winder, explains that, “Source of Light has a broad scope of ministry which matches well with a varied skill set in our volunteers.”



*Tammie Wilkes & Dale Grosvenor Helping to Collate and Shrink Wrap SLM Booklets — Photo by Alf Wilkes*

In a society bursting at the seams with activity, giving away valuable time to join a work trip with a bunch of people you may not know well, not knowing fully what you will be doing, may not seem worth the sacrifice. Truly the reasons not to go may be completely understandable. However, when the posture of a person’s heart is to follow where God calls, to be willing to be spent for His glory, the fruit of that person’s labor will abound in ways that could never be anticipated. Such is the case for Alf and Tammie, who in the midst of the ongoing commitments with their own ministry, chose to travel from Pennsylvania with their church to help at Source of Light for a week. They share, “After just the first day we agreed that as much as we were able to, this needed to become an annual trip for us. It was such a joy to serve in a different way

than we usually do ... it was a joy to get to know people from our church better and work alongside them ... For anyone considering volunteering at Source of Light we would say to make the time to do so. It is a blessing!”

“Put yourself in the way of blessing” is a phrase I continually heard my dad say to me growing up. He didn’t mean that I should strive to be the best or to achieve wealth or popularity or gold medals. When he said this, I knew he meant for me to look for opportunities to serve the Lord. The blessings God gives are eternally valuable and endless when we turn our hearts to Him in obedience, taking that first step to serve others for the sake of the Gospel. 🌿



*Alf Wilkes Shares with the Volunteer Team from South New Milford Baptist Church — Photo by Tammie Wilkes*



**Danielle Dare** is married to Bruce, Director of Publications at SLM. She spends her time caring for their three children and assists at the mission as she is able.

# BUILDING PROJECTS & NEEDS

THE VISION FOR OUR BIG CAMPUS IS GETTING BIGGER.

- ◆ 25 pillows for our guests houses . . . . \$625
- ◆ 50 sets of bed linens for guest houses . . . \$1,000
- ◆ 1 laser transit for our Maintenance Department . . . \$1,000
- ◆ Replacement for our broken vending machine . . . \$2,500
- ◆ Remodel guest house bathroom and add a third bathroom . . . . \$8,000
- ◆ Help fund/purchase 2 newer vehicles for ministry use . . . \$20-\$30,000 each
- ◆ Help fund/replace/repair new driveway and parking lot . . . . \$200,000
- ◆ Help fund/build a new ministry guest house . . . . \$300,000

## WOULD YOU PRAY WITH US ABOUT THESE BUILDING PROJECTS AND NEEDS?

# ANSWERING GOD'S CALL

By Ben Doomy

The prophet Isaiah was called to serve God in ministry, undoubtedly. Chapters one to five of Isaiah recount the wickedness of Israel and God's judgment to come upon them. We reach chapter six, and Isaiah has a vision of God sitting on the throne and His robe filling the temple. This holy moment brings about a correct posture in Isaiah's heart where he recognizes the sin in his own life and the sins of Israel. It is through this revelation to Isaiah that he understood the holiness of God and the sinfulness of himself. Then, a beautiful thing happens. An angel comes and puts a hot coal from the altar on Isaiah's lips and says, "thine iniquity is taken away, and thy sin purged" (6:7). Before all else, Isaiah's greatest need was that his sins be forgiven and he be made new. Isaiah then hears God say, "Whom shall I send, and who will go for us?" (6:8a)

Previously, God would send a judge or prophet to Israel in order that they might

repent and turn from their sins. This account of Isaiah seeing and hearing God ask "Whom shall I send?" is the first time we have seen this happen. It is only because Isaiah has been purged of his sin that he is qualified to be a prophet for God to present the impending judgment on Israel. So, when Isaiah hears God ask, "Whom shall I send?" Isaiah's response is, "Here am I, send me" (6:8b). This scenario reminds me of the question God asked Adam and Eve in the garden when they were hiding from Him. "The Lord God called unto Adam, and said to him, 'Where art thou?'" (Genesis 3:9). God knew where Adam was. It was not a surprise to God where Adam was hiding. He knows everything. In the same way, God knew He was going to send Isaiah when He asked, "Whom shall I send?"

Today, God is calling men and women to serve Him in ministry. I can remember the day God called me. I was only 14 years old when God called me to serve



Ben Doomy Shares His Heart with the Staff of SLM in Chapel at Headquarters — Photo by Ron Barnes III

Him full time in ministry. The beauty of God's sovereignty is that I never knew where God would lead me. I fully believed that I would be a youth pastor for a long time and then one day become a pastor and stay at that church until I died. Proverbs 16:9 says, "A man's heart deviseth his way: but the Lord directeth his steps." This verse taught me that man plans for his life, but ultimately God's plan will be done. The plans that I had made were not what God had planned for my life. That is a scary and beautiful thing at the same time. On one hand, it is scary because we are not certain of what the future holds for us, so we have to lean on faith in God. On the other hand, it is beautiful because God has a better plan than anything I could have ever dreamed on my own.

What is God calling you to? I fully believe that God has a calling on everyone's

life. Some are called to preach, some are called to be missionaries, some are called to be doctors, and some are called to landscaping. Not everyone has the same calling in life, but everyone has a calling. God's will is that you would be faithful to go wherever He leads you and to serve Him wherever that is, even if it is your hometown. Romans 10:13-15 says, "For whosoever shall call upon the name of the Lord shall be saved. How then shall they call on him in whom they have not believed? and how shall they believe in him of whom they have not heard? and how shall they hear without a preacher? And how shall they preach, except they be sent?". Source of Light's main goal is discipleship around the world. That goal is being achieved by men and women who are faithful to go wherever and do whatever the Lord calls them to. Is God calling you to serve with Source of Light? We would love to serve alongside you. 🌿



*The World Needs to Hear the Gospel, Whether That's Your Neighbor Next Door or These Children in the Small Villages of Zambia — Photo by Ben Doomy*



**Ben Doomy** serves as the Youth Ministries Coordinator and is helping to coordinate the development of the new SLM courses.



## MISSION TRIP TO MADISON AND BEYOND

By Ron Barnes

There is no greater way to take the first step in "GO" than a trip to Madison, Georgia! It will change your life. Those who have come in the past have returned home with a greater vision of what God is doing around the globe and how the office in Madison helps that process. Most left knowing better how to pray and partner financially with our missionaries and projects. Many returned home only to get started planning their return trip to volunteer in the office in Madison. And a few either went home so moved they started planning on returning to serve at SLM full-time or ... they never left at all. They stayed and still serve here!

We can accommodate youth, college, pastor, teacher and family missions trips based on your desire, either in Madison or to one of our 40 Branch locations around the globe! So, take that first step of "GO" and email us at [rbarnes@slmin.org](mailto:rbarnes@slmin.org) or call us at 706-342-0397 and ask for Ron, Ben, or Phil! One of us can get you started. 🌿



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](https://twitter.com/RonBarnesJr)

# THE NEXT STEP OF “GO”

By Bruce Dare

## Must a man go to seminary to be a minister? May a missionary not go overseas?

These are important questions, perhaps burning questions for some of us who serve at Source of Light. And maybe for some of you. Of course, it depends on one's definition of terms, but they are significant even from a broad perspective. Are there legitimate religious vocations outside of being a preacher? Can someone do missions other than church planting? What are the qualifications to serve? Is there more than just being willing to go?

The stories of some of us at SLM might be complicated, but the heart of the matter really is not. “I grew up in a pastor's home,” Phil Winder shares. “It's just what you did. It wasn't really a question. Serve!” As Director of Operations and Volunteers, that's what he continues to do every day. It may not be glamorous to oversee an aging campus of 14 homes, especially when a sewer line fails over the weekend. It's difficult to manage an aging fleet of vehicles, especially when the box truck has intermittent conk-outs. It's not always fun directing differently-aged work groups, especially when students

start using chairs as bumper cars. But it's what God prepared Phil Winder to do, how He uses a kind, unassuming guy to support the discipleship of thousands across the globe.

Ministry was always a part of Phil's life but not always part of his calling. After his family moved to Florida, he worked a couple jobs with his brother, Jim. After meeting his wife, Vera, on a blind date, they decided it was time to get serious and be faithful to the Lord. After 20+ years in the citrus industry, they worked together in small businesses, not only landscaping but also contracted to stock products for a home improvement store vendor. It was during this time they had a growing desire to serve in missions, though not



Jonathan Cutting Concrete While Marvin Looks on in Preparation for a Reinforced Pad for the Press — Photo by Dan Winder



Jonathan Weidman Standing with Marvin Ingalsbe during a Visit to SLM in 1994 — Photo by SLM Archives

certain in foreign missions. They saw an ad in the newspaper about a local church plant and answered the call to go and help. Phil's brother, Jim, who had a career as a truck driver, was part of the beginning of a similar ministry effort in Pennsylvania. Eventually, these mission-minded churches would join together in trips to none other than Source of Light Ministries International headquartered in Madison, Georgia. After a couple years of that, as they say, the rest was history.

The Winders became convinced that serving God at SLM was the thing for them. They sold their businesses to a friend, their house in a tough market, and broke even on an unfortunately damaged camper. The family trucking connection came through also as the company Phil's brother worked for had trucks hauling cheese from Pennsylvania to Florida but were not-so-coincidentally empty on the way to Watkinsville, right nearby Madison and the perfect solution for moving. Phil and Vera celebrated 15 years on staff at Source of Light just a few

months ago. What began as a simple commitment to serve, a heart to step in and volunteer when asked, has grown into a life-defining ministry on mission to glorify God in the advance of the Gospel.

No offense to our people, but God has not called many impressive folks to SLM. Not many professionals. Not many engineers or doctors or professors. But He has chosen to use us “that no flesh should glory in his presence.” (1 Corinthians 1:29). This choosing began in the early 1990's for Jonathan and Anna Weidman as they first heard about SLM through a visiting missionary at their church. It even resulted in their initial pursuit to join the mission, though that was eventually discontinued. God had more work to do, especially in Jonathan's heart, that would prepare them for their eventual call. Surrounding their daughter's involvement in an apprenticeship program at Source of Light and a youth missions trip during the mid-2000's, Jonathan was reminded “to be doing what you began and were desiring to



Phil As Part of the Crew on Concrete Work Needed for the New Press — Photo by Dan Winder

do” and felt compelled to “complete the doing of it” (2 Corinthians 8:10–12).

A couple years later enters once again Jim Winder and Cornerstone Bible Church, where the Weidmans visited to hear another SLM missionary share. The welcome at this church, to their family but also in support of their heart to serve, became just what they needed to propel them into a vocational commitment to ministry. Whether small commitments like participation on a crisis pregnancy center board or morning cold-calls to pastors to a life-altering job layoff and the global pandemic, Jonathan followed the Lord. “The process of getting to SLM drove me closer to Christ. You lose your job; you’ve got to trust Him. I was comfortable. I needed to become dependent on Him.” I asked Jonathan what the attraction to SLM was over all those years, and he said it wasn’t really the global reach that now accompanies his thinking. “It was a place I could be in ministry and use the skills I had.” Having served for decades as a carpenter in construction, Jonathan wrestled with a desire to offer his work to the Lord. He now has transitioned to lead our maintenance team at SLM Headquarters. From my vantage point, especially through his involvement in



Phil Winder Answers a Call from His First Days on SLM Staff in 2008 — Photo by Dan Winder

preparation for our new printing press, these skills could not be more evident. God is using him.

We all have our own versions of the story, and they all seem to be especially fluky. But then again, this work does not really have to do with us at all. “But of him are ye in Christ Jesus, who of God is made unto us wisdom, and righteousness, and sanctification, and redemption: that, according as it is written, He that gloryeth, let him glory in the Lord.” (1 Corinthians 1:30–31). Who will serve? Who will go? The next step for you might be signing up for a prayer letter. Others might give monthly on the support team of a staff member. You might cover a large project for one of our Branches. You might use a vacation week every other year to volunteer. Or you might sell all that you have and move states away from your family. God just wants us to answer His call. What is the next step of “Go” for you? 🌿



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



# HELP WANTED

Whether you can offer only certain days as a volunteer or prefer a non-typical missionary career, we just might have a place for you. Non-negotiable requirements include a heart to serve, a mind to learn, and two hands to help, but see below for more specific needs in the Operations Department:

## **MAINTENANCE**

To participate in general upkeep of housing, buildings, equipment, and vehicles

## **RECEPTIONIST**

To be the face and voice of SLM Headquarters by greeting visitors, answering calls, and directing inquiries

## **STEWARD**

To assist in light janitorial, preventive maintenance, safety inspections, event set-up, etc.

## **LANDSCAPING**

To maintain our 25-acre campus with mowing, trimming, blowing, edging, etc.

**ALL OPPORTUNITIES COULD BE PART-TIME OR FULL-TIME BUT WOULD NECESSITATE CLOSE PROXIMITY TO MADISON, GEORGIA.**

**CONTACT HR@SLMIN.ORG OR PWINDER@SLMIN.ORG FOR MORE INFORMATION.**

## PRAYER

- ◆ Source of Light is looking at some huge needs for literature for 2024 in our International Branches. Please pray that God provides the resources for printing the material needed. Please pray that we will be able to get everything printed and that it will reach its destination in a timely manner. Some of our partners serve schools and need to have their stock in place when the school year begins.
- ◆ One of our partner churches has taken on a project to raise money for Bibles as a part of their missions outreach. This has provided many Bibles for Africa. Please pray that other churches will embrace this opportunity as well. In Africa and Asia, the need is very great. In most places, Bibles can be purchased by our national missionaries in the language they need right in their own countries, eliminating the need for shipping. The funds are just needed to make the purchases.
- ◆ By the time you receive this edition of the *Reaper*, Source of Light should have the new printing press up and running. Please pray for the staff as they learn a new machine and that we will be able to print all the materials that will be needed for 2024 in a timely manner. Please pray also that God sends additional staff for the Print Shop
- ◆ Please pray for believers in India. In some areas persecution is very intense. Pray for their protection and that they will stand strong in their faith in these perilous times.
- ◆ Several of our Branches need ministry vehicles. In Kenya there is a need for a van to transport materials and ministry staff to areas where they minister.
- ◆ Please keep our Headquarters staff who struggle with long-term health issues in your prayers. They serve faithfully despite their struggles.
- ◆ Please pray for Paulo Naene, the Director of the new SLM Branch in Mozambique, and Adil Reis, the Director of the new SLM Branch in Portugal as they begin their ministries with Source of Light. Each of these men will be raising support for their SLM work. Pray that God will provide all their needs and give them wisdom in ministry.
- ◆ Jim Tilson, who heads up the Braille Department, requests prayer that God will provide someone he can begin to train as his future replacement.
- ◆ We have several students who are in our Advanced Studies courses who are prisoners and are being evaluated for release. Please pray that God will provide jobs and the spiritual support they need to enable them to continue to live free. Please read the praise in this *Reaper* that speaks of how God enables Source of Light to help with this.
- ◆ As new Branches become a part of Source of Light, they are responsible for raising funds for their ministries. We have had several new ministries added in recent years with multiple missionaries currently raising support. Please pray that God will provide sufficient financial support for these faith ministries so that they can thrive. 🌿

## PRAISE

- ◆ We are thankful for God's provision for the new press and that the modifications needed in the Print Shop were completed on schedule. We are also grateful for the volunteers who have assisted in the installation. One of these volunteers is a pastor with a background in the electrical field. His experience was such a blessing to our Operations staff. We praise the Lord for the safety of those doing the installation, provision for all the components, modifications needed for the installation, and for the protection of the equipment as it was being installed.
- ◆ We praise the Lord for how Philip Fraiser is recovering from a heart attack. Please continue to pray that God will restore his strength and that the adjustment to running the new press will go smoothly with little stress.
- ◆ We praise the Lord for two new SLM Branches that have officially opened in Mozambique and Portugal. The Director for the Mozambique Branch is Paulo Naene, and the Director for the Branch in Portugal is Adil Reis.
- ◆ We praise the Lord for donations that have come in to complete the amount needed to purchase new embossers for the Braille Department.
- ◆ Source of Light is very thankful for the many volunteer teams who have come to Headquarters to serve this year. They fill in the gaps and do a myriad of tasks that save our missionaries time and enable them to focus on the tasks that only they can do.
- ◆ Source of Light's Advanced Studies Department has several inmate students doing the advanced courses. Some of these inmates are reaching the end of their sentences, and release dates are being considered. It is wonderful to see their interest in continuing the lessons when they are released. If they are doing the lessons on a scholarship, they can continue their courses on the scholarship program when they are released. This is a blessing to them as they start again, often with limited resources, outside prison. Praise the Lord for the funds for these scholarships.
- ◆ In many of our International Branches, schools are open to receiving lessons for their students. This is a wonderful opportunity to reach young people with the Gospel. We praise the Lord for this open door.
- ◆ Our International Branches are so appreciative of the support that God provides for them through their donors in the United States. They do occasionally receive local gifts, but often "in country giving" falls short of supporting the work. When Americans give to international ministries, they really are putting feet to their prayers. It enables the staff on the field to eat, helps with the medical care that keeps them healthy, and helps to supply the means of getting lessons to the students. The nationals can operate more efficiently, in most cases, because they are functioning in their own language and culture, and they do not have the travel and relocation costs of a missionary who is sent from abroad. Source of Light has created a strategic way to partner with nationals and provide accountability so that the donor can be assured that their resources are being wisely used. 🌿

# 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

### *GIFTS IN HONOR OF...*

**Byron and Sheila Shupp by**  
Gary and Joanne Silverman

### *GIFTS IN MEMORY OF...*

**Ralph and Melva Davidson by**  
Michael and Sue Bailey

**Evelyn Bone by**  
Roger and Carolyn Bruce

**Bea Stanley by**  
William and Janice Blanchard

**Rev. Stanley Rosenau by**  
Don and Cindy Anderson

**Mary Brandon Harrington by**  
Dave and Allene Giles

**Frances Howell by**  
Beth Devor

**Bill Shade by**  
Allen and Sharron Riddle

**Ruth Burt Cornwell by**  
Don and Louise Hewlett

**Mary Ann Gorton by**  
Clair Gorton

**Robert E Smalley by**  
Pamela Holling



Source of light  
INTERNATIONAL

*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

1011 Mission Road  
Madison, GA 30650-4908

p. 706.342.0397

f. 706.342.9072

e. [slm@sourceoflight.org](mailto:slm@sourceoflight.org)

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