



# the REAPER

VOL. 70, NO. 1 | Spring 2025

A full-page background image showing a person standing on the dark, silhouetted edge of a cliff. The person is looking out over a vast, hazy landscape under a warm, golden sunset sky. In the distance, a large, jagged mountain peak rises, its slopes catching the low light of the sun. The overall mood is contemplative and expansive.

**ACROSS  
BORDERS**

**MARK 16:15**

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.

For information visit us at:  
**[www.sourcelight.org](http://www.sourcelight.org)**  
or call **800.776.1207**

**the REAPER** is published by Source of Light Ministries International, Inc. and is free of charge to subscribers. Write or call to be placed on the mailing list.

#### Change of Address or Subscription

If your address has changed or you are no longer interested in receiving **the REAPER**, please contact us using the postal or email address on the back cover of this magazine.

Copyright © 2025

Source of Light Ministries International, Inc.  
1011 Mission Road, Madison, Georgia 30650

*All rights reserved including the rights to reproduce this publication or any parts thereof in any form without the express written permission of Source of Light.*

Printed in the United States of America, January 2025

#### the REAPER

Dr. Ronald J. Barnes Jr.  
*Editor*

Bruce Dare  
*Assistant Editor*

Brenda Barnes  
Melody Zink  
Betty Ingalsbe  
Kimberly Thigpen

Ray Walker  
Shirley Rice  
*Reaper Staff*

David Eppinger  
*Graphic Designer*

Ron Barnes III  
*Photographer*

Michael Ventrello  
*Prepress*

#### Board of Directors

Dr. Paul Seger, *Chairman*  
Dr. R.J. Sans, *Vice Chairman*  
Jim Thompson, *Secretary*  
Jay Reber, *Treasurer*  
Steve Woody  
Dr. B.H. Struthers  
Doug Truax  
Don Lowry

#### Administrator's Cabinet

Dr. Ronald J. Barnes Jr.  
*President & CEO*  
Brian Thigpen  
*Chief Financial Officer*  
Phil Winder  
*Director of Operations*  
Bruce Dare  
*Director of Publications*  
Brian Thompson  
*Regional Director - North America*  
Scottie Staab  
*Regional Director - Europe & Asia*  
Dr. Ronald J. Barnes Jr.  
*Interim Regional Director - Africa*  
*Interim Regional Director - Latin America*

# the REAPER

VOL. 70, NO. 1 | Spring 2025

## TABLE OF CONTENTS

**4 Editor's Article:  
Across Borders**

**7 Fishers of Men**

**11 In the Trenches,  
Beyond the Grave**

**15 Brothers Behind Bars**

**16 Invisible Borders**

**18 Introducing Our Newest  
Regional Directors**

**19 Crossing into  
Communism**

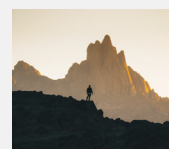
**23 The SLM Bible Institute  
Truly is WORLD WIDE  
and Across Borders**

**26 A Plea to One**

**27 Eula Keener Memorial**

**29 Prayer**

**30 Praise**



#### On the Cover

NEOM

Across Borders

Mark 16:15

#### Corrections & Clarifications

For the latest version of **the Reaper**  
go to [sourcelight.org/reaper](http://sourcelight.org/reaper)

# ACROSS BORDERS

“GO YE INTO ALL THE WORLD”

By Ron Barnes

A letter from the Editor

“I’m a political asylum seeker from Venezuela,” were not words I was expecting when I sat across from “L” in my office after he requested to meet with me. He was very eager to meet, and it took a few weeks for our schedules to line up. He was, in fact, so eager, he wanted to come from North Carolina the day hurricane Helene was making its way straight through the middle of both our locations. It took a couple of weeks to reschedule, and it was very last-minute, because he had decided it was time to return to Venezuela, even though he was still a political fugitive. But first he needed to connect.

“L” told me the story of how he had been an outspoken critic to the government of Venezuela, particularly his leadership. He had a significant bit of influence through his television news platform, and a few attempts

**“And he said unto them, Go ye into all the world, and preach the gospel to every creature.”**

**Mark 16:15**

were made on his life. Then came the official news that there were warrants out for his arrest, and so he fled to a neighboring country until he was granted asylum in the US. He settled into the US and found gainful employment in North Carolina, but most importantly, he says, he found God.

He shared with me that he considered himself quite religious “back home,” attending church faithfully. But neither inside church nor outside did he get fed. His religion was not a relationship with God, but a ritual. It was in that little country church in North Carolina that he met the Lord and came to faith in Jesus Christ. He was overwhelmed with how much the church poured into him and was so interested and invested in his spiritual growth. He told me the intentional discipleship he received was simple but exhaustive, giving him the spiritual foundation he needed to grow in his faith and to share it with others.

God began to burden his heart for his home country. He knew others, his family and friends, were going through the motions of religion without a relationship with or true

knowledge of Jesus Christ. He began to make plans to return, knowing very well if he was caught it could be extremely dangerous for him, but he was determined that if God wanted him to return, he would go in spite of the risks.

He began to put into place all the things that he would need to move back, including setting up an online business he could run from inside Venezuela and not be on the radar trying to apply for jobs. Once that was in place, he began to arrange the main thing he was returning to Venezuela to do: contacting and connecting with the organization that provided his small country church in North Carolina with the very resources he himself was disciplined with. That’s when he contacted ... me!

After he toured Source of Light, we sat in my office to chat more specifically about what his vision was, and he was so excited about what he had seen and heard just from the short tour, he was like a kid who couldn’t sit still in his chair.

It was like opening presents for his birthday as I shared about course after course, including that

our World Wide Bible Institute was actually available in Spanish. He had no idea. He was thinking it was only in English, and a whole world of possibilities just flooded his mind as we sat together.

We discussed providing him with electronic copies to print in country and other options about potentially smuggling printed lessons in through



Venezuela Borders Brazil, Colombia, and Guyana in South America



a soft border. He also volunteered to begin helping with some editing of new courses as well as our WWBI courses. Within a short amount of time, we discovered we both would benefit a great deal from a partnership, working together across a border, in a place where we have not had an official partner.

Recently, he made his way to a bordering country, flew to the closest city next to the border, took a taxi to the border, snuck across the border, and took a taxi to the next border city where he will live and begin to do the ministry of SLM.

As interesting as this story is, it's not an unusual one. Yes, "L's" experience is a little extreme, but it's not unusual in that we have many stories of God taking the SLM resources "across borders" where we have no Branches, no schools, no missionaries, nothing. Just the resources that people have brought with them from outside because of the impact the evangelistic and discipleship lessons had on them.

Just a few weeks ago, another similar example, a Ghanaian who was saved and discipled using the lessons, used them in his local church ministry in Ghana and asked

if he could have permission to use them and distribute them while he completed his doctoral studies in the UK.

These are just two examples of what God continues to do at Source of Light, taking these "paper missionaries" as some of our people like to call them, across borders to many countries where there aren't any missionaries or churches. To places where pastors have little to no training and to people who have never even heard the name of Jesus.

This edition of *The Reaper* is dedicated to telling some of those stories with the hope that God will raise up partners who would pray for and fund the establishment of new Branches and the resources it will take to provide them with literature. It is our hope God would continue to use us as effectively in the places across borders that we aren't as He has in the places we are. Pray with us as we continue to carry our mission and vision to go across borders:

"Source of Light Ministries International 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." 🌿



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



**"And he saith unto them, Follow me, and I will make you fishers of men. And they straightway left their nets, and followed him." (Matthew 4:19-20)**

It is a story most of us are familiar with—Jesus calling His disciples, some who were fishermen by trade. They left their nets behind to follow Jesus and encouraged others to do the same. Fishers of men: does He still call them today?

One surely cannot help but smile at the present-day similarity of a disciple of Christ in Zambia, Kelvin Chisiza. Kelvin, the eldest of eight children, grew up in a fisherman's family. They resided by the lake and earned their livelihood through catching and then selling fish. God had other plans for Kelvin, however, and called him to give his life to discipleship in full-time vocational ministry. He says, "Since the time I graduated from college, there has been a growing passion to

teach the Word of God. I told myself that even if I was going to lead a church, my main area of service would be discipleship."

The very basis of discipleship is to teach what you have learned to others as you live beside them, inspiring them to, in turn, lead others. 2 Timothy 2:2 simply explains, "... the things that thou hast heard of me among many witnesses, the same commit thou to faithful men, who shall be able to teach others also." In response to this calling, Kelvin has been given the opportunity from the Lord to serve as a Bible teacher as well as lead the Source of Light Branch at the Ambassador International University (AIU) in Zambia. In these roles, he participates in training future leaders and faithful believers who will graduate and begin the ministries God has for them in their communities.

Source of Light materials play a vital role in the training of these



Main Campus of Ambassador International University — Photo by Kelvin Chisiza



Newly Constructed SLM Print Shop in Zambia  
—Photo by Kelvin Chisiza

students, who represent several African nations including Zambia, Malawi, Mozambique, Togo, and Zimbabwe. Along with studying the courses themselves, the students participate in practical outreach trips where they disciple others in the surrounding villages using Source of Light lessons. This concept comes from Kelvin's vision and carefully calculated plan to equip students with the tools they need to start their own Source of Light Associate Discipleship Schools or possibly even Branches when they graduate and return to their respective countries. They are doing the work now, so they

will have what they need to continue that same work over and over again, sharing the Gospel, planting churches, and making faithful disciples. Kelvin puts it this way, "I have developed a policy of assimilating students to be part of my ministry as volunteers and learn more about Source of Light so that when they graduate and go to their countries, starting a discipleship school will be their first priority."

When he is not teaching or serving on the field, Kelvin is creating plans to carry out the vision of the recently constructed print shop. Weaving his experience and education in business with his goals for the ministry, he has

solid ideas for growth and funding for the Source of Light office on location at the campus of AIU in Zambia. Ideally, this would be the hub for lessons to be printed and distributed throughout southern African nations as graduates are sent out fully equipped to begin leading new ministries using Source of Light materials. Funding for the materials and equipment will be met through the development of relationships with churches, businesses, and individuals with the heart to come alongside the mission of Source of Light, primarily within Zambia. Another strategy, which will serve a dual purpose of funding and building evangelistic relationships, is to offer printing services to local schools that may choose to utilize the print shop as a valuable resource.

New students will continually participate in this discipleship model of growth—studying the truth, sharing with others, and building practical—and they will learn how to replicate these steps in their own communities, expanding the reach of the Gospel from generation to generation. God has promised to build His Church.

In the Gospel accounts of Jesus calling His disciples, they tried unsuccessfully casting their nets, catching no fish. It was not until they recognized and obeyed Christ's command that the nets were filled with fish. No doubt, this was a lesson of faith they carried with them in the often difficult, seemingly fruitless

work of the ministry. As the well-known missionary Hudson Taylor affirmed, "Depend on it. God's work done in God's way will never lack God's supply." From calling people into His work to providing the resources to accomplish His will, He is faithful to complete the work He has begun. As His fishermen are faithful to cast their nets, the work of the Gospel will organically go forth. *"So shall my word be that goeth forth out of my mouth: it shall not return unto me void, but it shall accomplish that which I please, and it shall prosper in the thing whereto I sent it"* (Isaiah 55:11).

Looking to the future, the potential for multiplication is thrilling. Source of Light's tagline "to provide the tools to finish the task" is one way that God is equipping the Church to grow, like the branches of a tree, into the far regions of the world. 🌿



**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.





# FIELD LITERATURE NEEDS

## The Source of Light World in Need

For over 70 years, Source of Light has been blessed with generous partners who support our missionaries and our projects. Usually, our countries have contacts who are regular supporters of their ministries, but a handful of our countries have virtually no mailing list and no contacts. We would like to focus on a few of those countries who have literature funds that have seen little to no contributions provided recently but have been helped by our emergency funds to provide their ministries with literature.

We ask for you to prayerfully consider these SLM Branches in need:

**ARGENTINA**  
\$2,960

**COSTA RICA**  
\$7,414

**PERU**  
\$2,200

**GUYANA**  
\$4,167

**PORTUGAL**  
\$2,166

**SPAIN**  
\$1,900

**MOZAMBIQUE**  
\$4,000

**ZAMBIA**  
\$5,000



# IN THE TRENCHES, BEYOND THE GRAVE

By Bruce Dare

Darkness descends in war when the trench becomes the grave. Often it seems so senseless, the suffering and battles of brothers emblazoned in bold bravery amidst beastly brutality. What then of innocents enmeshed in the injustice of jihad? This was the story in Burkina Faso on August 24, 2024, as certain residents of Barsalogho, having been suddenly and shamefully conscripted by the so-called army to reinforce the fortifications of their remote town, were gunned down by renegade terrorists in a sweeping massacre of historic proportions. The evil irony of the tragedy is no less magnified by the seeming absence of the government, not only in its lack of protecting the home of one of its own military bases but also in the response and responsibility in the aftermath. The situation was convoluted, if not conspired, as common citizens effectively dug their own graves, leaving the horror and grief of those left to watch just as deeply buried in their souls.<sup>i,ii</sup>

Such indescribable circumstances set the backdrop of the daily dangers faced by one of Source of Light's

current frontiers in West Africa. I admit that I had asked in a somewhat indirect way about the generally possible persecution faced by our associated partners. But I could have been more specific. We had pastors who were there. They experienced portions of this exact event. As Sika Yawo, National Director of SLM Togo reports, "Indeed one of our pastors was in this terrible area where the jihadists arrived and destroyed everything in their path. Our colleague suffered the loss of all his equipment and was himself traumatized but his life was saved. He was sent by our church to plant a branch church in northwest Burkina Faso, so please continue to pray for him ... Always pray for Burkina Faso and especially for the pastors and believers who have fled their villages of origin. Others are still surrounded by jihadists and still suffer violence because of their faith in Jesus Christ." There may be little we can do now for those tragically slaughtered on that day, and we might wonder if in Burkina Faso there is left any human hope. But we do have our orders. We all need to pray. And some have been called to go.



School Children in Burkina Faso with SLM Bible Lessons  
— Photo by Sika Yawo



Pastor Iria Charles and Family Serving in Burkina Faso  
— Photo by Sika Yawo

What would possibly compel people to go into this land with the Gospel? Without question, the assurance is not in the bright outlook of a new administration or the turning of a religious tide. It is the same Christian command given to us all, the duty of discipleship. Jesus said to make disciples “as we go” (Matthew 28:19-20). That “going” is full of hazards for some and comes at the risk of life. Source of Light actually has multiple connections to Burkina Faso through current Branches in the Ivory Coast and Togo. We wonder about future developments there. We are comforted by the promise of Christ’s presence with them.

One of the reaches into this African nation, as Sika explains, “is the work of SLM Togo, a pastor and his family in an effort to touch the hearts of Muslims” where they “took care to send them Bible lessons for distribution.” But the focus is not just about disseminating literature, as people themselves need to grow in their following of Christ. Three years previous, they “invited the pastor from Burkina to spend a week in Togo to reinforce the work ahead. He worked on all our

Bible lessons and received all the certificates. He also took care to help his own children work through the Bible lessons.” This family needed preparation to fulfill the ministry together, and they were intent to utilize the literally limited resources being offered to return at risk of their lives to reach others.

The constant threats faced by the ministry team are all too familiar. This pastor “and his wife came from a Muslim family and were saved by the preaching of an American missionary who came to work in Burkina for a short time.” They were “savagely persecuted in a deadly way by their parents but protected by God to serve him. They fled their village and came to settle in the capital city, Ouagadougou, where they started going to a Bible Baptist church.” After continuing faithfully there, the pastor “received the call to serve God, then received effective training for the cause, and finally he started a church to evangelize Muslims for Christ a few years ago.” The laborers are there and prepared. The harvest is ready, though in part is wilting.

Yes, there are real dangers, but what motivates them more are the needs. “The door is open for them to serve in different environments” such as schools, prisons, churches, and public places. These can be reached in various ways and by different means, but it would help if they could use SLM Bible lessons to undergird the work. As Sika puts it, “They can do better if they are given this main

tool.” But one concern is the effect this need could have on other areas of ministry. “SLM Togo will not be able to supply too many Bible lessons to avoid a severe shortage of our stock.” They have obviously invested in the effort but also need enough for elsewhere. Who will provide the tools needed to accomplish this task? Could you be part of the answer for these desperate and lost souls?

One response we could have to disasters such as happened in Barsalogho is one of distance. We are not there. It is not close to home. But as you read these words and are a part of the Source of Light story, it will take a heart of faith and courage to consider what God might call you to do. More tragic than the innocent digging of one’s own grave is that countless souls do so daily and spiritually in their sin. They need the Gospel. They need the Word of God to rescue them and give them hope in the only Savior. As these pastors work in the trenches, preaching a hope beyond the grave and reaching across borders to save the lost, we can join hands and save some. 🙏



**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.

#### Endnotes:

- i. <https://www.cnn.com/2024/10/04/africa/burkina-faso-massacre-600-dead-french-intel-intl/index.html>
- ii. <https://www.reuters.com/world/africa/i-saw-horrible-things-burkina-faso-massacre-survivor-describes-bloodshed-2024-08-30/>

# 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?**



## BROTHERS BEHIND BARS

By Bruce Dare

At the Entrance of Vale de Judeus  
Prison in Lisbon, Portugal  
—Photo by Adil Reis

*“Come over ... and help us”* (Acts 16:9). So too was the request to Adil Reis, Director of SLM Portugal. “The wife of a prisoner contacted me to provide spiritual guidance to her husband.” He not only responded but wisely. “I began to pray,” inviting another missionary and later an additional brother to form a team to innocently go behind bars. “We continued the long process to obtain permission from the Portuguese authorities to develop the evangelization work at the Vale de Judeus Prison ... using the courses of Source of Light.”

As soon as the wife’s husband completed the first course, “he gave his life to our Lord Jesus Christ and began to witness inside the prison.” First, he shared with a neighboring prisoner “who also gave his life to the Lord Jesus and led” another “to have an encounter with Christ. These three prisoners began to witness and encourage their fellow inmates to take the courses.” Meeting for two hours on Tuesday mornings, the small group soon included a prisoner “from Nigeria, who was already a believer in Christ. After the first four disciples,

they began to invite others.” And the growth was not just multi-national and numerical as these men saw the need to “instruct their children during visiting periods.” God was working.

A church where there is not meant to be a church was being born. “Due to the increase in the number of believers in Christ and the existence of other religious groups within the prison, it was necessary to choose a name to identify us. I presented three possible names, and they understood that the one that would best identify them would be: Source of Light Baptist Church ... Their decision brought great joy to my heart, because it was not a choice on my part.” Adil and the others simply answered the call to *Go into* all the prison cells *and preach the gospel to every creature* (Mark 16:15).

“It has been truly encouraging to see these brothers who, even in prison, are free in Christ.” 🌿



**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.



# INVISIBLE BORDERS

By Jim Tilson

As the Director of Braille Ministries, I was approached by a veteran missionary who asked, “How do you witness to a blind person?”

After a moment of shock, my response was, “Just like you witness to a sighted person.”

That missionary was a victim of an invisible border that exists between the sighted of the world and the

visually impaired. Blindness produces phrases such as “they can’t” or “how do you reach the blind?” Thus, the blind tend to isolate themselves from the rest of society. This is a barrier that the sighted church must proactively remove. The question is “how?”

We the Church must first provide access to the same spiritual training

materials that we as the sighted so often take for granted. SLM Braille Ministries is a source of such training. Most of the time, it begins with a simple introduction to devotional material. Training is then expanded to Sunday school lessons, the SLM Bible studies, and the World Wide Bible Institute.

Over the years, we have witnessed various individuals who have gone from casual reader, to Bible student, to Sunday school teacher, to pastor. Pastor Walker from New York City receives each of our monthly publications. This gives him study materials which he uses for sermon preparation. On Thursday evening, he also teaches a Bible study which is open to anyone, blind or sighted, who wishes to join him virtually. Only eternity will reveal how many souls he has impacted outside his own church. Willie from Chicago and Carole from Louisiana no longer attend their adult Sunday school classes. Every Sunday, they go to the children’s classes in their respective churches and read an age-appropriate story from a children’s devotional in braille. Willie says that he feels fulfilled when he can help children grow spiritually.

Results generally come slowly because of this invisible border. It’s a matter of trust. Patricia was introduced to our braille devotional. Gradually, she warmed to the idea of Bible study although she had been religious for 76 years. In her first study, she realized that something



Jim with an SLM Course in Braille next to the Embossers — Photo by Dan Winder

was missing. After receiving some godly counseling from our team, she put her faith and trust in Christ as Savior. Patricia is now sharing her newfound faith with the residents of her senior living facility. The invisible border had been broken. 🌟



**Jim Tilson** has been the Director of the Braille Department for almost 14 years. He previously worked as supervisor of the Print Shop and Shipping after joining Source of Light in 2000.

# INTRODUCING OUR NEWEST REGIONAL DIRECTORS

By Ron Barnes



Miguel Díaz, Regional Director for Central America, and his Wife, Viviana — Photo by Miguel Díaz

**Miguel Ángel Díaz López** was born in 1983 in San José, Costa Rica, into a Baptist family. From childhood, he was taught the fear of God, and at the age of eight, he accepted Jesus Christ as his Savior. Although he graduated in electronics engineering, he responded to God's call to serve in full-time ministry.

In 2010, he enrolled at the Costa Rica Baptist Bible Seminary, where he graduated with a degree in theology and met Viviana Mora, a journalist and graduate in Christian education. They married in 2014 and, in the same year, assumed leadership of the SLM Branch, where they have faithfully served to this day.

Currently, they lead the ministry with a significant impact in Costa Rica, Nicaragua, Panama, and an island in the Caribbean with restricted access, with the vision of expanding throughout Central America. Both also serve as professors at the seminary and joyfully await the birth of their first child, Josué.

**Carlos Aranguren** was born into a Christian family and was saved at age 14. It was from that day he has had a fervent desire to know and serve the Lord.

He completed his studies at Word of Life Bible Institute, Argentina, then studied for a bachelor's degree in education. He served many years in a local church and with Word of Life in Colombia and also taught math as a schoolteacher.

In 2014, the Lord called him and his family to move from Colombia to Argentina to serve the Lord in missions, and he became the pastor of a church plant in San Miguel del Monte.



Carlos Aranguren, Regional Director for South America, and Family — Photo by Carlos Aranguren

Since September 2022, he has been the Source of Light Director in Argentina.

He has been married to Constanza for 29 years, and they have three daughters and two sons-in-law: Catalina and Agustin, Camila and Elias, and Cristina (14) is in middle school.

Please welcome these men into their new roles and pray for them as they lead these regions and as they both raise support.



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

## CROSSING INTO COMMUNISM

By Kimberly Thigpen

Two thousand Gospel lessons were spread among the luggage bags of the small group en route to an "island ministry." Costa Rican Director Miguel Díaz was joined by his wife, Viviana, and a family from their church—a man, his wife, and their three children. They arrived at the airport and headed toward Immigration. Piece after piece of luggage was permitted through, until one bag was marked.

Miguel continues the story:

"One of the bags belonging to the wife of the church brother was marked with a large 'X.' We didn't know what that meant. She was called by some immigration officers and interviewed for almost three hours. Her husband was very nervous, and we were all outside praying.

"Eventually, they let her through, but they asked a lot of questions about where she was going and who she was going to give the materials to. They suspected it could be political propaganda or something of the sort. While we were there, we were monitored the entire time. We felt a lot of fear, as if we were being watched.

"After that day, we decided to bring a printer so that they could print the courses there."

Miguel and Vivi have been with Source of Light since 2014. Though the presence of Source of Light in Costa

Rica extends back five decades, the ministry under Miguel Díaz is, for the first time, crossing borders into other countries.

Why? With 40 Associate Discipleship Schools already within their country, and their first baby on the way, broadening their outreach beyond country borders could not have been a simple or hastily made decision.

Miguel's answer reveals a deep faith in the God they serve and His promise to be with them to the ends of the earth. He shares, "My wife and I worked as volunteer teachers at the Baptist Bible Seminary in Costa Rica. Many of our students become missionaries, and we saw a fertile field where the ministry could reach beyond the borders of Costa Rica."

A fertile field? A communist island? Though over 50% Catholic and thus considered largely Christian, churches in the island must be registered and avoid anything that might hint of being anti-communist, the true religion of the country, or at least its controlling force.



Director Miguel Díaz Shares God's Word in "Island Ministry" — Photo by Miguel Díaz





**Joyful Disciples in Panama**  
— Photo by Miguel Díaz



**So Many Need the Good News**  
— Photo by Miguel Díaz



**Course Completion Certificates Earned by Adult and Child Students** — Photo by Miguel Díaz

According to Open Doors, “The island’s government is the main reason Christians face persecution. Anything deemed to be in competition with the Communist Party of the island is squeezed, and this includes the Christian faith. Church leaders or believers who speak out against human injustice or political corruption—or who dare to criticize the regime—risk interrogation, arrest, smear campaigns, and even prison sentences.

“All churches are monitored in this island and may be infiltrated by citizens sympathetic to the regime and/or State security agents . . . As soon as a leader or a Christian is deemed to be anti-government or anti-revolutionary, the response is swift and harsh.”<sup>i</sup>

Despite the dangers, evangelical Christianity is growing. God led Miguel and Vivi to this needy land, and after two in-person trips, God provided a printer for two volunteer sisters to print material in country. Having a printer there will eliminate the need to ship or hand-carry lessons in, avoiding a repeat of their frightening immigrations experience and the suspicion and surveillance that followed.

This “island” was not their first foray across borders. Miguel shares, “The first place we traveled to was Panama. My wife and I went by bus, traveling for 18 hours. We packed light with only a few clothes and personal items to make more space for as many books as possible. We started with just one church in a place called Villas de las Acacias.

“The ministry in Panama has grown a lot, even on the islands. There are

many children, and a school opened its doors so that they could teach the courses to indigenous children. We used to visit Panama twice a year, but it was becoming expensive for us to bring the materials and travel there. We were praying to God to know what we should do.

“In one of the churches, there was a volunteer in charge. She’s not only Panamanian but also indigenous, and she studied at the seminary in Costa Rica. She wasn’t serving full-time but as an assistant. We interviewed her about her desire to serve God full-time, but we didn’t have the financial resources to support her ministry in Panama. So, I returned to Costa Rica and started praying to know if it was God’s will, asking Him to open doors. I began looking for specific people who could support her full-time with a base salary. Many people agreed to do it for one year, and with that support, I returned to Panama to meet with her again to share the good news. She was willing, and today she is the director in Panama.

“We still support her from Costa Rica through our ministry. This meant reducing our monthly family income, but we knew it was a big step for Panama. Currently, we have five churches, one school on the Kuna Yala Island, and one church on another island that benefit from the Bible study materials.”

When asked what people could pray for, he shared two requests:

1. In Nicaragua, we’ve introduced the courses, but there are currently many political problems, and many churches are being persecuted. It’s difficult for us to travel to Nicaragua

now. Please pray that the doors will open in Nicaragua.

2. In November, I visited different churches supporting the ministry in Panama, the “island,” and Costa Rica. I brought an island pastor who pastors in its capital, and he preached at all the churches encouraging ministerial support and sustainability. Please pray that this will bear good fruit.

I will add two additional requests for them:

3. The delivery of a healthy baby.
4. Increased monthly support for this growing family and their vast ministry.

Though latest reports show six schools established in Panama, four in the “island,” and five in Nicaragua, the Díazs show no signs of slowing down. “We have plans to introduce the courses in Belize and the Dominican Republic,” Miguel says. This is in addition to overseeing the 5,000-6,000 students in Costa Rica. God is at work expanding His Church. As Miguel says, “The reality surpasses anything I could write.” 🙌

*If you would like to support Miguel and Viviana in this work, contact bthigpen@slmin.org.*



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

### Endnotes:

1. <https://www.opendoorsus.org/en-US/persecution/countries/>

# THE PRINTED WORD... STILL CHANGING LIVES,

## CONSIDER BECOMING A PAPER PARTNER!



Weighing an average of **1,500** pounds, an **\$1,200** pallet of paper yields **36,000** to **40,000** 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 US and overseas.

Consider a donation with the ultimate return on investment ...  
...an investment which yields eternal results!

Become a Paper Partner today, go to  
**[sourcelight.org/donate](http://sourcelight.org/donate)**



 **Source of light**  
INTERNATIONAL



# THE SLM BIBLE INSTITUTE TRULY IS WORLD WIDE AND ACROSS BORDERS

By Brenda Barnes

The World Wide Bible Institute (WWBI) online program continues to cross borders and is being used by students now in 14 countries outside the United States.

Years ago, when Dr. Bill Shade and others first developed the WWBI, their desire was that the curriculum would be used by churches, schools, and other ministries to start their own institutes to disciple and train their church members in their spiritual life and for ministry. Their dream was realized when the completion of the curriculum was set, courses developed, tested, printed and used by churches, schools, institutes, colleges, church planters and more. But God has taken it farther than those developers even imagined.

This program is meeting the needs of obtaining affordable biblical training that students of any age can complete at their own pace right from the computer in a student's home.

Our most recent online student shared with us his story. His name has been redacted for security purposes.

"My name is H. from Jordan. I was born into a Muslim family. We used to do all the Islamic rituals, praying in the mosque five times a day, fasting, and everything. My story began when I started searching more about the truth of Islam, and then I discovered many mistakes, contradictions, and illogical things in Islam. Until I knew the true meaning of the word Quran, which in Aramaic means the book of Christian ritual recitation. Then I was very shocked by this information, and I started to search more about Christianity and what Christianity is.

"Christ visited me in my dream after a night of searching and crying. ... My God, Jesus, came to me in my dream ... A light coming from far away stood in front of me and said to me, 'Be with me, and do not be afraid.' I didn't see His face, but inside me, inside my soul,



**Less than 10% of all ministers worldwide have ever had formal Bible College or Seminary training.**

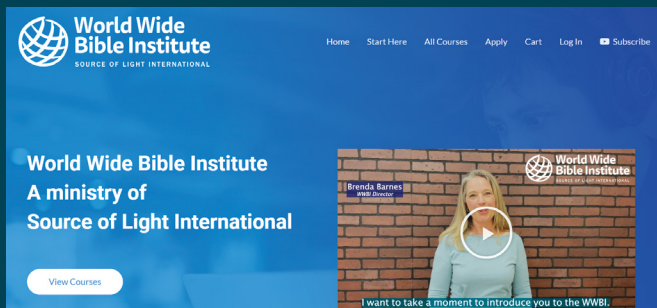


**These institutions will only be able to produce approximately 5-7% of the needed pastors, evangelists, and missionaries.**



**Less than 10% of all ministers worldwide have ever had formal Bible College or Seminary training.**





Anyone Can Register for WWBI Courses at [www.bionline.org](http://www.bionline.org)

I knew it was Jesus ... After this dream, everything changed. It didn't end like that. The following week I dreamt of Mary ... She was carrying a basket of bread and feeding me with her hand from this bread. I started searching the Bible when I read this verse: *'But I say to you, love your enemies, bless those who curse you, do good to those who hate you, and pray for those who spitefully use you and persecute you;'* (Matthew 5:44).

"I knew how wrong Islam was when it said kill your enemies. I knew how Christianity is a religion of love and peace. Jesus led me to freedom and safety ... When I told my family about this matter and the dreams and that I love Jesus and believe in Him, my family was about to kill me and cut off my head ... So I ran away from them. I ran away from my country Jordan to Kosovo, which I knew nothing about. Jesus led me here. I felt safe when I entered the church for the first time in my life. I felt safe whenever I carried the Bible and read it. I felt safe when I got to know the Jesus family here in Kosovo and they helped me a lot."



**Brenda Barnes** has served as a missionary in Hungary and the Czech Republic as a teacher and discipler 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.

Another recent WWBI student, a ministry partner in Kenya, upon completion of the Personal Evangelism course online recently wrote: "Sometimes, I wonder when I will finish. The WWBI courses are amazing. The Personal Evangelism course has really changed my approach to evangelism. I was looking at it last night, and I said I wish I had done this many years ago. I would have had more impact through my contact with the lost and helped the new believers in ways that are really transformative. I found myself wanting in the area of follow-up and admonishment. I pray that many Christian workers would take these courses. Finally, God will help me with challenges (e.g., power outages and internet) as well. For the courses, I am doing a course every time since 2020. We have devotions in the office daily. From Monday to Thursday, we study the SLM courses, and this has been very helpful to me. Serving together, D.M."

To be a student with us, go to [www.bionline.org](http://www.bionline.org) and fill out an application to get started today. 🌿

# BIBLE STUDIES ONLINE AND ACROSS BORDERS

By Brian Thompson

The world is hungry for the truths of God's Word. I know that it may not seem that way, because we look at it from our perspective and see a disinterest in people around us. Once you broaden your view, you can see the fields that are *white already to harvest* (John 4:35). Many of the 300 students enrolled in SLM courses online are from other countries. They are from Africa, India, the Philippines, and more. They often take the lessons in bursts as they have limited access to the internet. One man would go to an internet café and take as many lessons (2 courses at a time) as could be graded, one after another.

Kolli – *"Dear Director, I say greetings to you. At present I am working among poor tribals and slum dwellers. The two people groups have no Gospel and church planting. If you give me training, we can reach another group of people. Thank you."*

Jose from Guyana – *"Am greatly edified and built up by this lesson. I have now understood the subject of tongues. More grace for the sound doctrine."*

Malefetsane from South Africa – *"I need this course."*



Anyone Can Register for Source of Light Courses at [slmcourses.com](http://slmcourses.com)

Kule from Uganda – *"Kindly help me study the Word of our Lord Jesus Christ so that I can reach many lost souls and preach to them."*

Mukesh is from East Africa, and he enrolled in the online Bible courses in 2021. To date he has taken nine courses. He has asked many questions to understand exactly what the Bible is teaching, because he shares his lessons with other pastors in his area who are unable to use the internet to study God's Word.

Winnie is from Kenya and has taken seven courses. He is so thankful that the courses are available to be taken online.

Not only online but also on mission across national lines, praise the Lord that His Word could go out in this way to reach so many who need the Gospel around the world. Enroll today at [slmcourses.com](http://slmcourses.com). 🌿



**Brian Thompson** is the North American Regional Director. He oversees the seven Branch offices in that region while overseeing the Madison Discipleship School. He came to work at SLM after spending 12 years as a church planting missionary in Maine using SLM lessons to help establish the church.



Phillip Fraiser Checks a Press Sheet of a New Course in Haitian Creole —Photo by Bruce Dare

Section from Page 20 of "My New Life in Christ" and "A Country Called Heaven" —Photo by Bruce Dare

# A PLEA TO ONE

By Phillip Fraiser

Most articles are written to reach as broad an audience as possible. This one is different because I am writing to one person, you, the man God is calling to operate the printing press at Source of Light for eternal impact.

Perhaps you sense God's work in your heart like I did 40 years ago. I was working in a stationary store, running the print shop for the owner. The job was fine, and my career was satisfactory, but it just wasn't enough. With growing restlessness, I began to think very seriously about what I printed every day: business cards, letterhead, envelopes, etc. There is certainly nothing wrong or evil about these items; they just have zero eternal value.

I began considering how God might use me to print material that would evangelize and disciple people for Christ. After exploring and praying about several options to "print for Christ," God led me to SLM. My wife, Frances, and I began raising support and moved to Madison in May 1993. It's been my honor and privilege to print millions of Bible lessons for over 31 years!

So ... what about you? Are you wrestling with using your skill and talent for the world or for the kingdom of God? One of our courses is called *My New Life in Christ*. One of the questions asked in the lesson is, "Is Jesus the only way to Heaven?" Here is the answer:

"There is no middle ground when it comes to answering this question. The reply must be 'Yes' or 'No.' The Bible provides the answer. Jesus Christ said, 'I am the way, the truth, and the life: No man comes to the Father but by Me' (John 14:6)."

Does the thought of printing such great truth appeal to you?

I am 65 years old, and God is teaching me to number my days. I need an apprentice beside me to run the RYOBI 920 press we installed in 2023. You need to join us, learn how to run this machine, and carry the baton into the next generation. Contact us at [slm@slmin.org](mailto:slm@slmin.org)!



Phillip Fraiser has served as a pressman at Source of Light for over 30 years.

## EULA MAE SHOOK KEENER (JUNE 29, 2024)

By Ron Barnes

Eula was born in Hoisington, Kansas on April 12, 1935.

In 1953, Eula met David Glenn Keener at Midwest Bible and Missionary Institute, and one year later they were engaged in Pennsylvania. On June 5, 1956, in Hoisington, they were married and then moved to Missouri while Eula finished nursing school at Jewish Hospital.

They then moved to Illinois, where they had their first three children and lived for about six years. They then moved to Wisconsin where they stayed for four years and had their fourth child. Now a family of six, they moved to Oklahoma, where the last child was born, making them a family of seven: David, Stephen, Debbie, Joel, and Miriam.

After six years there, they made their last move and came to Georgia to serve at Source of Light Ministries International. While at SLM Eula and Dave served faithfully, representing the mission at conferences and churches around the US, and made an impact in churches remembered by many to this day.

For many years Eula served as the administrative assistant to Dr. Glen Dix, SLM General Director and then well past into his retirement. She was a great asset to Dr. Dix. He depended on her significantly, and she was a faithful assistant to him, loyal and thorough.

For a brief period, Eula took time to



Eula (Shook) Keener: December 12, 1935 - June 29, 2024 (Age 88) — Photo by Keener Family

faithfully care for her husband, Dave, as his health deteriorated. After his passing, it was a great honor to have her step back in full-time at SLM, serving in the editing of *The Reaper* and significantly in the accounting department.

She constantly impressed us with her thoroughness in a field that demands a great deal of detail and was someone we knew we didn't have to look over her shoulder. She adapted well to updates in Accounting, including the use of complicated accounting software. Besides her love for the Lord, Eula was known for seeing a challenge and being up for it. She faced many of them during her life, but she never shrugged away and confronted them head on ... to the very last day! She was in the race and she ran it well, all the way through the finish line. 🌿



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



# 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](https://sourcelight.org/donate)**

## PRAYER

- ◆ Please pray for Source of Light Zambia, one of our newer Branches. They are currently taking the steps necessary to get government recognition as a non-profit organization. Please pray that this process will be completed soon. They have also just completed their new office and print shop. Though they have already moved into the office, they are waiting on the Lord to provide the \$10,000 needed for the print shop equipment. Please pray that God provides so they will be able to print locally.
- ◆ Poorly-functioning mail systems are really affecting the delivery of lessons to and from students. Please pray that these problems will be resolved and that students will be able to rely on this method to send and receive their study materials. Even though the lessons are offered online, we have noticed that people are not as motivated to use the online platform.
- ◆ Many of our international Branches are under-supported. Please pray that God will move on people's hearts to partner with these Branches monthly. We are blessed with international partners who can work very frugally and run their ministries on a fraction of what it would cost to support an American missionary in their country. Some do receive a portion of their support from international partners. However, most still need to raise additional support. To make a trip to the United States takes them from their ministries and is quite costly with travel and deputation expenses. In some cases, there are difficulties in deputation success in the United States because of cultural and language struggles. Please pray for committed monthly partners for our faithful international staff.
- ◆ There are always opportunities for full-time, part-time, and volunteer service here at Headquarters. Jim Tilson, in our Braille Department, is praying that God will send someone he can train to run the Braille Department before he retires. We also need help in the Operations Department and in the Print Shop. The Field Department needs additional people to serve the needs of our International Staff, and help is needed to recruit church partners for support of the ministry here and abroad.
- ◆ Many of our staff at Headquarters are struggling with health issues. Some are long-term illnesses, and some are age-related issues. All require God's grace to accomplish their tasks in ministry despite physical limitations.
- ◆ Many of our field staff overseas are also experiencing health problems. Please pray that God will keep our Field Gift Fund healthy so that we can assist our national missionaries with unforeseen expenses they incur. Also pray that God will help our international staff to identify someone they can train who will carry on their work when they are no longer able to serve.
- ◆ Please pray that Source of Light will be able to recruit new churches to partner with us in reaching the world with the Gospel. These partnerships could lead to new students and new Associate Discipleship Schools ministries that will serve in new areas. We will also be able to present our needs for staff and volunteers and be able to recruit financial partners for the needs mentioned above. 🙏

## PRaise

◆ We praise the Lord for how He is opening doors for several of our African Branches to be able to print locally. This eliminates heavy shipping costs and customs fees. Our Uganda Branch has set up a Risograph printer and started printing their own lessons. They work under tight time frames with the school schedule, so they are hoping this will help them keep their stock well supplied so that they can deliver their materials when needed. In Ghana, we are doing a trial run with a local printer to see if they can produce the quality of materials that we need in country. Our West Africa Source of Light Branches would then receive their shipments from Ghana rather than Madison, Georgia.

◆ We express gratitude that we are seeing doors opening again for ministries that were affected by COVID. Prisons are working with us to allow the materials with less restrictions, making it easier to serve students who are incarcerated. We have also heard that a blind ministry in Uganda that was shut down due to COVID is preparing to resume serving students.

◆ We are grateful to the Lord for our volunteer groups who come to serve at Source of Light. Several church groups come at certain times during the year with teams that can address large projects. It is so helpful to Operations, the Print Shop, and Madison Discipleship School where many of the volunteers serve. Recently, we had a mobile home that had to be demolished and removed due to mold and termites. A couple of groups came this Fall and helped with the demolition and clean up. The site is now being prepared for a new home to be built.

◆ When our international missionaries visit the States, it is “all hands on deck” at Headquarters. Staff is called upon to host our guest for meals, prepare housing, and arrange transport (trips locally, to other states, to and from the airport, for local shopping and healthcare, etc.), Churches must be contacted, events may need to be organized and carried out, promotional materials prepared, and a myriad of other things. When Headquarters is short-staffed, it can put a large load on a few people. The praise is that recently when our Ugandan Director was in the States on deputation, our staff really stepped up. James Byakika told Source of Light's President that he had really been refreshed and blessed during his visit. It was, in part, because of a committed headquarters team who were willing to go out of their way to make his stay fruitful and a time of respite.

◆ We are also thankful to our church partners who host our missionaries when they come to America. The way that these churches serve our international staff is a blessing to them. The love offerings, monthly support pledged, housing provided, special excursions planned, meals, ministry needs provided, prayer promised, and friendships formed all show our hospitality as Christians and send them back to often very difficult living situations refreshed and encouraged. 🌿

## IN MEMORIAL

### GIFTS IN HONOR OF...

**John Cranmer** by

Revelation 22:2 Fund

**Ruby Shade** by

Emmanuel Church

### GIFTS IN MEMORY OF...

**Frank Eaton** by

Ken and Carla Wills

Raymond Gilbert

Samuel Bearden

Carol Killen

Mr. and Mrs. Roger Bruce

Anne Montgomery

Tommy Cathey

Ray and Linda Walker

**Johnathan Parris** by

Mr. and Mrs. David Parris

**Thomas Rochon** by

Alice Shellito

Ray and Linda Walker



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

**By Phone:**

**706.342.0397**

Each gift will be used as preferenced 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@sourcelight.org](mailto:slm@sourcelight.org)

Current Resident or

Nonprofit  
Organization  
U.S. POSTAGE

**PAID**

Permit No. 33  
MADISON, GA