

Basic Training Bible Ministries Mission Report **January–June 2024**

This spring has been busy, as usual, with some very blessed times indeed. God has been so faithful in the prayer and financial support of our faithful and diligent partners. Following is a brief overview of what we have been able to accomplish together.

Cuba Mission, February

I think we sent out a brief report on this mission. We were joined on this one by Paul and Deborah from our church, *Living Truth Prescott*. We were able to meet with many faithful believers who were greatly encouraged that they are not forgotten. Pray for the believers there, as life for them is very difficult. We were recently informed that Dengue Fever is spreading through some of the church family there.

We were able to buy a small plot of land for a church planter and his wife to build a dwelling and a meeting place. In another location, we provided funds for the building of a church in a strong witchcraft area. In addition, we ministered the Word of God in several church locations.

India/Nagaland Mission, March/April

On this mission, we were able to provide funds for the Theological College to purchase a new vehicle—a much-needed provision. BTBM continues to support about 13 students at this school, which provides for their books and materials, food and lodging. We had five days to teach the students *Principles of Ministry from the Pastoral Epistles*, while Nan trained the female students in Children's Ministry. We then attended the graduation ceremony for 12 of the students. Our son-in-law, Daniel, joined us and gave the message at the ceremony.

While we were at the Theological College, we were hit with an intense 36-hour storm, which left roads and bridges damaged and dangerous. It was an interesting trip back out of the mountains! Thank you for your prayers!

We were also able to help, along with other supporters, provide a new vehicle for PJF in his ministry in Hyderabad. This replaced the old vehicle that he has been using for the past 15 years. Michael and Marilyn, from our home church here in Prescott came along for their second trip to India. We also had Sharon, one of our children's teachers, with us. While Nan and the ladies traveled to various villages for children's Bible programs, Michael and I taught the Bible College students throughout the week. At the end of our ministry time there, Nan and the ladies conducted a one-day *Sunday School Teacher's Training Seminar* with 130 village teachers in attendance.

Texas Bible Conferences, May

Our first conference was in Buchanan Dam, Texas, at the Cross and Spurs Cowboy Church. The topic was *The Parables of Jesus*. We then gathered with a small group, including some members of our board, at an isolated ranch retreat, where we studied the Book of Second Thessalonians.

Arkansas Bible Conference, May/June

Our theme for the Arkansas conference was, *I Did Not Kill the Giant*. Daniel and our daughter, Katie, along with their whole family, joined us for this one. Daniel and I shared the teaching, and on Sunday, we had a very special time as Ezer, our Israeli guide, brought us an Israeli perspective on what is happening in Israel, as well as a much-needed wake-up call on what he sees happening in America.

Pastors and Wives Retreat, June

By combining both the Texas conferences back-to-back with the Arkansas conference, we were able to save a lot of travel time and expense. We followed up the Arkansas conference with our annual retreat for young pastors and their wives. It was a very special time, since Daniel and Katie were with us. We had five couples join us for four days of teaching, discussion, and great fellowship. How we look forward to this time each year, as we have the privilege of meeting with these younger couples who are faithfully taking up the challenges of ministry in our declining nation.

Arkansas Family Reunion, June

After the retreat, we had a two-day gathering of extended family, where Nan and I celebrated our 50th wedding anniversary. What a special time to share this milestone with so many family members who we have not seen for so long!

Arizona Family Reunion, June

Returning home to Arizona, we were blessed to have all of our children and grandchildren with us for eight days. This gathering was a miracle of God's grace, and the answer to a long-standing prayer. We had not all been together for 13 years. Our children and grandchildren from Australia made the long journey to join with the Arizona side of the Cunningham Clan for this glorious week. All five of our children and 13 grandchildren were present! We visited the Grand Canyon, a popular Sedona swimming spot known as Slide Rock, and the old ghost town, now rejuvenated, of Jerome. Evenings were spent on the back porch enjoying the Arizona sunsets, singing, playing games, sharing old memories and watching the grandchildren play together. God's grace abounds!

Sheri Johnson Memorial, June 22

I was honored to speak at the memorial service for Sheri Johnson and to share one of her favorite verses with the many who attended. The crowd was filled with old acquaintances from Westside Bible Church (where I was trained under Pastor John Miller), and from past youth camps in Arizona and Arkansas. Many of you have heard us share the courageous story of Kurt and Sheri Johnson. There were some tears, but much rejoicing that Sheri's long marathon, so faithfully run, was over, and she is "walking, and leaping, and praising God" in the presence of her Savior and Lord!

As part of our 50th year celebration, Nan and I decided to take a bit of a "breather," from July to September. This is the first such breather we have taken in all these years. It will be busy with my regular Friday night Bible study, along with working on writing and editing chores, but we will be refreshed not to have any major travel during this time. Our prayers and financial support of our co-workers in faraway places will continue.

Thank you to all of you who pray and support us. We count you all as vital members of the team. And of course, God knows the vital part each of you plays in the ongoing work of clear evangelism, sound Bible teaching, and support of pastors and ministries in many third-world countries.

May God richly bless you all, and equip you for the challenging year ahead!

By His grace alone,
Gene and Nan