

The Seeker

“Seeking the Souls of Men and Pointing Them to Christ”

March 2020

Volume 9, Number 3



Dear Brethren,

Greetings to you all in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ. Many of you know about our plans to ship a container to Zambia, Africa around the first of April 2020. That is just a few days away. We want to thank the many congregations that have helped with this container. We have had brethren from Tennessee, Kentucky, Michigan, Indiana and Mississippi to bring items for the container. Our thanks to everyone for the help. We have had lots of help from the Algood congregation here in Cookeville, TN, to help sort and pack these items. This container is going to Livingstone, Zambia. We work with 4 preacher schools in Zambia and hope that each of these 4 areas will get some of the Bibles, books, Gospel tracts, BCC booklets, Bible class materials, song books, communion trays and cups and clothing for men, women and children. A 20 foot container sounds like a lot of materials sent but when you consider that in these 4 areas where these preacher schools are located there are over 200 congregations of the Lord's church. I hope we can send a container to Malawi in June or July of this year.



Food delivered to brethren in Ngwezi, Zambia

the people in their areas. It takes about \$45.00 to feed a family of 5 for 30 days. Many areas in Malawi will see some relief as their new crops will be harvested in a few weeks. If you would be willing to help us feed our brothers and sisters in Christ who are suffering in Africa at this time please send your funds to us and mark for “Food Relief Africa”.

Our trip to Zambia and Malawi in August is uncertain at this time due to the world wide virus!

I am hoping and praying that we will be able to go in August. God is in control and we must put our trust in Him! When we ship the container in April all the Bibles, Gospel tracts, books, BCC course books, communion trays and cups, suits, ties, shirts, shoes for the preachers, text books and library books for the preacher schools will have been sent for our August trip.

We are beginning to hear from some of the churches in Tennessee and Kentucky that the Comer Trust Fund has started coming in to churches. As we mentioned a few months ago we have in Africa 2 church buildings we are trying to build, one new preacher school to build, 3 staff houses at different preacher schools to build, 2 wells to drill to provide clean water at preacher schools and a need for many Bibles, Gospel tracts, BCC booklets and books for preacher school libraries. We want to encourage your congregation to share a portion of your share of the Comer Trust Fund with IBTM. We will put your funds to good use carrying out the Great Commission and helping train many faithful Gospel preachers in Africa. Please make checks to Rock Valley church of Christ, and send to PO Box 49494, Cookeville, TN. 38506, and mark for “Building projects Africa” you may specify in a letter just how you want your funds to be spent on the items listed above. We will give a financial report to those churches that send funds as to how their funds were spent.

The food relief program is coming along and hungry brethren are being helped each month. In some areas in Zambia where we work this is the second year for many people to be suffering due to droughts. In Malawi floods destroyed many crops around Lilongwe area. In Uganda they are suffering from droughts and locust has descended on many areas. We have been trying to send around \$2,000.00 per month to help with food relief for our brethren who are suffering in many areas in Africa. We are wiring the funds to the preacher schools we are working with in Africa and they are purchasing the grain and delivering it to faithful congregations of the Lord's church who then distribute the food to



One of the baptisms resulting from a gospel meeting in Kenya during February

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There is a song we sing from time to time, “**Count Your Many Blessings**”. On Monday March 2, 2020 in the early hours of the morning a tornado of EF-4 strength hit Cookeville, Tennessee. Three of our 4 children and 8 of our 11 grandchildren live here in Cookeville. Three of our grandchildren and their mother rode out the storm in a closet with houses damaged near them but not the house they were in. Our daughter Tracy was in the path of the worst hit area in Cookeville. She lost her house, car and everything. She was thrown from the house and dug out of a pile of debris in the back yard with a separated shoulder, broken rib, broken toe, stitches and cuts and glass in her back and side but alive. She was treated at the ER and sent home. Her 2 teenage daughters were spending the night at other places and fortunately were not at home. Eighteen lost their lives that night and one more has died recently due to head injuries from that tornado. There were 11 that died in our daughter’s neighborhood. The next day I prayed and thanked God for the blessings He had bestowed upon us. I told Carolyn we could have been planning funerals for a daughter, daughter in law and 5 of our wonderful grandchildren. Indeed we need to “Count our many blessings”. A few days after the storm I visited where her house once stood and looked at a lot that was completely leveled with none of the house still standing and wondered how anyone could survive such a storm.

Thanks brethren for your support of our work and for your prayers. Please help us as you can to take the precious Gospel of Christ “*into all the world.*”

Things You Helped to Accomplish



Baptisms	15,758
Restorations	11,570
Congregations Established	374
Schools of Preaching Begun	7
BCC Students	49,001
ICOTB Students	498
Preachers Graduated	492

Jimmie B. Hill Memorial Library

Bronson & Julie Roper and Linda Hill added books in honor of *Jimmie B. Hill*

Check our website for information and a donation form

Office News

The world is a bit of a scary place today with the evermore alarming news concerning Covid-19. It has even arrived in this tiny town where I live. Since I already work from home isolation has not made much impact, although a trip to the grocery store has become more worrisome.

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In Christ,

Ronald D. Gilbert, Director of **IBTM**

Yet, this situation keeps bringing to mind my first foreign campaign.

It was 1983 when my husband, Jimmie, and I joined a 6-week mission effort in Ghana, West Africa. Our arrival was quickly followed by an attempted coup so the nation’s borders closed. Suddenly there was violence in the streets, military checkpoints, and curfews. We lay in bed at night listening to machine gun fire and got up in the mornings to check the radio for the death toll. A drought and famine added to the woe so there was water rationing and very little food available. I learned first-hand how unpleasant 10 days of dysentery can be, and the village where we were walking door-to-door to set up Bible studies had a cholera outbreak while we were there. I still think of this as my Campaign to Gehenna. Yet, this was the campaign that convinced us to become missionaries. It is amazing how hardship can change your perspective on what’s important and bring greater appreciation for God’s power and love.

I pray that the current situation will have a similar impact on all of us. Whether it is violence in the streets, a tornado in the night or a worldwide pandemic remember that God is in control. We are in His hands, and that is a seriously good place to be.

In Christ,

Linda Hill