

VolunteerVoice

BRINGING GOD'S WORD TO THE WORLD

SUMMER
2020

ISSUE
94



You helped this pastor attend the first Project Philip training in Pikit Cotabato, Philippines.

In This Issue

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This section features our volunteers, their stories, testimonies, and what's happening.

5 BOARD UPDATES

We missed our April meeting, but check this section for new updates.

6 NEW VOLUNTEERS

Join us in welcoming some new Bible League Volunteers.



Welcome Felix

Felix Mathew is Bible League's new Vice President of Church and Donor Relations. He lives in Buffalo Grove, Illinois, a suburb located northwest of Chicago. He is married to Joy and they have two daughters. Danielle is a sophomore at Calvin University and Isabelle is a sophomore in high school. Felix grew up in Lincoln, Illinois, before his parents decided to become missionaries in India. He moved to India at age 10. Felix received his bachelor's degree before moving back to the States to pursue a master's degree at Lincoln Christian Seminary. It was during this time that he was offered a position as a youth pastor. Over the years, he wore many hats at two churches that he served and which God had blessed with great growth. God then used him for 13 years at Awana in various capacities, the last role as the Area Director for India and Bangladesh.

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Valued Volunteers *by Joanne Marvin*

For many of us, spring was very different. Most of our events, if not all, were canceled. The comfort through all of this is God has all of us in His hand.

I pray and hope each of us will be a stronger influence for God here at our churches and around the world. The analogy of a very cold snowy Midwest winter comes to mind. Afterwards comes spring with its first flowers to lift our spirits; the happy crocus, bright daffodils and the beautiful tulips. If you live in western Michigan,

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Joanne Marvin
Executive Board President
Bible League Volunteers

(continued from page 1)

then comes the blossoms and scent of all the various fruit trees. Then there is also the pleasant smell of the freshly tilled soil and planting. With the blessing of sunshine and rain during the summer comes the bountiful fall harvest.

This is my prayer for Bible League International; this virus was the winter. We couldn't meet for our spring meeting, but all of you are the happy, bright, and beautiful flowers. Now with the blessing of sunshine and rain, fundraising, Love Letters, and offerings, we will produce a bountiful harvest to continue the growth of Bible League's ministry.

When we meet, hopefully, this fall, let each of us share some blessing from this time, either personal or from our division, to increase the work of Bible League. Here is a reward to look forward to from 1 John 5:11-12 NKJV, *"And this is the testimony: that God has given us eternal life, and this life is in His Son. He who has the Son has life; he who does not have the Son of God does not have life."* Our work is not finished. **Plant on!**

PRAYER

by Carla Kooiman, Tri-State Conference Treasurer

As we are in "global time out" due to worldwide pandemic, be encouraged to know and trust God is in control of all things. In the Bible, we are told Jesus took time out to pray. *"One day soon afterward, Jesus went to a mountain to pray, and He prayed to God all night."* (Luke 6:12 NLT)

Prayer is a blessing, a gift from our heavenly Father, where we can praise and glorify Him, seek His will for our lives and petition for our concerns, fears, anxieties or whatever is on our hearts. Prayer is powerful, prayer is a discipline, and prayer gives us hope in hard times.

Bibleleague.org has a section titled, *Be Encouraged*.

Readers are encouraged to submit their prayer requests. With the growing number of these being submitted, Bible League developed a new ministry called Crisis Prayer Ministry. Volunteers for Bible League and staff members serve in this ministry. We lift-up these requests to God. We are committed to pray over each request and honor the confidentiality of each person.

So be encouraged; we serve an awesome God who cares about every facet of our lives. From every corner of the world, He knows our hearts. He knows our concerns and our fears. He will carry us through this hard time. He hears our prayers. *"Hear my cry, O God; attend to my prayer."* (Psalm 61:1 NKJV)

EDUCATION

Jerry and Nancy Dykstra, Education Coordinators

Early in March, Jerry and Nancy visited Covenant Presbyterian Church in Holland, Michigan, where they

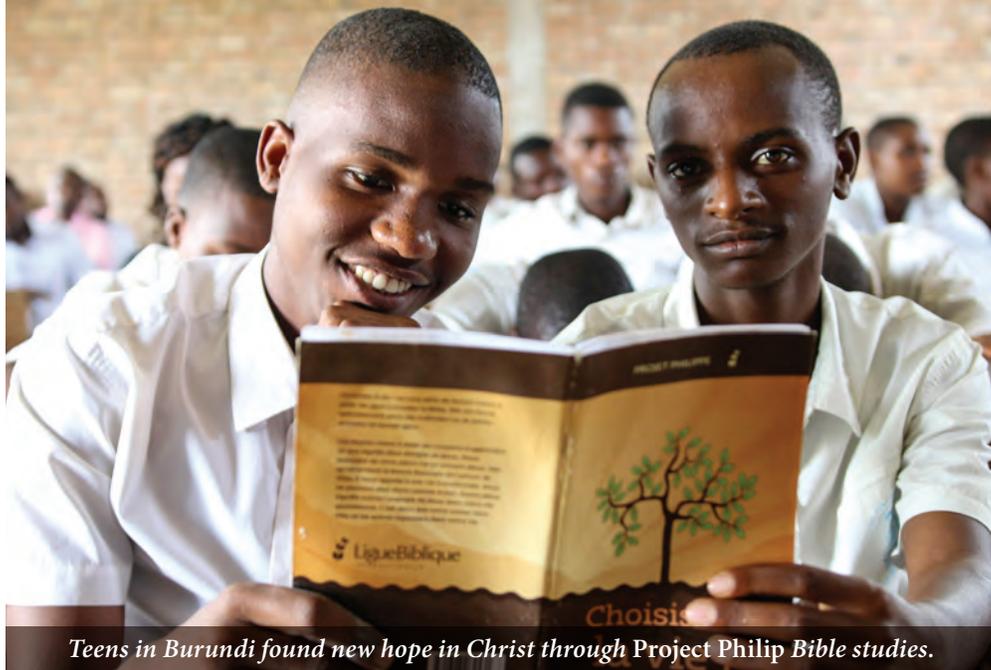
showed the video of the "Red Book" story. They shared with the congregation how important their prayers are and how Bible League appreciates their financial support. They also shared statistics from 2019 and invited them to pick up the Annual Report on their way out. They were very well received. Jerry and Nancy were scheduled to bring devotions during Chapel time at Lake Area Christian School in Nottowa, Michigan, in April, but that had to be canceled. They hope for more opportunities to share about ministry. If your church or a local event in the central Michigan area can provide an opportunity for a Bible League presentation, please contact Jerry and Nancy (dykstra5354@gmail.com).

FUNDRAISING

Although many fundraising events had to be canceled this year. We give thanks to God that there were still some creative fundraisers. Keep up the great work of getting God's Word to people!

- A spring flower sale was held in the Chicago Southwest Division, selling 50 baskets and raising close to \$500 for ministry. Praise God!
- Joanne Marvin made face masks for donations to Bible League. Great idea! She suggests we keep thinking of ways to fundraise, especially since many events were canceled.
- Newaygo County Division continues their scrubbies fundraiser. A big thank you goes to Sally Bielema for all her efforts.
- Although the NW IA and Central IA Divisions had to cancel their spring luncheons, they are inviting people to still partner in sharing God's Word through their giving.

A Global Reach for the Kingdom



2020

WORLDWIDE
MINISTRY
IMPACT PLANS



People Engaged
in God's Word
2,798,673



People Trained to
share God's Word
124,596



Churches Planted
2,303

Making a Global Reach for the Kingdom

Amid a pandemic, the need for God's Word can intensify. People are seeking the comfort of the Gospel. And you are helping them to hear it. From children learning how much Jesus loves them, to church growth in areas with no Christian presence, to inmates sharing the Good News with each other, you are a blessing.

Your gift of time ensures the Lord's work continues through children and youth, prison ministry, Bible-based Literacy, and church growth. Please ask God to keep them encouraged in these stressful, unsure times. Ask God to bless all the ministry leaders, partners, and those who help carry out precious training so people can hear God's call through the Holy Spirit. In a time of crisis, you are helping to encourage others. You are helping to transform lives by engaging everyone in the Word of God. This is the eternal gift your commitment and hard work make possible. Thank you.

God's Word Makes the Difference

Pastora Mely (pictured standing) is a church planter in the Philippines, and she was facing a crisis. As the COVID-19 virus began to spread, she—like so many of us—was encouraged to shelter at home. The news devastated Christians in her area. Suddenly, no one could go to church anymore. It was a severe blow because that is where the members of her congregation come together to listen to the Word of God. Church is where they draw strength in fellowship, especially during tough times.

Pre-pandemic, Pastora Mely shared the Gospel with dozens of children in her community every Saturday, despite her busy schedule. "Children are sincere in their hunger for the Word of God," she says. Once everything was halted due to the coronavirus, Pastora Mely wondered, "What would become of them?"

She was surprised when village children continued to show up on Saturdays. Many begged her to resume teaching them. She told the young Christians

Continued on next page



The Difference *(continued)*

that they would have to not meet for a while. “I had to send them home,” she says softly. “Many of them cried.” Still, she comforted them and assured them that God would solve this problem. She encouraged them to pray, and to take good care of their health.

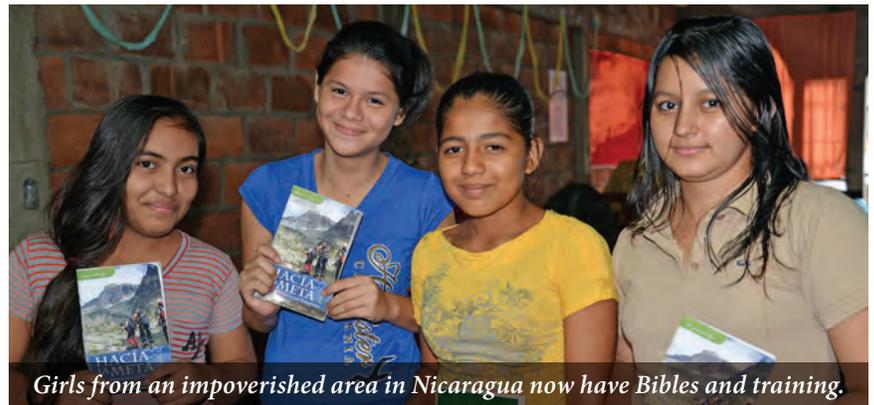
God’s Word would not be stopped, however. Many churches in the Philippines began live streaming services online. Not only did many churches find they could reach far more people on a digital platform, Pastora Mely now has a way to reconnect with her congregation—especially the children.

PRAYER REQUESTS

- Pray for the youth and children in *Project Philip* small Bible study groups in Zambia. May they remain encouraged to study God’s Word.
- Ask God to bless the economy of Armenia. Already weak, the coronavirus pandemic made it worse. Many families have no income and are facing hunger. May God open doors and provide solutions.
- Please pray for the health of ministry leaders around the globe. There are reports of pastors and Philips (*Project Philip* Bible study leaders) with health ailments from heart attacks to positive COVID-19 tests. May God heal all in need of His healing hand.
- A praise report from the Middle East! By God’s grace, believers have located a safe place to hold literacy classes.

Be Part of Making a Lasting Difference in Lives

When you join hands with Bible League Volunteers to provide Bibles and training worldwide—and to pray—you will help make *A Global Reach for the Kingdom*. By God’s grace and the power of His Word, each \$5 Bible you provide today has the power to transform a life. A family. A community. And as lives are transformed, God’s Church will grow—on a global scale! You will help make disciples around the world, just as Jesus commands. Thank you!



Girls from an impoverished area in Nicaragua now have Bibles and training.

Faithfully serving nearly
50 countries worldwide



Serving the under-resourced Church with Bibles and
training to transform lives worldwide through God’s Word.



PLEASE SHARE
THIS BIBLE LEAGUE
INTERNATIONAL NEWS
WITH YOUR CHURCH!

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EventsCalendar

Fall Conference Events

- **September 14-15**
Dinner event, Tri-State Conference with Kelli (Kredit) Gotthardt, and Pastor's Lunch in Sioux Center, Iowa
- **September 17**
Central Iowa Retreat in Pella, Iowa, with Kelli (Kredit) Gotthardt
- **September 19**
Morning Brunch Conference in Crete, Illinois, with Lynn Wilder
- **September 23**
Michigan Conference in Byron Center, Michigan, with Lynn Wilder



Kelli (Kredit) Gotthardt authors the memoir, *Unlikely Rebel: A Church Girl's Journey Out of Shoulds and Shame*. Kelli helps others develop practices that increase their capacity to listen, lead, and love.



Lynn Wilder is a former Latter-day Saint now biblical Christian, transformed by the Word of God. Learn more about her ministry at <http://unveilingmormonism.com>.



Thony Ronaldo is Bible League's national ministry director in Indonesia who is passionate about sharing the Gospel. Thony will share how God's Word is breaking through the spiritual darkness in powerful ways.

Please submit your articles for the next newsletter by 7/24/2020

Spring National Board Meeting Update

We missed having our National Board Meeting in April. Here are some updates that come from your Bible League Volunteer Executive Team and the home office.

- Prayer has been a serious focus for the Bible League Volunteer Executive Board. They are gathering monthly to pray for you and for ministry. They hope to share more at the October board meeting.
- Elections—Both Joanne Marvin, President, and Sherri Ten Napel, Secretary, are up for another 2-year term as officers of the Bible League Volunteer Executive Board and are happy to continue serving. However, if you know someone who would like to jump in to one of those roles, please let the team know.
- We welcome Felix Mathew to our team! He is serving Bible League as Vice President of Church and Donor Relations. (Similar role formerly held by Max Kohanyuk.)
- Financial Report
 - We are sending newsletters out third-class mail, saving us about \$250 each time!
 - At our Fall 2019 meeting, a goal was set for us to raise \$400,000 by September 30—see the bottom of page 2 for our progress. Despite the pandemic the Lord is blessing our efforts to pray, educate, and fundraise. Be encouraged and keep up the good work!
 - The Bible League Volunteer Executive Board voted to keep a worldwide focus for fundraising starting October 1, so the funds we raise continue to be used for ministry when and where they are needed most.

If you have any questions or comments, please connect with anyone on the Bible League Volunteer Executive Board or Deanna from the home office.

2020 GOAL
\$400,000

Bible League Volunteer donations providing Bibles and training around the world as of 5/31/2020 are \$168,728 (42.2% of goal with 66.7% of fiscal year 2020 completed)

Greetings and Blessings to You from

BIBLES FOR MISSIONS THRIFT CENTERS

Amidst the global pandemic, we are encouraged, grateful, and give thanks in all things. Even when giving thanks does not make sense to us, the Word tells us God is our ever-present help and strength in times of trouble. Praise the Lord and be of good cheer!

All 16 stores were closed when the virus started. We are all concerned for the safety of our volunteers, the donors, and shoppers. And praise the Lord again—we believe we are in good shape and are not aware of any serious health situations.

Please pray that God will bless the plans to reopen well. Pray the environment is safe and that God will provide a healthy group of volunteers to help move us forward. Because of the states' executive orders and our store

closures, we have been unable to help Bible League financially. Please pray and help us communicate our need for volunteers to reboot the stores. Some volunteers are considered in the vulnerable category of health standards, and it might be difficult for them to return, so we need additional help recruiting. If you know of older youth, the unemployed, family groups, and anyone looking to make an impact for the Kingdom, this would be a great time to engage them as a partner and "get the Word out."

We do hope and pray that these past days and months you have been drawn closer to the Lord. He is the answer to and for the world! Let's keep working together to further His Gospel message around the world!



John Scafe
National Director
Bibles for Missions
Thrift Centers,
*approved partner of
Bible League International*

Welcome Felix *(continued from page 1)*

In that position, he saw how God prepared him so many years ago to minister in the country close to his heart. It is with great anticipation that he joins the team at Bible League. His role will be to expand our reach in the country Bible League was founded, the U.S. He hopes that the Bible League will be able to equip the church to evangelize the lost right here in its "Jerusalem." As Felix learned about Bible League, he was excited to learn about our team of volunteers and the impact you are having throughout the world.

Felix is looking forward to meeting each of you and thanking you for what you have and are continuing to do for God's Kingdom. He says, "I'm also looking forward to eating some of that delicious pie that some of you make." Please pray for him as he seeks to be used by God in spreading the Good News.



Felix Mathew
Vice President of Church & Donor Relations
Bible League International
(pictured with his wife, Joy)

Welcome New Volunteers

(Please see insert for details.)

Dawn Berg
(GR North Division)

Ruth De Bruin
(Central Iowa Division)

Diane Emanuelson
(Illiana Division)

Alvina Kooiman
(NW Iowa Division)

Coretha Rozendaal
(Central Iowa Division)

Marlene Broek
(NW Iowa Division)

Deanne Dykstra
(Chicago SW Division)

Marilyn Feekes
(NW Iowa Division)

Karen Misner
(Kalamazoo Division)

Brenda (Faber) Vander Molen
(Illiana Division)

467 CHURCHES
22 DIVISIONS
bibleleague.org/volunteer-resources

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welcome

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New Volunteers

Dawn Berg (*GR North Division*)

Dawn has been a long-time member at Cascade Fellowship CRC in Grand Rapids. She has four children and likes to spend winters in Florida. After being invited to be a volunteer, the Lord moved her to say yes. She was inspired by Isaiah 6:8 NKJV where the Lord asks, “Whom shall I send, And who will go for Us?” Then I said, “Here am I! Send me.”

Marlene Broek (*NW Iowa Division*)

Marlene is a Key Contact at First CRC in Sioux Center, Iowa. She is also a member of the Crisis Prayer Ministry Team for the *Be Encouraged* ministry at Bible League. Marlene has two sons, one daughter, and seven grandchildren.

Ruth De Bruin (*Central Iowa Division*)

Ruth has joined the team as Vice Chairman. She is excited to again be a part of the volunteer force of Bible League and has many fond memories of the years she volunteered to help Willis Timmer (a Bible League fundraiser) do Bibles for Mexico radio marathons in the '70's!

Deanne Dykstra (*Chicago SW Division*)

Deanne is our newest volunteer and she joined the Chicago Southwest Division in March 2020. She is a member of Orland Park CRC. She is married and has four children.

Diane Emanuelson (*Illiana Division*)

Diane attends First Church PCA in Lansing, Illinois. After over 40 years together with her husband Mark, they have four sons and six grandkids. Her mom, Dorothy Porter, loved being a key lady. “I feel the Lord leading me to become involved in the ministry so near and dear to both of our hearts. Getting the Bible, the message of salvation, and His Word out to people is the most important ministry there is for life eternal. I’m excited to be a small part of it.”

Marilyn Feekes (*NW Iowa Division*)

Marilyn is a member at Covenant CRC in Northwest Iowa. She says, “After I retired, the Lord led me to serve on the Bible League Conference committee in the Tri-State area. I have been blessed to serve with wonderful sisters in Christ, supporting Bible League and its mission to bring God’s Word and salvation to all the world. The more I learn about Bible League, the more I see God’s hand at work!”

Alvina Kooiman (*NW Iowa Division*)

Alvina lived in Worthington, Minnesota, for 50 years before moving to Sioux Center, Iowa, in May of 2018. She has 4 married children and 14 grandchildren.

Karen Misner (*Kalamazoo Division*)

Karen is a life-long member of East Martin CRC. She and her daughter, Sara, often lead worship services with their wonderful abilities on the organ and piano. Karen is looking forward to participating in the Michigan conference.

Coretha Rozendaal (*Central Iowa Division*)

Coretha is a member of the Covenant URC. She always enjoys the retreats in Pella and says, “There is always an awesome speaker and music...that is where my love for Bible League started.” She has three married sons and six grandchildren. Since her husband’s recent passing, she is now running their three businesses with the help of her oldest son and two grandsons.

Brenda (Faber) Vander Molen (*Illiana Division*)

Brenda attends First Church PCA in Lansing, Illinois. She has been married to Roy for 37 years; they have three children and six grandchildren. Brenda grew up in Lansing, Illinois, and now lives in Munster, Indiana. “I’m excited to be a new volunteer for Bible League and hope to make a difference in helping spread God’s Word.”