

Missions in Media Update – Spring/Summer 2023

Greetings in the Name of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ

Thank You for your continued prayers and support of our labor! We give thanks to God always for each of you and continue to seek the fruit that abounds to your account (Phil. 4:17)—Russell & Family

Javier Speaks!

I shared with you in the last update brother **Javier Perez** and his desire to speak. Well, that came to fruition! He spoke on the subject, “How I Became a Christian?” After he approached me about wanting to preach, I developed an outline, not only for him but for all the men to consider. To build the lesson, I used a series of questions considering the apostle Paul from (Acts 22; 26). Encouraging the men to stretch themselves a bit more, I challenged each of them to share their story as well. On one Sunday each month since January, starting with Javier, we’ve been hearing their stories. We used these particular times to invite friends and family. I am now encouraging brother Javier to speak elsewhere. It’s been very uplifting to see the men stepping up and getting more involved with the service, especially when I’ve been absent, when traveling south. Brothers **Richard; Mark; Sam; Amos; William** and **Nicholas** are learning to **serve more! Praise God! Please keep brother Javier and the men at Media in your prayers.** More to share about Javier below.



Brother Javier Perez wanted to speak and it came to fruition, PRAISE GOD!

Revive Us Again Workshop in Waxahachie, TX: In late March the Brownstreet Church of Christ hosted an RUA Workshop. **“I Surrender All”** was the theme. I spoke on the subject, **“Reaching Your Community for Christ.”** Sisters **Eileen Beothy** and **Angela Perna** were able to travel down from Media for the event. **Brother John Orr and his team; the leaders from Home Mission and the Brownstreet Leadership did an excellent job presenting this event. Media members and NEIE are grateful for the RUA’s that we’ve been able to attend. These events have helped immensely with strengthening our team by presenting practical lessons to help us grow and develop in service for the King. I invite YOU to come to the next RUA and be inspired to greater service. Attendance was around six hundred. LET US INCREASE! INVITE!**

Planning with Waterview Brethren: While at this event, I was able to connect with brethren from Waterview to discuss goals for the future. Brother **Reagan Morgan** (Deacon/Missions) and one of the elders who has worked closely with Media, brother **James Withrow** encouraged me with constructive advice and prayers. We discussed oversight and potential ways for more direct involvement from the leadership. The goals shift from year to year as some are attained and others seem less attainable. One thing is for sure—if there are no goals and plans to attain them, nothing happens. I am extremely grateful that these men take the time to consider the direction of the school and my work as an evangelist. The congregations now involved in our labor give us immense strength to continue...without ALL of YOU this work would not move forward!

Another Important Stop: While driving to this event I stopped in Knoxville (my home away from home) to pick up my table display and stopped in to visit with the **West End congregation. The elders there have been a great source of encouragement, along with brothers Bill Tankersly & Adam Wilson** (Deacon/Missions). Please continue to pray for brother **Bob Waters and family**. He is still dealing with various health issues; he is still in a hospital in Jacksonville, FL. Through the years Bob has been in my corner, he lifted me up when I needed words of advice. **Please lift his name up to God in prayer. Please keep Jeremy Weekly and this wonderful congregation in your prayers!**



In Waxahachie, TX: Bill & Cathy Hardy (Gospel Sharing Ministries); Angela; Eileen & who’s that?

Walter Hall: We have been studying with Walter for more than several months. His health unfortunately has been up and down. Walt has been struggling with congestive heart failure and diabetes. He has been in and out of the hospital several times. A surgeon removed part of his right foot due to a blood infection about a month ago. He has expressed his need to be immersed for the forgiveness of his sins, but has not yet obeyed the gospel. He's been concerned with his foot healing completely before he gets into the water...and yes, we have already discussed covering it. **Please keep Walt in your prayers, pray that he obeys soon!**

New Steam Boiler: We are extremely grateful that the boiler is finally going to be replaced. Brother Sam Hancock has come to the rescue again! Sam helped us a few years back to put in a mini-split system in the auditorium for A/C and secondary heat. He has a team of more than several mechanics that are helping through the summer. The old leaky boiler was no longer able to pass the borough safety inspections. When this job is finished, I will be grateful for at least two things—I will not have to run to the building at five in the morning to make sure there is enough water in the boiler and secondly, a clock thermostat. Wow, new technology! LOL! PRAISE GOD!

Ladies Day at Media: Sister Eileen was sharing with me how she wanted to do more. She has been growing in her love for the truth and the Lord's church. Her desire led to a discussion about what can be done to strengthen the ladies. Which naturally led to another discussion, a Ladies Day event? On Saturday, May 20th Media hosted our **Ladies Day!** Eileen liked the idea of asking my sister **Carol Warrell** to be the speaker, of course *my sister* did not turn me down! The theme was, **"Positive Ways for Women to Support the Work of the Church."** It was well attended with at least six congregations represented. **Eileen** and **Angela**, along with **Cheryl** were involved in preparation. Sister **Marlene Bundridge** (NEIE student) invited a few non-members to come and did a fine job leading songs. Please keep these ladies in your prayers. I am grateful to see God working through them to help further the borders of His kingdom. Prayerfully, it will become a yearly event! **Need help reaching a Catholic family? Please consider Carol's book! Need a Ladies Day speaker? cwarrell@gmail.com** (610) 306-2946



My sister Carol; Media; Clayton; Overbrook Park; Chester; Camden and Levittown were represented!

Revive Us Again in Florence, AL: Home Mission held another Revive Us Again Workshop at **Heritage Christian University**. The theme, “**Here I Am, Send Me,**” challenged the listeners to be more evangelistic. I was chosen to speak on, “**Teaching an Evangelism Training Class.**” One of the lessons that was very eye-opening, “**Hark, the Cry for Help,**” was delivered by brother **Rob Whitacre** (H to H School of Evangelism). He did not hold back about our dismal numerical growth across the board in the U.S. We are in great need of personal workers, everywhere and in every church of Christ across the land. One of the stats he shared: **IF we continue with our current rate of growth by 2069 it will be hard to find a church of Christ in America!**

My prayer is that our congregations will start utilizing members who are evangelistic to *build a team*. Paul had a team (1 Cor. 3:6-9; Col. 4:7ff). Why do we think ministers of the gospel can do the work that should be distributed among faithful members (Rom. 12; 1 Cor. 12:13-27; Eph. 4:16; Matt. 28:18-20; NOTE: 1 Thess. 1:6-9; 2 Tim. 2:2)? Christlikeness is key...but Jesus took his disciples *by the hand and trained them* to do the work. Mark’s gospel begins with our Lord building a team to walk with Him (Mark 1:16-20). Can we not have *team leaders* helping to develop soul winners within our congregations? We have many tools that have already been written which are readily available. Let’s utilize them for training and teaching the gospel. Your Bible first! **I am reminded of what brother Clayton Pepper wrote a few decades ago...**

“Many of our schools that train preachers have made the same mistake as the Bible school. The emphasis is on “preaching the word” publicly. Most do little to equip the prospective preacher for more than public preaching as a means to reach the lost. This has largely become edification of the saints, and his work is largely “pastoring a church.” One preacher said that when he got out of school he had a Bible in one hand and a diploma in the other, but did not know what to do. Another said that he studied the Bible from Genesis to Revelation while in college, but had to learn by trial and error how to win the lost. One school made a survey of students who had graduated to determine what they needed most but did not get. They responded personal evangelism.” (Church Growth Today, Pgs. 29-30)

A Great Reunion: Brother **Willie Franklin** was the final keynote speaker at the RUA in Florence. “**Ready at Thy Bidding,**” was his message. Willie has (in his many years) exemplified a servant heart. It was a fitting subject for him to share with us our great need to be a ready and willing people of God. Please keep him in your prayers. **Our family loves brother Willie, he is (Italian) Dark Chocolate to us! LOL! Please keep him and his family in your prayers.**



Back to the Bible Campaign in Clarksville, TN: Eileen, Angela and brother Javier traveled south with me again...this time to my favorite state, Tennessee! Oops, I'm sorry. I am supposed to say, "along with Texas and Alabama." I can hear Russ Blackwell, "that's Alabama first brother! Roll Tide!" LOL! We were very fortunate, once again to work with brother Russ & sister Judy Blackwell, along with our yearly campaigners from Cox Blvd. and other locations! **You know who you are! 3200 doors were knocked; 46 studies were set and 6 were baptized into Christ. Please pray for Dean Roach, Malvin Algood & their wives along with the Barkers Mill membership in the follow up labor necessary to help assimilate their new members.**

What an amazing time we have together working to reach the lost! It is a time of sharing, caring, learning, growing and sacrificing in the Lord's vineyard. We grow closer year upon year and it's never easy leaving one another. The benefits of campaigning for Christ are many, this is a very short list: Members of the Lord's church learn **how to approach people at their front door**; members learn that Bible studies **can actually be set up at the door, and they can actually hold**; members learn **how to teach another soul how to be saved**; they also learn to **teach by being a silent partner (hearing and watching) how it's done**; members learn that **you can stretch yourself beyond what you thought able**; members learn how to **work together** for the cause of Christ; they learn that **God's family can be focused on what is needed**, so desperately, in our world today—**evangelism!** If you have thought about reaching the lost, working with a team, **why not come and join us** as we build upon our foundation of personal evangelists? Contact Russ Blackwell: judrus@gmail.com or Russ DiGiorgio: russneie@icloud.com ; want to take classes online www.wedoevangelism.com ; quickest way to reach me, text: (610) 306-2946.

On this particular campaign I believe the greatest benefit (outside of those being saved of course) was the fact that more than several members at Barkers Mill grew spiritually beyond what they thought able. What a blessing it was to hear them speak on the last night of the campaign, sharing how moved they were with all they experienced. Praise God that we're able to be involved in the greatest work in the world! Real change takes place in Christ! Change that benefits the broken world in which we live! **To God be the glory...great things He hath done! A special THANK YOU to ALL who participated in making the campaign a success! Especially for Dean and the Barkers Mill family for taking up His challenge to go therefore! The ladies at Barkers Mill who stepped up...PRAISE GOD for YOU!**



Barkers Mill Members with a newly baptized member (orange blazer); Campaigning in Clarksville (teamwork)!

Javier on Fire: When brother Javier returned from the campaign he immediately taught and baptized one of his nephews, Dorian Billada. He also taught and baptized another nephew in May, Adrian Perez. He continues to do follow up teaching with both of them and at the same time is reaching out to his brother Rick. Javier lives in South Jersey, so he is not always able to attend classes at Media. Sometimes we have him in class via ZOOM or I will record the class for him. **Please keep this wonderful brother in your prayers** as he continues to learn and grow in his service for the King. He often shares with me his struggles as the devil attacks his efforts, and immediately we'll pray together on the phone. He has an opportunity to speak at the Levittown congregation coming up soon! Praise God for Javier and his love of the truth!

Souls to pray for: Please keep **Walter Hall; Felix Rodriguez; Johnathan Gidek; Cheryl Sindoni; Anna Drew; Lois Offenbecher.**

NEIE now in our 10th year of service: We are entering our 4th quarter, 2nd year of classes in August. **Denominational Doctrines/Worldviews** will be covered. I've noticed how crucial it is to understand the times in which we are living. Various ideologies around our globe cause great concern and are waking some of us up to just how much evil has manifested, in ways unimaginable. It's nothing new in Scripture yet advancing beyond what we see in Scripture. With technology in the medical field and of course the social media, so many children are now being bombarded with evil not seen before in world history. Transitioning? You know what I speak of. More lessons in apologetics are needed for the soul winner.

On the Home Front: We have a new addition to our family!! **Our first grand baby!!** Lindsay DiGiorgio gave birth to **Vivienne Elise DiGiorgio** on July 7 at 8:42PM. She weighed in at 7lbs. 6oz. and is our little cherub! Please keep **Jordan, Lindsay** and baby in your prayers.



THANK YOU! Waterview; Cox Blvd.; West End; Gold Hill Rd.; West Side; Levittown; Media; and all of our Personal Supporters as well...you know who you are!

TO GOD BE THE GLORY! WE LOVE YOU and ARE ALWAYS GRATEFUL FOR YOUR PRAYERS AND FINANCIAL SUPPORT! Russell, Cheryl & Family (1 Cor. 15:58)