

Baptist COURIERS FOR CHRIST

July 2024

An **E.P.I.C.** Opportunity!

by Joshua Stertz

EPIC is one of those words that I have heard often from the younger generation over the past 10 years. They describe something that sounds fun to them, and then proceed to slap the phrase, “THAT WOULD BE EPIC,” to whatever they are declaring to all within earshot! Our senior pastor, Jason Brenenstuhl, has a vision to reach across the Caribbean in a way that we have not ever done before. Tim Carpenter (director of Bearing Precious Seed, Oshkosh) has worked for over a decade in Puerto Rico, leading many teams of believers from across the USA. These trips assist the local churches in their evangelization and help them with a variety of projects. Given this level of experience in the Caribbean, Tim and Pastor Brenenstuhl have spent a lot of time discussing the details of this outreach. It was quickly discovered that to accomplish the vast goals, more manpower would be needed. Pastor graciously asked each of the ministries based at Wyldewood Baptist Church if they would like to get involved to extend the outreach beyond its current possibilities. We prayed and

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discussed the ramifications of doing a “scripture blitz” in the Caribbean and felt the Lord’s leading to do so.

All good outreaches need a name, and we settled on Evangelizing People In the Caribbean (E.P.I.C.). Given the potential outreach of the various trips, we feel like it will be an EPIC experience for sure! In the United States, the Caribbean gets looked at solely for its awesome vacation spots--and it is beautiful, no doubt. However, behind all the natural beauty is a group of people steeped in a variety of negative spiritual practices that leave them empty, hopeless, and on their way to hell. We want to point them to the Lord Jesus Christ, who is “...the way, the truth, and

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the life...”, and their only hope for eternal salvation instead of the horrors of a Christ-less eternity in the lake of fire. If you have ever been to the islands for a vacation, we aim to show you a part of it that you likely did not experience. We desire to show you the Caribbean through the lens of the word of God, which will help us all to see a much clearer picture.

At this point three of our home-based ministries (Bearing Precious Seed, Couriers For Christ, and Wings As Eagles) will be collaborating to assist churches in multiple Caribbean islands with their ministry outreaches. A variety of trips will be available to Christians of like faith and practice from January to May of 2025. Couriers For Christ is planning to administer three trips: mid-January, late February, and mid-March. These will be similar to our past scripture campaigns in that we will break out into small groups under team leaders to distribute John and Romans door to door, on the street, and into hands of folks. However, the Caribbean trips will be only eight days long instead of two weeks. Thus, they will be more affordable and require less time away from responsibilities. Another cost-lowering benefit is the fact that we are flying only to the Caribbean and not to Europe.



We will be working with pastors and missionaries in their outreach and church-planting efforts while we distribute copies of the scriptures. People will be invited to an evangelistic “Friend Sunday” service with the goal of seeing people saved, connected with a local Bible believing church, and added to the church membership after their salvation/baptism. We have started a website dedicated to the details of the trip, and I encourage you to visit it for information (epic.wyldewood.org). Feel free to reach out to me directly if there are questions beyond the scope of what is answered in the web pages (josh.stertz@gmail.com).

John and Esther Meyer Update

Much has happened in our lives since we last wrote an article for the newsletter. We have safely traveled thousands of miles due to our faithful prayer warrior partners, especially our mothers. Last July God gave us a window of time in our schedule that we were not able to fill with meetings, as he had other work for us to do. What a privilege it was that we had that time to spend with my mom, Lela Adams, and help her move to Warsaw, Indiana! However, after helping my mom move, we had to rush over to Kansas for a couple of meetings on that following Sunday.

August, September, and October were very full months of travel. After being home in Wisconsin, we spent time in Florida but had to leave early and run from a hurricane! Our next meeting took us earlier than expected to Albuquerque, New Mexico. Our stay in the southwest wasn't long, and we headed back to Kansas, then over the Rocky Mountains of Colorado, around through Utah to northern Colorado, and then to Evanston, Wyoming, for a Sunday morning meeting.

Traveling mercies are never taken for granted, because our next meeting was clear across the United States! We pushed 2,000 miles in less than three days to Warrenton, Virginia, for their Wednesday evening service. We did stop for a couple days to visit the father of Erica (John's first wife who passed away in 2018) on our way to a meeting in Rossville, Georgia. Please pray for his salvation.

Praise the Lord that in all those travels we had very few issues until our brakes went bad, but John was able to repair them. It was then our privilege to attend the Bible and Literature Missionary Foundation Bible Conference in Shelbyville, Tennessee. While we were there, we got to visit The Bible Barn and The Bible Exhibit, help to collate scriptures, and even load a couple of containers. We also had a precious and refreshing visit with a very dear pastor friend and mentor of ours in Jackson, Tennessee, while we were in the area a couple of days for our meeting there in Spring Hill, Tennessee. Monday we raced up to Mount Vernon, Kentucky, to visit a supporting church, but also to attend the tremendous Wings Bearing Precious Seed Bible Conference, which included helping load a container and cutting and stapling scripture!

Upon leaving Kentucky on October 28, we made our way to Butler, Pennsylvania, for a meeting that we had been looking forward to with our dear friends, Pastor Brian and Mrs. Niki Lott. But we had never imagined the life-altering day that it would become. My dear mother, Lela Frantz, had an accident and passed away soon thereafter. After Mom's funeral in Indiana, visitation, and graveside service in Nebraska (where she was laid to rest beside my dad), we carried on. We know that is what she would have wanted. We left Nebraska early Saturday morning to return to Indiana for a meeting there on Sunday, and then we headed back to Kentucky to attend a missions conference. Mid-November brought us back to Wisconsin for our own home church's missions conference. It was great to be back home with our church family and meet other servants of God who are concerned with taking the gospel across the world. November and December were difficult adjusting to the loss of several loved ones missing from our lives and facing the holidays, BUT God is our Rock, our Refuge and our Comfort! The first Sunday through Wednesday in December we spent back in Kansas at another missions conference, where John was the keynote speaker for the whole conference!



Pastor Matthew and Johanna Hudson, Bella Vista Baptist Church, Albuquerque, New Mexico



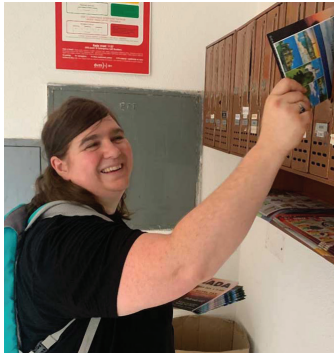
Pastor and Mrs. Nolita Gravely, Bible Baptist Church, Rossville, Georgia



John collating scriptures, Bible and Literature Missionary Foundation Bible Barn, Shelbyville, Tennessee

John and Esther Meyer Update

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Esther placing literature in mailboxes during Together 4 Split Campaign

On January 9, 2024, we left Wisconsin again for meetings all over Florida. Then we spent some time in Mississippi. John was a guest speaker at a seminary while we were there, and he was honored to have that privilege. Afterward we attended two different missions conferences in North Carolina. We returned home for only a few days to prepare to fly out April 29 for Split, Croatia, for our tremendous Together 4 Split Campaign. We were delighted to meet and work with Missionaries Johnny and Tori Leslie and their dear church people! John was the D Team leader and driver; and he truly did a fabulous job at both. The narrow streets and limited parking there are absolutely crazy. The whole team was able to distribute 55,000 John and Romans covering the city of Split. We rejoice in the attendance of 55 people, 43 staying to receive their full Bibles, but we especially rejoice in the 2 souls saved from Satan's clasp.

The last half of May was spent back home in Oshkosh getting some very needed home projects done, but we headed back out on the road in early June. Thank you for all your prayers and partnership as we continue to cover many miles to sow the seed of the word of God.



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