

# Baptist COURIERS FOR CHRIST

*Happy  
Thanksgiving  
November 2024*



## *Is it time for Thanksgiving?*

by Joshua Stertz

***O give thanks unto the LORD, for he is good: for his mercy endureth for ever. Let the redeemed of the LORD say so....***

**Psalm 107:1, 2**

Forty-five years. To some folks, that might seem like yesterday. To others, it might seem like a lifetime. On November 6 Baptist Couriers for Christ will celebrate its 45th anniversary as a ministry. In the USA we annually set aside a day of thanksgiving to reflect on the goodness of God. He has blessed this nation with so much over its nearly 250 years of existence, and yet we often fail to really recognize him for his wonderful works. I pray that as you sit down with family and friends in a few weeks that you don't fall into the trap that many of our countrymen do: relegating the day to football and overeating. What a perfect time to

give thanks for every good and perfect gift that cometh down from above! It is with that spirit that I am inclined to take a few moments and praise the Lord for the 45 years that he has blessed this ministry. It is not our ministry, but his.

It was a young family hitting the road 45 years ago in a worn-out old car sharing their vision to place the word of God into the hands of the persecuted church behind the Iron Curtain of Eastern Europe. Today it is five families traveling the country asking people to pray, give, sponsor, and go to place the word of God into the hands of people that do not have it across Europe and beyond. We anticipate that the Lord will touch more hearts and add more folks to this ministry in the upcoming years. God receives all the glory for working on, in, and through the lives of each member of the ministry. Without his strength, provision, and protection, none of us would be able to continue in this great work.

*Continued on back page...*



Left: Don and Ken loading and weighing M-bags; Above: People flocking to Bible table in Bulgaria

# HISTORY

## Highlights

Continued from October issue...

by Ken Stertz

### ROMANIA--Sunday, October 16, 1988

Up early, for we have a busy day ahead. Georgi had us memorize his license plate number last night, and we are to watch for him to drive by the hotel at precisely 8:00 am. We are going to some Romanian village churches--Larry and Cheryl will go to Church #1 of Oradea, just across the street from the Dacia Hotel. We skip breakfast, settle up for our room, and load our car. It is cool and foggy out, and our windows are covered with condensation. Oh-oh! We can't see the license plate numbers! So we pull out onto the street and roll down the windows. Almost immediately Georgi drives by from the opposite direction and slows down at the corner, we assume to allow us time to do a U-turn and follow, but when we pull up behind him he still stares intently at the parking lot. Apparently he has no idea we are directly behind him. Ken toots the horn--nothing. Finally we drive right up next to him and wave our arms out the window. It startles him--he kills the engine, but finally gets going, and we're off to the villages. Georgi drives quickly and soon turns off the main road into the hills. At one point he suddenly takes off like a man possessed, careening off the edge of the road, passing trucks on curves. When we arrive in the village we are quickly waved into the courtyard of the pastor's home, the gates are quickly shut behind us, and grape vines are draped to conceal our car. Georgi apologizes later, telling that he noticed a red car behind us and was concerned that we were being followed.

Georgi and Gabby, the pastor, have planned for us to visit at least four churches. The people are expecting us and anticipating our visit. We feel their frustration and general disappointment when we tell them we have time for only two visits. We all pile into Georgi's car: Georgi, Rabbi, Marianna (Georgi's daughter and our translator), and Tricia and I.

Together Georgi and Gabby minister to eight village

churches, and the distance between them is much too far to walk. The churches once had many more members, but the young people are moving out of the villages to find work. We

are greeted with hugs and handshakes. The people sing--they sing heartily out of chorus books with no accompaniment. The songs have a mournful chanting quality. I bring greetings from I Peter 1. Prayer time involves every church member; we hear the word *America* often. The only Romanian word we learn today is *Pac'e*--Peace. Even *God bless you* in Romanian proves too difficult for our Anglo tongues. So when the service is over, after we share bread and tea with these foreign yet warmly familiar people, we again embrace and whisper *Pac'e*.

Off in a flurry to the next church--all this and it is yet only mid-morning! The next is a large congregation in a small building packed shoulder to shoulder with about 300 people. There is a large choir, mostly teens and young adults. They have just finished a Bible study when we arrive, and there is no break as they go right into the church service. The music is fabulous. The singing fills the building and has much less minor tone than that of the last church. There is also a full brass band--mostly young people playing, and an enthusiastic and obviously talented older director who pleads with us later, apologetically, that if ever possible could we send them some better instruments? Any kind would do, and they

are not asking a gift--they would be glad to pay. How does one smuggle a trombone or a tuba into Romania?? And how can a poverty-stricken people pay for instruments costing hundreds of dollars? In spite of their very difficult lives they still pose cheerfully for the photos, encapsulating true joy of the Lord being their strength.

*The conclusion of this article will be in the January 2024 issue of the newsletter.*





# Couriers to our Jerusalem (2.0)

by Joshua Stertz

“Thuwump, thuwump, thuwump,” gave way to “rrrraaaaccckkkkt, rrrraaacccckkkkt, rrrraaacccckkkkt,” as the owner of the Big-Block-Chevy-powered Chevy Nova drag car blipped the throttle while he drove past me. About five seconds later the breeze brought the smell of high octane race fuel to my nostrils. Each American car manufacturer that dared enter the performance race of the 1960s had its own engine and with it--a unique sound. A few minutes later a 1967 Ford Mustang GT rolled past me wearing the 57-year-old original copper paint and interior. This original pony car ended up taking home the Spectators Choice Trophy because it was such a well-preserved time capsule from the golden age of American automobiles! Vehicle after vehicle pulled into the parking lot of our home church in Oshkosh, Wisconsin, over the next couple of hours.

Why were these cars and about 70 more at our church? We were hosting our second annual car show with the purpose of using another tool to reach the unreached in our community. Through the years Couriers for Christ, by the grace of God, has taken teams of Americans across Europe to physically hand out a little over 2.6 million John and Romans. Now we are taking the opportunity to distribute them to our own community in a unique way! We worked with Tim Talbert (Bearing Precious Seed--Milford, Ohio) last year to design a cover that would tie in the restoration of a car to the restoration of a soul. Tim Carpenter (director of Bearing Precious Seed--Oshkosh) and a group of volunteers assembled these covers on John and Romans signatures. Each car that entered the show was given a grab bag including a John and Romans, along with some gospel tracts and a few goodies. Copies of John and Romans were also offered to spectators in attendance. We also set up a booth designed to minister directly to those who may be going through difficulties or desire answers to some of life's toughest questions.

There were over 300 visitors on the grounds (spectators) plus about 85 who came with the cars. We are



so thankful for the 30-plus volunteers from Wyldewood Baptist Church who worked hard throughout the day to make sure that no detail was left undone. Eric Joss (The Master's Craftmen ministry--Oshkosh) gave a clear salvation message before the trophy presentation. Our Lord knows the hearts, and it was awesome to be able to plant the seeds of the word of God in such a unique medium. The Lord has called us to share his gospel in the uttermost part, but that doesn't absolve us from reaching our Jerusalem when we can!

*“...and ye shall be witnesses unto me both in Jerusalem, and in all Judea, and in Samaria, and unto the uttermost part of the earth.” Acts 1:8*

# Is it time for Thanksgiving?

...continued from front page

Years ago we were shipping a few M-bags of literature several times a year. Since 2020, however, God has provided the funds through our partner churches to ship 27 containers filled with Bibles, New Testaments, John and Romans, tracts, and Christian literature to a variety of countries in Europe and beyond. There was a time when only a few members of the ministry would travel behind the Iron Curtain to meet with believers, search out the needs, and then devise a plan to fulfill those needs. God has since opened the doors for us to take many teams of believers into cities across Europe and beyond to work with church planting missionaries to seed those areas with scriptures.

This article could easily turn into a book if I were to begin to describe all the ways that our Lord has provided for our needs, gone before us to open doors, and given us everything that we need to keep on moving forward in these past 45 years. However, if each of us were to honestly look at our lives, we would see his hand at work daily. Let us take time this month to truly thank the Lord for his manifold blessings in our lives. We serve a God who loves us, gave his son to die for our sins, saves us when we call upon his name, sustains us daily, and provides for our every need many times in ways we cannot even explain!

*Oh that men would praise the LORD for his goodness, and for his wonderful works to the children of men! Psalm 107:8*



**WYLDEWOOD BAPTIST CHURCH**  
3030 Witzel Ave.  
Oshkosh, WI 54904-6599  
[www.wyldeewood.org](http://www.wyldeewood.org)

ADDRESS SERVICE REQUESTED

NONPROFIT ORG  
U.S. Postage  
**PAID**  
Oshkosh, WI  
Permit No. 441

## DIRECTOR

Rev. Joshua Stertz

## FOUNDER/ASSISTANT DIRECTOR

Rev. Donald Stertz

## REPRESENTATIVES

Rev. Kenneth Stertz

Rev. Larry Ingalls

Rev. John Meyer

***Opposed to all forms of compromise and deviation from God's Word.***



Please scan the code at left  
to visit our ministry web pages  
for more information.

A ministry of  Wyldeewood Baptist Church