



BAPTIST COURIERS FOR CHRIST

EST 1979

October 2026

A candle set on a hill



by Joshua Stertz

Darkness. It can take several different forms, but each one has a commonality--the absence of light! How many of you have been in an unfamiliar residence, whether a family member's home, a hotel, an Airbnb, etc., and needed to get to the bathroom in the middle of the night? The disorientation that comes from unfamiliar territory, foreign objects that you may not have in your own house or room, and that moment of exhausted stupor that wonders where you are--causes you not to know which way you need to go in the dark room. You can't turn on the light for fear of waking a loved one, and so you do the best you can, groping in the darkness while trying to find your way to the desired destination. What would be the best option to keep you from stubbing a toe, whacking your shin on a table leg, or running into a wall in the darkness? Light. Even a small light like a flashlight, cell phone light, or a candle will dispel enough darkness to cause you to see your way safely.

By the time you receive this newsletter, we will be,

Lord willing, with a team of 26 Americans working with Missionary Clifford Kiester in Bologna, Italy. We are there with the purpose of spreading as much spiritual light in this ancient city as the Lord will grant us during a two-week period. The name of the campaign is Knowledge of the Truth. It comes from two verses found in the New Testament. As I was studying the culture and history of the city of Bologna, I came across information stating it had the longest continuously running university in the world--in operation since 1088 AD! It immediately made me think of the verse, **"Ever learning, and never able to come to the knowledge of the truth."** (II Timothy 3:7) Knowledge of many things on this earth is good, but if it never brings you to the place where you realize that you are a sinner in need of a saviour; that Jesus Christ came to this world out of love for you, took your sin and died for you, rising victorious the third day over sin; and that you can have eternal life if you but repent and receive his free gift of salvation--what good is all other knowledge while suffering in eternal punishment?

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Below: Clif and Christina Kiester with Josh and Kelli

Below right: Easily accessible outdoor mailboxes

Inset: Mailboxes behind locked doors



Staff Family Update

Don and Laura Stertz

How Time Marches On

by Don Stertz

My, oh my, how time flies by! It seems like only a short time ago we were welcoming the New Year, and now three-fourths of it is already history! And what a year it has already been for Laura, myself, and the ministry of Couriers for Christ! Our Lord has blessed us with safety, which we never take for granted, as we have traveled tens of thousands of miles in the states preaching and presenting the ministry. Thus far this year we have had meetings in Wisconsin, Pennsylvania, Tennessee, Alabama, Michigan, Virginia, and Kentucky.



In March we were flown to Honduras, where I was privileged to preach a conference for Missionary Samuel Hodges. I also had the opportunity to speak to several of their Christian school classes and twice to their Bible institute class of around 40 students.

During this time the church also hosted a large ladies' conference with over 300 in attendance, where Laura was the keynote speaker. What an exciting time that was!



Norah and Michael

In May I was given the privilege of officiating Michael and Norah's wedding. Norah is the granddaughter of my oldest brother, Bob. Michael has been in charge of Wyldewood's Saturday bus visitation, which has grown substantially under his leadership.



Our team on the streets of Stuttgart



Patrick and Christelle Ndjaboue with Laura and Don

In June we boarded a Lufthansa airliner and headed to Stuttgart, Germany, with the largest team of 40 volunteers that our ministry has ever taken to a foreign mission field. We worked with Missionary Patrick Ndjaboue (pronounced Jobway) and his church folks. Over 70,000 scriptures were distributed in Stuttgart. For this tremendous outreach I rejoice, for I am reminded in II Corinthians 5:18, **"And all things are of God, who hath reconciled us to himself by Jesus Christ, and hath given to us the ministry of reconciliation."** It is our responsibility to evangelize the world.

Then in August our oldest grandson, Caleb, made us really feel old! Did I say old?! I prefer the word "vintage." It sounds a little better. Well, that is what we call aging vehicles, don't we? Caleb married a sweet, wonderful, Christian young lady named Faith Cowger, who had joined us on a CFC trip to Brazil. **"And the Lord God said, It is not good that the man should be alone: I will make him an help meet for him."** (Genesis 2:18) We welcomed Faith into our extended family and know that our Lord is going to greatly use this couple for his glory!



Josh with son Caleb and Faith during Brazil Campaign

Then we were blessed with another pleasant surprise when our oldest granddaughter, Claudia, announced her engagement. A couple of years ago when Claudia was still traveling with Josh and the family, they had a meeting at Rose Park Baptist Church located in Holland, Michigan. Rose Park is a Seedline church, and they were assembling John and Romans. Josh decided that the family would stay a few days and help with the project. During this time Claudia met Devon, a stable Christian man, and things blossomed from there.

In just a few days we will be boarding another airliner and will be heading to Bologna, Italy. Our team of 26 will be working with Missionaries Clifford and Christina



Devon, Claudia, Laura, and Don during Hope for the Valley Campaign in Brazil



Don and Laura on their 52nd wedding anniversary

Keister. Please pray with us that many precious Italian souls will be reached with the gospel. Thank you so very much for your prayers. Laura and I are doing well. Oh, there are the regular dentist, doctor, and chiropractic appointments that we have; however, our wonderful Lord has been so gracious to us, giving us the health and privilege of serving him. We celebrated our 52nd wedding anniversary on July 5. Thank you, our faithful prayer warriors and financial supporters, for allowing us to partner together in getting the word of God to Europe and beyond! Romans 12:1, **"...that ye present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable unto God, which is your reasonable service."**

A candle set on a hill

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This is our second scripture distribution campaign in Italy, and while it is a beautiful, historical, and advanced country, it is spiritually dark. It has been held in the clutches of religion for many years that is akin to handing someone in darkness a flashlight with no battery or a candle with no match. Religion without the salvation of the Lord Jesus Christ is powerless to save one single soul! We will mobilize our team daily to go house to house, apartment to apartment, and neighborhood to neighborhood distributing booklets containing the New Testament books of John and Romans, including the plan of salvation. It is our desire that the Lord would use his word to enlighten the eyes of those in spiritual darkness to the ONLY PATH to eternal life in heaven found through Jesus Christ. While studying, I came across these verses, one of which is our campaign verse, **"For this is good and acceptable in the sight of God our Saviour; Who will have all men to be saved, and to come unto the knowledge of the truth. For there is one God, and one mediator**

between God and men, the man Christ Jesus; Who gave himself a ransom for all, to be testified in due time." (I Timothy 2:3-6) I love the fact that God is not willing that any person should stay in the darkness of his own sin, but that he wants all men to walk in the light of his salvation and love.

Please pray for our team to have unity, safety, and health as we work together for the furtherance of the gospel. Please pray that we could be an encouragement to the Kiester family and their church in Bologna. Finally, please pray for open doors, hands, hearts, and minds of the Italians to the truth of eternal life found only in Jesus. It is our earnest desire that this brief time of work in Bologna would glorify our Lord and reap fruit that remains. **"We have also a more sure word of prophecy; whereunto ye do well that ye take heed, as unto a light that shineth in a dark place, until the day dawn, and the day star arise in your hearts:"** (II Peter 1:19)



One of the tall apartments in Bologna containing many precious souls



Enjoying mid-week service while on survey trip last April



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