

The Seeker

"Seeking the Souls of Men and Pointing Them to Christ"

April/May 2020

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Dear Brethren,

Greetings to you all in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ. The Covid-19 virus has not only slowed down things here in the USA but all over the world. Many nations in Africa are currently under lockdown. Public schools are closed and our preacher schools have been closed. People have been ordered to stay at home but many nations in Africa that have ordered people to stay at home are not offering any food to their citizens. Because of this there is much hunger in many nations. How are the people to eat if they are told to stay at home and not work and the government will not help them with food? Many African nations have ordered churches not to meet and some in rural areas have continued to meet on Sundays for one hour only for worship. I received a report this week that in one rural area a small group of Christians were meeting at the church building and the local police came in with clubs and began to beat the people and disbursed them. The preacher who reported this to me said this was not the official policy of the President of that nation but it was the decision of the local police. At the time this beating occurred there were 3 known cases of the virus in that nation.



The new church building in Lilongwe is nearing completion.

The building project for the new church building in Lilongwe, Malawi continues to go forward. At this point the government there is allowing building projects. Our thanks to those who have helped with this new church building.

In Bomet, Kenya we have purchased 2.96526 acres of land in a good location to build a new preacher school building there. We hope to be able to raise the funds to build this building this year. The cost should be around \$70,000.00 to build a building that will house a dorm, library, class room, kitchen-cafeteria, bathrooms and office.

The staff house project at Solwezi, Zambia is moving slowly due to government shutdowns. We have the plans for the house drawn up and the government must approve the plans before the project can start. We already have a new school building on this location and are trying to build a small 2 bed room house so that one of the teachers at the school can live at the school with the students.

Our food relief program continues to help many hungry brethren in Africa due to the drought. In the month of April we wired \$5,400.00 to several different locations in Kenya, Malawi and Zambia. We mentioned in our last newsletter that \$45.00 will feed a family of 5 for 30 days. Our thanks to churches and individuals who have sent funds to help our brethren in Africa.

Recently we have heard of 2 baptisms in Malawi and one BCC student in Kenya who was from the Congo that was baptized.

Our thanks also to the congregations that have sent part of their Comer Trust Fund to IBTM. I believe so far we have received funds from 3 congregations who wanted to use part of their funds for mission work. I hope we will hear from other congregations that will help us build church buildings, staff houses at preacher schools, and new preacher schools in Africa. We need your help with these projects.



Food is desperately needed by many of our brethren overseas right now.

International Bible Teaching Ministries
C/o Rock Valley Church of Christ
PO Box 49494
Cookeville, TN 38506-0494

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On a personal note Carolyn and I want to thank many of you for the calls, cards, prayers, and financial help given for our daughter Tracy who lost her house, car and just about everything she owned due to the tornado back in March. Her injuries are just about healed and she has now gone back to work.

Thanks brethren for your support and for your prayers for our mission work efforts. Please help us as you can to take the precious Gospel of Christ "*into all the world*".

In Christ,

Ronald D. Gilbert, Director of **IBTM**

Things You Helped to Accomplish



Baptisms	15,870
Restorations	11,570
Congregations Established	378
Schools of Preaching Begun	7
BCC Students	49,592
ICOTB Students	498
Preachers Graduated	492

Office News

This global pandemic is causing havoc in so many ways, such as delaying the shipment of the container Ronald Gilbert and many others have worked so hard to fill. The destination port is currently closed so the container has to go into storage until the port reopens.

But another issue had not occurred to me

until a few weeks ago. That's when one of our online teachers notified me that her local post office had refused a package she wanted to mail to a foreign student. (Many of our teachers like to send a small gift to graduating students – not required, of course, but a very sweet idea.) Since the mail truck still passes my house daily it had not occurred to me that mail in other countries might be a completely different story. A quick search online disclosed a list of 22 nations that had either shut down their mail service completely or our US Post Office had no way of getting the mail to them. Today that list of nations numbers 111. (Yesterday it was at 112, but Israel just opened back.) This certainly puts a kink in our postal BCC program – but there are still more than 80 nations that are mailable right now.

Please pray that the gospel can reach those who need it so badly – during the pandemic and beyond..

In Christ,

Linda Hill

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Websites:

www.IBTMinistries.org ▪ www.ICOTB.org

Contacts:

RDG@IBTMministries.org ▪ INFO@IBTMministries.org

ICOTB@IBTMministries.org

Jimmie B. Hill Memorial Library

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