



## God Bless Us Everyone!



If you have heard the above statement, then you probably know it is from the book *"A Christmas Carol"* by Charles Dickens. Written in 1843, this book is a fictional story that describes the transformation of Ebenezer Scrooge, a London businessman who cared little for Christmas and the plight of other people. After the death of his business partner, Jacob Marley, he was visited by the ghost of Jacob followed by 3 ghosts of Christmas past, present, and future. This was an attempt by Jacob Marley to change Scrooge's heart and avoid the fate of eternal chains that he suffered.

Charles Dickens wrote this story to influence others in the culture he lived in. The industrial revolution was just beginning that brought many people to the big cities for work. As a result, children became laborers with little protection and those unable to find work were suffering extreme poverty and homelessness. He wanted people to have compassion for those in these difficult circumstances and to see Christmas as a time that can transform a person's heart from indifference to caring for others less fortunate.

Thus, "A Christmas Carol" is a story about transformation. Throughout this story Dickens links Biblical references to Christ, who came to earth to transform our hearts so that we might love others as He loved us. When we become self-focused and greedy for money like Scrooge, we fail to see the needs of others and become bitter, lonely, and joyless people. Dickens also uses crippled, innocent, little Tiny Tim to represent the childlike faith that is required to have joy and peace in our lives when we know the baby Jesus as our Savior.

So, when we read the book or watch one of the many movies made about this story at Christmas, I urge all of us to see it through spiritual eyes as I believe Dickens did. If we do, we too may sense the need for a spiritual transformation and a childlike faith in our own hearts as well.

***"Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation; the old has gone, the new has come!"***  
**(2 Corinthians 5:17)**

I hope you all had a very Merry Christmas and may "God bless us, every one!"

## Egypt Trip Report



Barry just returned from a training last week in **Cairo, Egypt** for MELTI, the Middle East Leadership Training Institute. He was there to train two groups of pastors and leaders along with **Pastor Hanna Karam** from **Lebanon**. The first group were 20 pastors and leaders from various nations including **Egypt, Nigeria, Kenya, South Africa, Tanzania, Qatar, Pakistan, the Ukraine,** and the **USA**. They taught them our Management for Church Leaders training in English. The second group were 40 pastors and leaders from Egypt. The second training was in Arabic and was our Management for Church Leaders II training. The photo above is of the combined groups. Numerous requests for our training material in other languages were received and several of them have indicated that they will train others with it. We thank God for this training and their willingness to go and train others what we have now taught them!

## MCL #2 Training Recording Started

We began the recording of our **Management for Church Leaders II™** training on video in January. Like our MCL training videos, there will be a course overview video and a video for each of the 12 chapters in the training. We have already shot the course overview and the first 6 chapter videos. The other recordings will be shot over the next two months. The final videos are expected to be completed and available for posting on our website by the end of June.



Once completed, we will look to record our Discipleship for Church Leaders™ training in the second half of this year. Once that is completed, all 3 of our training courses will then be available to take online through our website for free.

## Global Training Summary

The past three months have seen a strong level of training of pastors and church leaders by our global trainer network. Here are the summaries for each of the past 3 months:

In December our global trainers conducted 13 training conferences by 10 different trainers in the



5 nations of **India, Nepal, Kenya, Uganda,** and the **DRC**. A total of 642 pastors and church leaders were trained. The photo at left is from a training in **Nakuru, Kenya** by **Pastor Silas Omolo** who is from Nairobi. Silas is one of our newer MCL Trainers. Additionally, we added 2 new global trainers in December. They are **Mary Otiotio** from **London, England** and **Isaiah Magaya** from **Harare, Zimbabwe**. Isaiah is our very first MCL Trainer in Zimbabwe! The annual total for the number of pastors and church leaders our global network trained in 2023 was **7,138!!**

The new year began with 13 training conferences being scheduled in January in the 9 nations of **India, Tanzania, Uganda, Burundi, Cameroon, Malaysia, Bangladesh, Indonesia** and the **Philippines**. A total of 378 pastors and church leaders were trained. The photo at right is from a training in **Assam, India** by **Dr. Bankit Marpna**. So, we are off to a great start in 2024!

In February, our global trainers conducted 14 training conferences. Twelve of them have been completed where they have trained a total of 582 pastors and church leaders in the nations of **Botswana, Kenya, Uganda, Ghana, the DRC, India,** and **Nepal**. The training in Botswana was the first training by one of our newest MCL Trainers, **Andrews Sepako** from **Gaborone**. The other two conferences are taking place this week. The photo above is from the training in **Njoro, Kenya** by **Pastor Gordon Onyango**. Gordon has been a global trainer for our ministry since 2008!



## Our 2023 Accomplishments

2023 was another fruitful year of accomplishment for this ministry. Not only were we able to record our Management for Church Leaders training on video, but we also wrote self-training versions of our MCL #2 and DCL training courses and added 5 new translations of our various training manuals. Additionally, we added 10 new MCL Trainers to our global trainer network (**Malawi, Tanzania, Philippines, Kenya, Botswana, Zimbabwe, Taiwan, England**, and 2 in **India**), reached 6 new nations with our training (**Eswatini, USA, Italy, Belgium, France, and Venezuela**), and trained 8,099 pastors and church leaders. These all exceeded our goals for the year!

We also launched our first ever Ministry Prayer Guide to assist our ministry prayer team, supporters, and trainers on how to pray for this ministry in 2024 (*see article on page 4*). We praise God for all of His accomplishments through all of us!

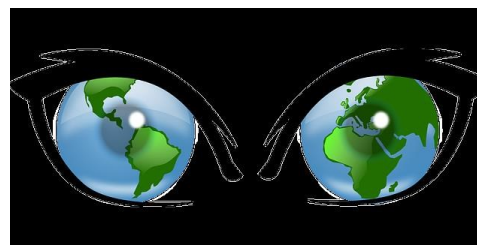
## A New USA Training Opportunity

*"Therefore, as we have opportunity, let us do good to all people, especially to those who belong to the family of believers."  
Galatians 6:10*

Barry was contacted by **Ben Gonzalez**, one of the **Mission Strategists** for the **Lutheran Church Missouri Synod (LCMS) Texas District**. The President of the Texas District is Pastor Mike Newman, Barry & Kim's former pastor from their church in Palatine, IL back in 1993-94. He referred Ben to Barry. Ben is interested in our Management for Church Leaders training for their minority churches located in rural areas of Texas. These churches generally have bi-vocational pastors and limited time and resources for travel and training.

After reviewing our training with his leaders, Ben is interested in having Barry come and train them on the leadership and management principles from the Bible that we teach. They are going to take a step-by-step approach to the training to see how best to implement it in their context. Barry will likely be going to Texas in a few months to help with the initial launch of the training. This would be Barry's first MCL training in the United States! Please pray for God's wisdom and provision in this new endeavor.

## A New Vision



*"Many are the plans in a man's heart, but it is the Lord's purpose that prevails."  
Proverbs 19:21*

After attending a global pastoral trainer's conference in Panama last November, the Lord revealed to Barry that we have barely scratched the surface of the training needed for pastors and church leaders around the globe. According to a study by Gordon Conwell Theological Seminary's Center for Global Christianity, about 80% of the world's pastors are undertrained. That's about 1 million pastors! I believe that the Lord is calling us to do more to reduce this shortage.

Through 2023, this ministry has trained a total of 76,048 pastors and leaders, and we are amazed at what God has done through us over the past 23 years. But the need continues for better trained pastors and church leaders to grow the Church and God's kingdom. After much prayer and discussion with our board of directors, we have initiated a new vision to have trained 150,000 pastors and church leaders by the year 2030! That's accomplishing in the next 7 years what took us 23 years to achieve. It's a big goal, but we know that *"with God all things are possible"* (**Matthew 19:26**)!

We just celebrated our 23rd ministry anniversary on January 22nd and have begun planning for how we will achieve this new vision in the coming months. This will incorporate our own global trainers as well as collaboration with our ministry partners and Bible Schools around the world.

Please pray for God's wisdom and provision to meet this challenge and His calling on our ministry. We know that God's work done in God's way will always have God's supply!

To God alone be the glory!!

## Our 2024 Schedule

<u>Dates</u>	<u>Location</u>	<u>Purpose/Host</u>
Feb 18-26	Cairo, Egypt	MCL & MCL #2 training— <i>MELTI</i>
May or June	Austin, TX	MCL training—LCMS-TX District
June	Istanbul, Turkey	MCL Training— <i>MELTI</i>
TBD	Madagascar	MCL Training— <i>Leadership International</i>
Nov 2	Cumming, GA	Annual FLM Board of Directors Meeting

### Prayer Requests



- God's healing for **Dr. Diego Cruz**, our MCL Trainer in **Guatemala**, from heart issues.
- God's healing for **Gideon Nair**, our MCL Trainer in **India**, from heart and blood pressure issues.
- Thankfulness to God for his protection for **Pastor Suveni Rubaduka**, our MCL Trainer

in the **DRC**, from a home invasion and armed robbery.

- God's guidance for **Jonatan Chavez** in **Mexico** and his 2024 ministry plans including a new church plant.
- God's healing for **Viviana Rosales**, wife of **Pastor Jose Rosales** from **Argentina**, from back & disc problems.
- God's wisdom, guidance, and provision for our new vision to train 150,000 pastors and leaders by 2030.
- Thankfulness to God for Barry's safe travel and fruitful training in **Cairo, Egypt** February 18-26th.
- Thankfulness to God for His continuous financial provision for this ministry!

### Other News



- **David Quispirroca**, our MCL Trainer in **Peru**, will begin teaching our **MCL in Spanish** via Zoom in March. He plans to record it and hopes to provide this training in Spanish on video for future distribution.
- For those of you who are Thrivent members, remember to direct your **1st quarter Choice Dollars** by March 31st. As always, we would be blessed if you would direct them to this ministry.
- Plans are being made for Barry to go to **Istanbul, Turkey** in June to train pastors & church leaders who are Syrian refugees.
- We will continue the recording of our **MCL #2** training on video in March and April.
- We are currently developing translations of our MCL into **Khasi** and **Tamil** for use in **India**.
- We now have an **Arabic** translation of our **MCL #2** training, which was used in Egypt recently.
- Barry is working on a **succession plan** for our ministry this year for when he decides to step down from leading it.

### New Ministry Prayer Guide!

We have developed a new Ministry Prayer Guide for 2024. This prayer guide will help you to pray for our ministry and our global trainers and partners. If you would like a copy, please sign up for our ministry prayer team on our website on our Support Us page. A copy will then be emailed to you.



Ministry Prayer Guide  
2024

*Thank you for your prayers & support!*

*Barry & Kim*

**FaithLife Ministries**  
**6170 Crescent Landing Dr.**  
**Cumming, GA 30028**  
**Phone: 770-492-4903**  
**Email: BarryVoss@comcast.net**  
**www.faithlifeministries.net**