

BCMWorld

An Inside Look at BCM Global Ministries



BCM

BIBLE CENTERED
MINISTRIES
INTERNATIONAL



Building God's Kingdom in Sri Lanka and Beyond



Sri Lanka flag-Colombo hotel

MAN'S ULTIMATUM BECOMES GOD'S OPPORTUNITY IN SRI LANKA

By: Jeanette Windle with Rev. Susiri Liyanage

"The choice is simple," a board member reiterated. "If you will take this on, we will give you all our support. If not, we will dissolve as an organization, and BCM ministry in Sri Lanka will be closed down. Perhaps forever"

The choice may have been simple for Rev. Susiri Liyanage. The dilemma was not! Susiri was already pastoring a thriving church plant. He was involved in **active evangelism in some of Sri Lanka's poorest rural zones. He served as a leader in Sri Lanka's association of evangelical churches.** How could he possibly find **time to take on leadership of BCM International's ministry in Sri Lanka?**

Rev. Susiri Liyanage had first come into contact with BCM in 1990 when he was conducting an advance leadership seminar for key leaders in Sri Lanka. The late Dr. Vararuchi Dalavai, then BCM VP of International Ministries (**see link:** <http://www.bcmintl.org/well-done-good-faithful-servant/>) approached **Rev. Susiri about serving on a board of BCM's struggling work in Sri Lanka. The time investment would be minimal, just occasional board meetings and the oversight of BCM's national coordinator and volunteers working to start Bible clubs in different areas in Sri Lanka.**

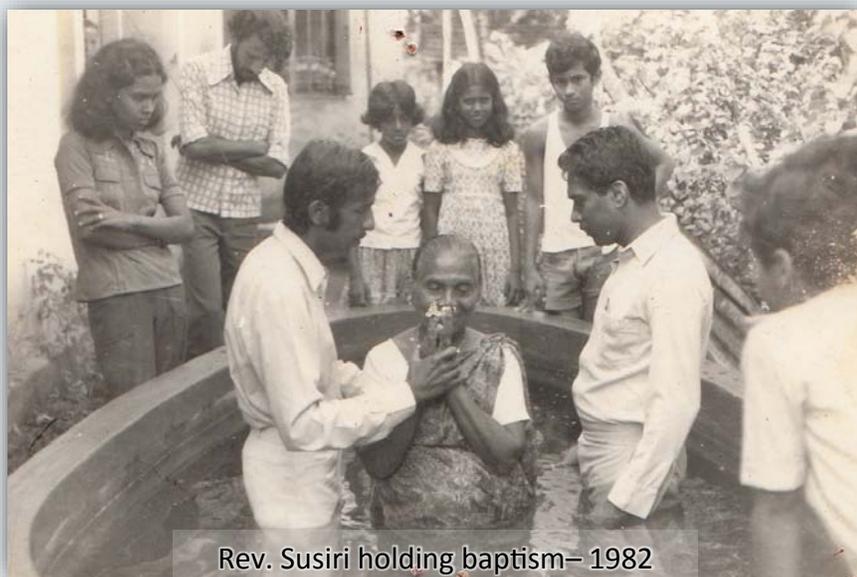
Susiri in turn had been excited to hear of thousands of churches planted and hundreds of thousands of children reached with the Gospel through BCM's ministry across India and other parts of Asia. Susiri



Rev. Susiri preaching

agreed to join several other Sri Lankan Christian ministry leaders to form a BCM Lanka board.

But only three months later, the national coordinator announced that his family was moving to England. The remaining volunteers were not experienced enough to take over the ministry. Now other board members were asking Susiri to salvage the situation. Susiri **didn't want to see this ministry closed. Nor** did he want to disappoint overseas donors **who'd already invested substantially in this** ministry. But could he take on another responsibility of this magnitude?



Rev. Susiri holding baptism— 1982

This was not the first time Susiri Liyanage had faced an ultimatum. He'd grown up in a prosperous Buddhist home in the southern city of Galle. By age 16, he was searching something to fill a spiritual vacuum. Buddhism and Hinduism both professed to be peaceful religions. Yet his country was being ripped apart by infighting among extremist religious groups.

Susiri attended numerous temples, searching for answers. The one religion he had no interest in exploring was Christianity. To him, this was the religion of foreign conquerors. Then one day a friend invited him to an evangelistic campaign being held in the city hall. He declined angrily, but loitered outside the city hall while friends went in. From the doorway, he heard a young Sri Lankan give his testimony of faith in Jesus Christ.

"The foreigners must be paying him to say those things," Susiri told himself. **"This Jesus couldn't even save himself. How can he be God?"**

But on the third night of the campaign, Susiri found himself again listening from the doorway. At last he slipped inside and took a seat near the door. The message being preached seemed aimed directly at his own questions and doubts.

"How can they possibly know what is in my heart?" Susiri asked himself. **At the end of the service, an** usher approached.

"I can see something is happening in you," he told Susiri. **"Come, give your heart to Jesus."**

Susiri could not be so easily persuaded. Kneeling, he directed a prayer heavenward. "Jesus, I want you to show me you are a living God. If you show me, I will follow you."

As Susiri got to his feet again, a lightness of joy and peace filled his heart. He knew God had answered his prayer. From that moment he committed himself to following Jesus Christ as his Savior.

But carrying out his new commitment didn't prove easy. When his school authorities learned Susiri had converted to Christianity, he was expelled. Furious, his family demanded he renounce his new faith. The pressure became so great he ran away, making his way from Colombo to Tamil territory in the far north. There he encountered the Finnish captain of a small ship and his two sons. The three men were also Christian missionaries. Taking the 16-year-old under their wing, they gave him work on the ship and began to disciple him in his Christian faith. Susiri was happy in his new-found sanctuary—until a visitor arrived.



Early Church Service

The visitor was Susiri's older brother. He gave Susiri an ultimatum. Return home, or he'd file charges against the Finnish captain for harboring a minor. Not wanting to cause more trouble for his kindly host, Susiri agreed to return home. But once back in Colombo, Susiri was again pressured to renounce his new faith.

"If you attend church," his brother told Susiri, "I will kill the pastor."

Leaving home again, Susiri took a job on a farm. The farm administrator purported to be a Christian. Susiri was happy he'd be free to practice his faith. He was less happy once he received his first work assignment—cleaning out

an enclosure containing years of built-up pig manure. He'd expected to be taught agricultural administration, not assigned filthy manual labor suitable only for the lowliest peasants! Was this how one Christian should treat another?

Susiri decided he'd do the job and do it well. But once finished, he was going to quit. When the enclosure was clean, Susiri reported back to his employer. The man expressed satisfaction. Then to Susiri's surprise, he began the expected training. Only later did he explain that the first chore had been a test to see whether Susiri was willing to get his hands dirty and work hard.

Over the next years, Susiri learned the agricultural trade, working his way up to manager of a large livestock enterprise. By then he was also speaking in churches, working in children's outreach, and sharing his faith in Jesus Christ with anyone willing to hear. Among those with whom Susiri shared his faith was a young postal worker named Swarna. She too had grown up in a staunch Buddhist home. When Swarna accepted Christ as Savior, Susiri introduced her to a local church.

"My intention was not to find a wife," Susiri smiles now. "Only to see her become a Christian."

But it wasn't long before Susiri and Swarna recognized their growing love for each other. They were married when both were 23 years old. By this time Susiri was not only deeply involved in church ministry, but the young couple had begun an outreach to children in one of Colombo's poorest slum areas, a district named Wattala. Susiri recognized he needed to make a decision—either continue a business career or commit himself full-time to ministry. As Susiri and Swarna prayed for guidance, both agreed that God was calling them to leave their jobs for full-time ministry.



Susiri and Swarna Photo



Wattala Church building

A local Christian family sponsored the young couple to attend Southern Asia Bible College in Bangalore, India. After graduation, the Liyanages returned to Sri Lanka. By then God had given them a daughter. Settling into the slum area **where they'd ministered before, they began an outreach to the poorest of the poor.** Soon more than 200 neighborhood children were attending their Sunday School.

"They were uneducated, dirty, with runny noses," Susiri remembers. "We shared the Gospel. But we also taught them to wash, comb their hair, speak respectfully to their parents. We helped them go to school."

As parents saw change in their children, they too began to attend. Within a few years, a church was well established. Many of those children are now grown, raising Christian children of their own.

By now the Liyanages had two children—their daughter and a younger son. As the Colombo ministry became well established, Susiri and Swarna felt burdened for areas outside the city where there was no Gospel witness. Traveling by bicycle or public transport, Susiri began evangelistic outreach across a wide area. When one family came to Christ, they opened their home to start a church, removing all their furniture on Sundays so the space could be used for services. By the time Susiri met Dr. Dalavai in Singapore, he was well-known in Christian leadership across Sri Lanka.

And now here was one more unexpected challenge. After praying, Susiri returned to the board with an **answer. "I will take on leadership of BCM in Sri Lanka until someone else can be found to take my place."**

See the next issue of BCM World for Part Two of how one simple choice became the beginning of a BCM church planting movement across Sri Lanka. Today BCM Lanka has planted nine core churches and 15 daughter churches. An urgent need is finances. BCM missionary pastors currently receive less than \$100USD monthly and lack of funds limits expanding personnel.

A field goal for BCM Lanka is to raise \$3000 in monthly support (less than the average single family income in North America), which will supply basic living expenses for current BCM missionary pastors and the national director as well as ministry expenses of evangelistic outreach. If you are interested in taking on part of this on-going support or making a one-time donation, follow the link below.

[BCM Sri Lanka Pastors](#)



Preaching Point-Sri Lanka



PASSING THE BATON

By: Esther Zimmerman

In mid-October, 2014, twenty-seven children's ministry leaders from eleven nations converged on Sanctuary House in Pamunugama, Sri Lanka, for Mobilise Asia 2014, a week of visioning, equipping and encouragement for key country leadership involved in reaching children for Christ in their birth nations. Participating faculty included BCM Philippines director Gerlyn DeJesus, BCM India trainers Mohan Paul and Yesurajan Manuel, BCM South Africa's Children's Ministry Coordinator Pat Govender, BCM Philippines missionary Fay Escoton, and Esther Zimmerman, BCM's Director of International Children's Ministry.

As with two earlier Mobilise events in Ireland (October 2013) and Ukraine (March 2014), the goal of this event was to grow BCM's ministry to children around the world through multiplication and partnership. Specifically, the participation of these twenty-seven key leaders would enlarge BCM's team of global trainers available to lead *Train the Trainer (TTT)* workshops and coordinate the development of *In Step with the Master Teacher (ISMT)* training throughout Asia and Africa.



ISMT Exercise

So what exactly is *TTT* and *ISMT*? *In Step with the Master Teacher* is BCM's children's ministry leadership training curriculum, a 22-hour interactive program that prepares leaders to make disciples like Jesus did by 1) modeling God's truth, 2) building relationships, and 3) teaching for response. *Train The Trainer* prepares regional children's ministry leaders to head up their own ISMT training programs, thereby multiplying many times over the effective reach of a single global trainer in raising up well-equipped Sunday school teachers and children's ministry leaders throughout their birth regions.

As leadership from India, Nepal, Myanmar, Bangladesh, Indonesia, Philippines, Malawi, South Africa, USA, East Asia, and Sri Lanka itself gathered at Sanctuary House, delegates were well aware of many things that could drive the group apart—culture, language, politics, age, ministry background, and experience. Instead, God gave the group a wonderful spirit of unity. One ISMT Lead Trainer from Ireland, who'd committed to covering the event in prayer, commented after watching the week unfold via Facebook, *"I was praying in the beginning, but then I just started thanking!"*

God truly did abundantly above all one could ask or imagine as He knit twenty-seven hearts together with a common vision. Each day brought new learning experiences as delegates worked through the training materials, worshipped, imagined and planned together. BCM Sri Lanka host Meashed Liyanage made sure there was also time to play. Singing around a campfire, exploring a nearby bird sanctuary by boat, and jumping for joy beside the Indian Ocean were among the week's highlights.

Throughout each aspect of Mobilise Asia 2014, the goal was to *'pass the baton'*—to share a vision for children and to equip more leaders until every child in every community all around the world has the opportunity to know, love and obey God. Following the event, leaders who participated shared how God had worked through their time together:

South Africa: *"Meeting each one of the delegates was just so encouraging and gave me a surge of passion and love for children and to see more children come to know Jesus."*



Esther Z teaching Mobilise 14



Mobilize Campfire Shot



Faculty Gerlyn de Jesus conducts exercise

Indonesia: *“We are grateful to do the ministry with BCM, because we have something supporting us to do more, help more, walk further without doubt.”*

Philippines: *“I’m so joyful that we’re working all over the world as one team. Your [BCM] passionate heart for the children is a big challenge and inspiration for us to keep reaching the kids as well as training others.”*

Sri Lanka: *“We can make a difference in our world with leaders who are passionate and true to the cause. We can inspire and give hope to the lost through love and compassion.”*

As the event finished and delegates flew back to their own countries, BCM South Africa faculty member Pat Govender offered a follow-up challenge to each participant: *“My encouragement to each person is that we must not forget what we learned and how God ministered to us during our time there. We must not let it fade away into the busyness of our daily lives and ministry, but meditate on what we’ve learned, apply it and allow God to make us real and radical. We must be real in this ministry if we want to bless God’s heart. His heart aches for the children. And if we are real, we’re going to be radical. We cannot be radical if we are not real. Every single child needs Jesus, and we must let the children come to Him using the tools we have to train more trainers and workers.”*

Pray for these twenty-seven delegates as they are now back home that each would continue to be both radical and real as they seek to multiply ministry to their countries’ children. Already, Pat’s challenge and the vision of Mobilise Asia 2014 is seeing fruit. Within a month of the event, in virtually every nation represented, new ISMT and other children’s leadership training events had already been scheduled. God’s heart for this planet’s 2.2 billion children is being shared ever increasingly across Asia and Africa.

The baton has been passed.



A NEW HOME FOR MYANMAR'S LOST CHILDREN

By: Jeanette Windle with Jacob and Sandar Mung

By his eighth birthday, Sai Ja Aung had lost everything that means security to a child. Sai Ja Aung was Kachin, one of many tribal minorities in Myanmar (once called Burma) involved in what has been listed as the planet's longest civil war, lasting since that nation's declaration of independence from British rule in 1948. The Kachin in the Himalayan foothills of northern Myanmar had been fighting for autonomy since 1961. An uneasy truce brokered in 1994 with Myanmar's Burmese military regime had lasted for seventeen years before fighting broke out again in 2011.

Among the casualties were Sai Ja Aung's mother and father. Homeless, he lived in constant fear of army raids, flying bullets, bombs. By the time someone brought him to the BCM children's home in Insein, a sector of Yangon, Myanmar's largest city, he could not even remember what adequate food or shelter felt like.

Three years later, that has all changed. At Bethel Children's Home, Sai Ja Aung no longer worries someone will snatch him away from his new home. Good nutrition has healed his body, and he is catching up educationally, now attending 6th grade at a local school. Even better, he has been introduced to the love of Jesus and a new family made up of brothers and sisters in Christ.



Dr. Jacob & Sandar Mung



Sandar with children group shot

BCM Myanmar missionaries Dr. Jacob and Sandar Mung have long felt a burden for Myanmar's countless orphan and homeless children. A second generation Christian, Dr. Mung not only serves as a pastor and evangelist, but one of Myanmar's few Christian publishers. It was a piece of literature he published that led his wife Sandar to Christ (see ["It All Started With A Book"](#), [BCM World Fall 2009](#)). Several years later, Jacob and Sandar were married. They have one son, born in 2004.

The couple joined BCM as missionaries in 2009. In 2010, Dr. Mung was appointed national director of BCM Myanmar. Today the BCM Myanmar team includes ten missionary church planters, leadership training, youth ministries, and children's outreaches in 14 locations that reach 600-700 children with the Gospel each week. As a Christian publisher, Dr. Mung has also been responsible for the publication of BCM's *Footsteps of Faith* children's curriculum in Burmese.

Sandar Mung's own training was in the field of dentistry. For 21 years, she'd enjoyed a successful career in government health programs as a dental surgeon and consultant. Her salary permitted both Jacob and Sandar to serve in ministry in a tent-making capacity. Sandar was involved both in the central church Jacob pastored and in children's outreaches. But her heart was burdened to do more, especially for the lost children she witnessed everywhere, many of them orphaned by war or left homeless due to extreme poverty. One person could not help them all, but even a few was a start.

In 2009, Sandar resigned from her job to dedicate herself to full-time ministry. Her leading priority was the founding of a children's home. Within the first year, Bethel Children's Home had 12 children. This has now grown to 49 children—28 boys and 21 girls—ranging in age from 8-19 years old.



Sandar with children group shot



Children in Dormitory Room



Doing homework



Bethel Dormitory Room



Three Bethel boys heading to school



Orphanage child in dorm room

The children are currently housed on the same campus as the central church Dr. Mung also pastors, a total area of only about 10,000 square feet. Sharing the campus is a small Bible Institute. The children's living quarters are simple dormitory rooms with multiple bunk-beds. A large multi-purpose room serves as dining hall, study room, and for other activities. Helping Sandar in the orphanage is one full-time assistant and six more part-time volunteers.

The children attend local schools for half of each day. Back at the orphanage, each has daily chores and homework. But there is plenty of fun as well, whether kicking a soccer ball around the courtyard or singing choruses and listening to Bible stories in the chapel.

The children themselves represent a wide variety of ethnicities and religious backgrounds. Jacob explains, "We do not pressure the children to become Christian. But we do share the love of Christ with them. And many have come to accept Jesus as Savior."

Among such is a boy named Nay Sann Oo. From a conflict zone in western Myanmar, Nay Sann Oo was one more homeless orphan when he was given opportunity to come to the children's home in Yangon in order to receive his secondary education. From a Buddhist background, he accepted Christ as Savior his first year in the orphanage. After graduating from high school, he enrolled in a local Bible college. Upon graduation, he has committed himself to return to his home village, where there are no other Christians, to start a church there.

He is not alone. To date, three of the orphans have gone on to Bible college after graduating from high school. Others are in university, studying for a variety of professional careers.

Dr. Mung shares, “Our vision is see future Christian leaders raised up through this children’s home. Not necessarily to go to Bible college or in full-time ministry. They may choose to become an engineer or a nurse. But in whatever capacity, our aspiration is that these children will grow up to lead lives that will testify of Jesus Christ as their Savior.”

Caring for so many children has not been easy. Each month is a stretch of faith to provide adequate nutrition, clothing, school and medical supplies, as well as tuition so that children can continue attending school. With the ongoing civil war, Bethel receives far more applications than they have resources to accept. An urgent goal is to expand both facilities and personnel to accept more children. The ministry’s long-term vision is for the children’s home to have its own campus and housing.

Dr. Jacob and Sandar Mung ask for prayer—not just for the children’s financial needs, health and education, but above all for their spiritual life and growth. It is their prayer that these children will not only encounter the love of Jesus Christ through the caring staff and teachers at Bethel Children’s Home, but that they in turn will become vessels of God’s love and the Gospel of Jesus Christ as they grow up and go forth across the nation of Myanmar.

To cover boarding and schooling for one child is approximately \$40USD a month. A current Christmas project is to supply each child with a small cabinet or cupboard in which they can keep personal belongings. If you would be interested in becoming a prayer partner, sponsoring one or more children, or giving a one-time donation, contact BCM International at: Phone: 717-560-9601 Email: giving@bcmintl.org or follow this link. [Myanmar Christmas Project](#)



Group Shot outside BCM children's home



Fieldtrip with some GS children

GOOD SAMARITANS STILL NEEDED IN THE UKRAINE'S WAR ZONES

By: Lisa Biegert

Ongoing conflict between Russia and the eastern European country of Ukraine has filled headlines around **the world since Russia's takeover of Crimea in February, 2014**. As always, those most affected by war are the smallest of citizens. BCM missionary Tymofiy Anokhin (Tima) and his wife, Natasha, work with an orphanage in the Ukrainian city of Mariupol. In the midst of this deadly, no-end-in-sight conflict, they are seeking to maintain normalcy and safety for the children in their care.

Tima came to know the Lord in 1998 after a serious car accident left him reconsidering **eternity without God**. Tima's parents Viktor and Nadya Anokhin have been BCM Ukraine missionaries working in deaf ministries, camps and Bible clubs since Tima's childhood. But though he'd grown up helping his parents in



Tima & Natasha Anokhin family

camping ministries, it wasn't until the car accident that he accepted Christ for himself. It wasn't long afterwards when he began to work with homeless children and orphans. He explains, **"At that time [1998] we had more than 300,000 orphans and homeless children just in the capital city of Kiev!"**



Good Samaritan, Mariupol

In the year 2006, Tima met Natasha. From the city of Mariupol, Natasha had been kicked out of her home by her mother when she was only eleven years old. She survived on the streets of Mariupol for over a year before some Christian volunteers introduced her to Jesus Christ—and to an orphanage called the Good Samaritan. The orphanage had been founded by a Christian ministry with the goal of reaching street children, of which Mariupol also had many.

Natasha ended up living at the Good Samaritan for the next five years. When she finished high school, she attended a Christian university in Kiev. Her vision was to reach and help other street children such as she had once been. Involvement in this ministry brought Tima and Natasha into contact. They were married in 2007.

After marrying, Tima and Natasha began volunteering at the same orphanage where Natasha had spent her high school years—the **Good Samaritan in Mariupol. The Ukraine's tenth** largest city with a population of a half-million, Mariupol is located just forty miles from the Russian border.

This eastern Ukrainian city is predominantly an industrial city, complete with three large factories. However, following the collapse of the Soviet Union, many people were left without work. Others were released from prison, filling the city with criminals. Alcoholism is rampant. Many children are put on the street simply because their parents have no desire to take care of them.

Since 2001, the Good Samaritan children's home has taken in more than 500 children. Currently, the facility is renting a former school built in 1960. This has two floors which include a dining room, a large hall for meetings, and dormitory space enough for the thirty-five boys and girls currently living there. Twenty of these are between the ages of six and fifteen while the others are sixteen years or older.

In contrast to orphanages where children no longer have living parents or guardians, the majority of these children still have parents, which means they are not eligible for adoption. Tima calls them, **"Social Orphans."** Most come from the Mariupol area with just a few from surrounding cities. Over the years, some have become true orphans, so have been able to be adopted or fostered by Christian families.

Tima and Natasha do not live full-time in Mariupol, but divide their time with ongoing ministry in Kiev—a solid 400 miles away. Along with their two small children—Angelina (6 years old) and Mark (almost 2 years old)—they travel to Mariupol for a few months at a time where as volunteers they fill in wherever needed including leading Bible studies and praying with the children, manual tasks around the orphanage or as chauffeur.

When in Kiev, Tima and Natasha work in BCM camp ministries, including upcoming winter camp that ministers to many children from the war zone. They also do outreach in orphanages around Kiev and continue to reach out to street children. All this while holding part-time secular jobs to help **meet their own family's needs.**

Initially, the ongoing conflict with Russia did not **affect the Good Samaritan children's home.** When Russia invaded Crimea in February, the bombing and fighting took place to the southwest of Mariupol. However, Mariupol is a strategic city since it sits near the Sea of Azov which is shared by Russia. Located between Crimea and Donetsk,



Kids helping with supper

it is in the middle of the conflict zone where Russian separatists have been fighting to secede and become part of Russia.

This conflict has divided the citizens of Ukraine. Many residents of the eastern part of Ukraine are Russian by descent and therefore desire to be a part of Russia rather than Ukraine. Just recently, the eastern region of Donetsk held its own elections in opposition to the rest of the Ukraine. Their newly elected president is not currently being recognized by most governments around the world. Meanwhile fighting, air raids, bombs, and threat of Russian intervention continues.

All of which has taken a toll on the children and staff at the Good Samaritan. Bombings and shootings had lessened somewhat over the summer months. But in June, 2014, the fighting once again reached a crisis stage. Out of concern **for the children's safety, the decision was made to** evacuate them from Mariupol to a city called Novovolynsk which is a safe distance from the conflict zone near the Polish border.

That first evacuation lasted three months. When the conflict seemed to have calmed down, the children were returned to Mariupol. But in October, 2014, the conflict escalated again. Along with the **bombs and shooting, the children's home received** direct terrorist threats to burn the facility to the ground. Within a week of arriving back in Mariupol, the children had to be evacuated again.

This evacuation was more difficult because winter had set in, and the children were forced to abandon Mariupol without necessary cold weather clothing. To complicate matters, the elderly 18-**passenger bus that is the orphanage's only** transportation broke down, necessitating a replaced transmission. But the children finally reached Novovolynsk again, where Good Samaritan has been able to lease a building for temporary housing. Tima has been able to visit the children several times. They have also been able to purchase some winter clothing, shoes, jackets, socks, sweaters, for the children.



Girls Dormitory



Helping with Homework



Children's Study Room

"Now the children are ready for the cold winter!" Tima reports. However, urgent needs remain, among them adequate furnishings for the new lodgings since much had to be left behind in Mariupol. Funds for heating, food and other basic needs to get through the Ukraine's cold winter are also needed. A more long-term need is for a more reliable and larger bus to transport 35+ children and staff.

Meanwhile, the Ukraine military has seized control again of Mariupol, but fighting continues throughout eastern Ukraine. So just when the children might return to Mariupol remains unknown. But the children have settled in well to their new refuge. Tima reports that they are greatly enjoying the fresh air—away from the constant smog of Mariupol's factories.

Pray for the safety of the children of Good Samaritan. Being moved around and misplaced during a time of war is disconcerting for anyone, much less children whose only true stability is an orphanage. Pray for provision of food, heat, and reliable transport. Pray for Tima and Natasha Anokhin and the other volunteers at Good Samaritan that God will grant wisdom in their decisions on when and where to move the children and how best to care for them in this new facility. Pray for the children that in the absence of earthly parents, they would come to know their heavenly Father.

To give a one-time donation to Good Samaritan children's home or become part of Tima and Natasha Anokhin's support team, click [here](#).

Send the Gift of Jesus' Love to Children and Adults Worldwide this Christmas

What a calling is on us to go into all the world and share the Gospel. Our missionaries in 50 countries around the world are spreading the hope of Jesus to children and adults, and we are inviting you to reach out and join us.

Follow the link below to view our Christmas Gift Catalog, you will read the real stories of the needs of those who are working to share the love of Christ in their area of ministry. In places like Sri Lanka, India, North and South America, the Philippines, and through disaster relief, Jesus is changing lives. When that happens, there is a new kind of love and a fresh way to live.

You can be involved in sharing the Gospel by reaching out with your gift to help a world in need. Please prayerfully consider how you feel led to be a part of our efforts. Perhaps you'd like to provide support as a family project, or give as a meaningful special occasion gift for someone special to show mutual care for those who need hope. We thank you for your prayers, and for partnering with us to reach out so that the Good News of salvation can be shared all over the world.

View our 2014 Christmas Catalog here: <http://christmas.bcmintl.org>



DAVE AND LOIS HAAS: PASSING ON THE BATON OF FAITHFUL FOOTSTEPS

By: Lisa Biegert

Retire? The Haases? Is that even conceivable? After fifty-six years of faithful service across numerous spheres of BCM leadership and ministry, it took an engraved invitation to their retirement celebration for family, friends, and colleagues to believe that Dave and Lois Haas were at last passing on the baton of full-time missionary service. Officially, at least.



To begin this story, turn back the calendar to 1957. Bible Centered Ministries, then the Bible Club Movement, had been in existence for just twenty-one years when BCMI founder Miss Bessie Traber invited newly-weds Dave and Lois Haas to join her in ministry. Dave had already been impacted by Bessie Traber's ministry, coming to know Jesus Christ at BCM's Camp Sankanac when he was just nine years old. Lois too had come to Christ through a camp experience. They'd met as children while using their musical talents in a Philadelphia area Christian radio program called Children's Church of the Air. Both were gifted musicians; Dave played violin and piano and Lois sang.

Dave and Lois married shortly after graduating from college in 1956. When they accepted Bessie Traber's invitation to join BCM just a year later, they could not have foreseen fifty-six years of teaching, training, writing, revising, and mission leadership. To their BCM colleagues and those they served, they would be remembered best for their gentle humor and deep love for children and fellow missionaries around the world.



Dave and Lois's initial ministry appointment was as BCM's first missionaries in Jamaica. That door closed when Jamaica gained independence from Great Britain and put a moratorium on new missionary endeavors there. Dave and Lois shifted focus as they were assigned to children's ministry in the inner-city of Philadelphia. Dave taught Bible Clubs in five of the housing projects for his first year and after that began to supervise 100 Philadelphia College of Bible sophomore students who taught approximately fifty weekly Bible Clubs throughout the city.

Dave says, "Multiply that by the ten years I did it, and it adds up to a thousand students trained to teach. Even today, I occasionally run into someone who says, 'Oh, I remember you! You made us teach a Bible Club in the city [Philadelphia].'"

By this time Dave and Lois had their own growing family. While Dave taught Bible Clubs and led children's rallies, Lois concentrated on raising three boys under the age of five. But they weren't the only ones keeping her busy. BCM's Genesis-to-Revelation Bible curriculum *Footsteps of Faith*, which pioneered the use of flannelgraph visual aids, was already being used to teach children in numerous languages around the world. Bessie Traber asked Lois if she'd be willing to write a preschool Bible curriculum.

Lois agreed. While she'd taught elementary school during early married life before beginning a family, she'd never taught preschool. So she dedicated herself to observing preschool classes and her own young children to get an idea of what kind of concepts preschoolers could learn and how they learned it. Finding time to write wasn't easy for a busy mother, and Lois found herself more than once getting up in the middle of the night to write a thought or two down. The end result was *Tiny Steps of Faith* - a two year, four volume curriculum for 4-5 year olds, which has over the years been translated into multiple languages and remains in use around the world.

As part of Dave and Lois' Philadelphia ministry they spent each summer working in BCM's Camp Sankanac and Camp Streamside for a total of twenty years, beginning in 1958. Their sons David, Dan, and Doug loved being at camp all summer. In their teens they began serving along with their parents at Camp Streamside.



Retirement Luncheon; Young Dave Haas camp director Sankanac; Tiny Steps Born; Bible Literature Display; Dave and Lois Share Musical Gifts



2009 Dave preaching in church in Peru

Lois shares, “We took our boys to camp every summer. As they grew older, they began to work at the camps. At Streamside David was a counselor. Dan worked on the grounds. Doug worked in the kitchen. When our son Dan’s own daughter became old enough, she served as counselor there for a couple of summers as well. Doug and his wife, Chrystal, and two children worked at Camp Sankanac during boys’ camp for a couple of summers. Later Doug’s son worked for a summer at Camp Streamside.”

By this time Dave was also serving as BCM’s Director of Philadelphia Area Ministries. Then for eight years Dave was on loan to Manna Bible Institute in Philadelphia as their Academic Dean. BCM founder Bessie Traber had stepped into heaven, and Oscar Hirt, who would go on to serve as BCM president for more than three decades, had assumed mission leadership. Approaching the Haases, Oscar asked if Dave would be willing to take on some mission leadership and administrative responsibilities. This included serving as BCM’s Director of Training Services, which involved candidate orientation and seminars for the missionaries to help them grow in their teaching and leadership skills.

Dave would go on to serve as Northeast Regional Director, then USA Ministries Director, which included oversight of 190 missionaries, then Director of BCM International Publications, and finally Director of Curriculum Development. For thirteen years while directing USA Ministries, Dave served as BCM’s senior vice president. With their children now grown, Dave and Lois both were able to travel more in ministry, not only across North America but trips to the UK, Europe, Peru, India. They have been involved in leading seminars, training missionaries, and teaching workshops around the world. Dave and Lois also worked together on a team to complete a full 21st century revision of the eight-volume *Footsteps of Faith* curriculum. Throughout all their years of ministry, they continued to bless others as well with their musical gifts.

But of greater import, the leadership and insight into missions Dave and Lois Haas have offered over the last fifty-six years have impacted hundreds of missionaries worldwide. Their love for children as poured out through camp ministries, Bible Clubs, and other youth outreach, has affected countless thousands in the United States over the years.

Yet, it remains clear that Dave and Lois take none of the credit for themselves. Nor do they wish to. Their life and service have never been about themselves. It is solely about the great God they have given their entire lives to serve. Lois' advice to upcoming missionaries sums up their viewpoint beautifully:

“The work always belongs to the Lord and can be done only through His power. It doesn't matter who gets the credit for a job well-done as long as God gets the glory. Sometimes you're working behind the scenes, and somebody else gets the credit for what you've put in a lot of time to do. But that really doesn't matter in the long run, because it is the Lord who does the work through you, so He gets the glory. If you want to see the power of God through you, you must be willing to be stretched beyond what you think you can do, and sacrifice your comfort as you step out in obedience by faith. We've never felt up to what we had to do, but we learned that God strengthens us because we have to trust Him to do what we can't do.”



Dave and Lois revising FOF

When asked to share their favorite Bible verses, Lois immediately spoke up to quote Colossians 1:10: *“So that you may live a life worthy of the Lord and please him in every way: bearing fruit in every good work, growing in the knowledge of God.”* Lois explains, “I don't want to waste my life and my time and my energy on something that isn't going to be worth something to God.”

Dave adds that his favorite verse is Colossians 4:17: *“See to it that you complete the ministry you have received in the Lord.”*

Dave and Lois, you certainly have not wasted your lives. And while we as a BCM family offer a hearty congratulations on your retirement, we are certain your ministry is not yet complete. Thank you for all you've done for the Lord, and all you continue to do. With our heavenly Father, we can say, “Well done, good and faithful servants!”

Shop at AmazonSmile
and Amazon will make
a donation to:

BCM International, Inc.

Get started

amazonsmile

**Supporting BCM International through
AmazonSmile is easy:**

1. Log on to www.smile.amazon.com
2. Select BCM International as your charity of choice.
3. Make a normal purchase. BCM International will receive a gift of .5% of your purchase total.



While the Ukraine is filled with opulent churches, millions remain without hearing the good news of Jesus Christ. Read more in the article on page 13.

BCMWorld

President

Dr. Martin D. Windle

Editor

Jeanette Windle

Graphic Designer

Brian Biegert

Contributors

Lisa Biegert

Jeanette Windle

Esther Zimmerman

© 2014 BCM International

BCM International is a global Bible-Centered Ministry dedicated to making disciples of all age groups for the Lord Jesus Christ through evangelism, teaching, and training so that churches are established and The Church strengthened.

Bcm International
201 Granite Run Drive
Suite 260
Lancaster, PA 17601 USA

www.bcmintl.org
1-888-BCM-INTL

Cross Global
LINK Member