



# THE LifeLight

The Newsletter of Canadian LifeLight Ministries

July 2005

## DID YOU KNOW....

- John and Marilyn Van Essen are LifeLight reps in Ontario?
- A LifeLight Ministries fundraising golf tournament is taking place in September?
  - We need about \$195,000 to reprint *The LifeLight* and *How to Find God* New Testaments?
- Vacation is a good time to distribute Scriptures? Are you prepared?
- This newsletter will be going to about 6000 readers?
- Your prayers and gifts are essential to this ministry?

## Expanding My World

Brent Gillon

**W**hat an amazing summer God has blessed us with! I want to take this opportunity to thank all those I have met over the past couple of months for your support of LifeLight Ministries and our ministry of equipping disciples for God's kingdom.

Looking back at my past experiences, I thank our Father in heaven for all his blessings on my family and me. My wife, Monique, and I have been married for twenty-two years and have two amazing daughters, Sarah (12) and Elyse (11). They attend Calvin Christian School, where Monique and I are in various committees.

All of us are involved in various aspects at Eastview Community Church. We are part of and actively involved in a care group, and I am a member of a men's Bible study and outreach group. Several times a year we volunteer at Donwood Manor, where I serve on the board of directors as a church representative. I am also on the boards of Christian Camping International, Manitoba Camping Association and the Donwood Group.

I grew up in a Christian family and always knew I had a relationship with Christ. I always knew that God had a plan for me--I just had to listen. Upon completion of university, I found myself focused on my career and accumulating "worldly" possessions. Monique and I both realized that God was missing from our busy lives. We once again asked Him into our lives and surrendered to follow His leading.

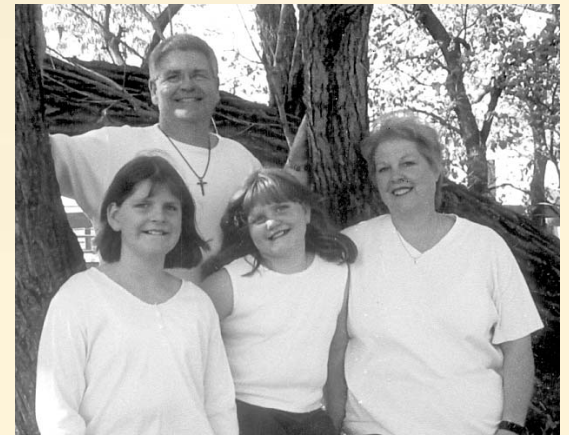
I asked, and was granted, a nine-month leave of absence from my administrative position with the local government to direct an inner-city housing project with Winnipeg Habitat for Humanity. I had been involved with this organization since 1989, volunteering as building committee chair, board member and co-project manager

for the 1993 Jimmy Carter Work Project.

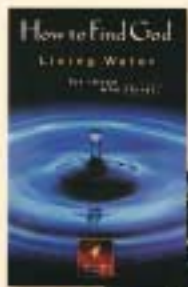
After reading *The Prayer of Jabez*, I asked God to expand my world and was led to take on the role of Executive Director at Camp Arnes, where I spent three years sharing my gifts of leadership to continue the legacy of Christian camping.

I have learned from God to trust Him fully and that, despite how I feel things should unfold, He is in complete control and knows what plans He has for me. He has led me to the position of Executive Team Leader with Canadian LifeLight Ministries, and I see myself contributing to the growth, development and ministry, using my God-given talents as an administrator, mentor and enthusiast in sharing our heavenly Father's Good News.

I look forward to meeting all of you and welcome your input as we work together in building God's Kingdom by sharing His Word.



Brent and Monique Gillon and their daughters, Sarah and Elyse



LifeLight Ministries, Box 4904, Steinbach, Manitoba R5G 1R5

God's Word for this Generation

## Don't Put Your Faith on Hold!

Ron Kroeker

My wife, Wendy, and I enjoy traveling and have had the privilege of spending several winter vacations in the Mayan Riviera in Mexico. You meet people wherever you go – at work, at home, on vacation – and we have always agreed that practicing and sharing our faith should not be put on hold during our holidays. As a matter of fact, we believe that vacations are unique opportunities to connect with people and to introduce Jesus Christ to them.

Wendy and I have been truly blessed by these experiences. We have taken Bibles, leaflets and other Scriptures provided by LifeLight Ministries and have shared them with people after getting to know them. We have discovered that people are generally very receptive to Christian literature, particularly Bibles. Children love to receive Christian pamphlets designed for them and are often excited about sharing them with their friends and parents.

I would like to share with you the wonderful experience my husband and I had on our trip to Hermosillo, Mexico, in January. As part of our winter escape we planned to visit a church in Hermosillo and report to our own church about the possibility of becoming sister churches.

We took along some Spanish Bibles and tracts from LifeLight Ministries. The missionaries who assisted us with translation and accommodations were delighted with the gift of Scriptures. (Next time we will take more!)

We fell in love with the Mexican people, their church, their city and Mexico. Did you know that less than one percent of the people in the state of Sonora are evangelical Christians? Our churches have begun a "sistering" relationship, and we are looking forward to sharing in a ministry together.

This has been a life-changing experience for us. God spoke to both of us while we were there and showed us that this is a ministry that He wants us to pursue. We have applied and been accepted to attend language school next year. After that we will dedicate several months of each year to facilitating this work. We are very excited to see what God will do in this new ministry.

Thank you, LifeLight, for your ministry of Scripture distribution. We will be keeping in touch.

## Of Course I'll Read it!

Henry Penner



The pastor, one of his daughters, and his wife

If you ever go to Cuba for a vacation be sure to take lots of Scriptures, extra clothes, pieces of metal (they repair their own vehicles), tennis balls, pencils, notepads, and other school supplies. No one turned down anything! Even the guards around the resort where we stayed were happy to receive things.

On Sunday morning we hired a taxi to take us to a church. The taxi driver was happy to return to pick us up again after the service. We left more than half of our things with the pastor, who lives on the churchyard, for him to distribute where most needed. We asked whether the church was being persecuted by the government, and his answer was "No." He said the opposite was true – Government officials frequently ask him for advice.

One day we went for a train ride into the country, where we handed out Gospels of John. The next day one of the conductors (a helper) asked if he could have one too.

The manager of the resort asked for a New Testament. He had been told that we were running low, but that he might be able to get one if he would read it. "Of course I'll read it," he said. Whenever we walked past the hotel desk after that, he waved and called *Hermano*, which means "brother."

If we return to Cuba sometime, we will take even more supplies along, and we know that we won't have to bring anything back home with us. It was a great feeling to travel "heavy" on the way there and "light" on the way back. Praise the Lord!

testimonies. Some of them were left with church leaders in Mexico, but most returned home with us to be used for further preparation for upcoming ministry opportunities.

Thank you, LifeLight, for providing the most valuable tools needed in ministry.

## His Answer

Elaine Erb

This past Easter I had the pleasure of serving in a short-term missions project in Nuevo Laredo, Mexico, with a team from southern Alberta. Our ministry included the construction of a church building; and children's, youth, medical and worship ministries.

We met several times to prepare for our trip and sincerely tried to learn a bit of Spanish, which proved to be a challenge. I fervently prayed to the Lord to equip us for His work. His answer arrived in the LifeLight newsletter. As my eyes landed on the Spanish/English NT, my heart leapt, and I knew this was His answer!

The team members were blessed with these Bibles and in turn blessed others. They helped us immensely to get a better grasp of the language and to be better prepared to share our n for

I again had the privilege in February of traveling with Campus Crusade for Christ, this time to Panama City, Panama. We showed the Jesus film, had executive outreaches and contacted many homes in the city for events called Dinner for Friends.

Christian people invited their non-Christian friends, neighbours, relatives, and co-workers to their homes for dinner, and we gave testimonies and did a presentation, with an invitation for them to come back in a few days for a follow-up Bible study.

When we returned for the Bible study to the home that hosted our group, we realized that none of the people had Bibles. It was a blessing to have several Spanish Bibles from LifeLight with me so they could follow along, using page numbers to help one another find passages.

### To Steinbach Readers:

Is the postal code correct on your address label? If not, please let us know.

## Valuable Tools

*Wilbert Friesen*

In February I had the privilege of leading a group on a work mission exposure to Nicaragua. We went there to help in the construction of an orphanage project that the Fraternity of Evangelical Mennonite Churches had initiated.

As we thought about what tools we should take with us, it was suggested that we take along some Spanish Bibles as well. LifeLight Ministries provided us with Bibles and New Testaments for distribution.

Twenty-five years ago my wife, Hilda, and I ended our missionary stay in Nicaragua in the heat of the civil revolution. What a blessing to see how the church had grown over all these years! Some of the pastors presently serving

the churches were young people when we left in 1979. What a joy it was for me to present them with a package of Scriptures as we renewed acquaintances!

While at a pastors' retreat, I was introduced to many of the church leaders serving in the Fraternity. One of them was a young man who said that while waiting at a bus stop he had been robbed of his briefcase, with his Bible inside. His comment was that it was kind of hard to do pastoral work without a Bible. Being a pastor myself, it was easy to agree with him. So I gave him one of the Bibles we had brought along. Because of the economical hard times that the Nicaraguan people are experiencing, the gift of God's Word is greatly appreciated.

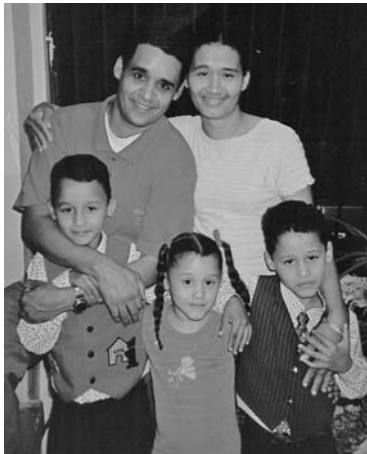
I think that in light of eternity, the Bibles we left in Nicaragua will be far more valuable tools than the hammers, saws and tape measures we gave them.



*Pastor Pedro Luis and his family were grateful for the Bibles they received for their church.*

## Enrich Your Vacation!

*Diane Skelton-Curtis*



*Rafael and Aleida Peña and their children, Ralfy, Geraldine and Raldy.*

My husband noticed the article in the LifeLight newsletter about taking Bibles along when going on vacation. If you want to significantly enrich your vacation experience, we would encourage you to take Bibles with you for distribution. If you pray about it and contact the resort you are going to, like we did, God will connect you with the right people.

Before we left for the Dominican Republic, we e-mailed our resort, telling them that we wanted to attend a church while on vacation. When we

arrived, we were connected with an employee at our resort, Rafael Peña, the Associate Pastor at a Pentecostal church. We left most of the Bibles with him to give to those in the church who needed them.

Church services were held every evening, so we chose to attend mid-week. However, my husband got sick and couldn't join me. After a windy and bumpy car ride, Rafael and I arrived at the church. There were no lights on, and I was told that, because nobody pays for electricity, it's turned off frequently in the evenings. Resorts and some businesses have generators, but most places deal with the power outage by using flashlights.

The service was very interesting, with lots of singing, with guitars, maracas and a musical instrument that looks like a giant nutmeg grater played by rubbing a stick on the surface. I was introduced as a guest, and after the service everyone came to greet me. The men shook my hand, and the women gave me a hug. It was very touching and made me wish our vacation were longer so we could experience an evening like this again.

We love to spend part of our winter in a warmer climate, and lately, our vacation spot has been Puerto Vallarta, Mexico. We have many opportunities to give away Spanish tracts and Bibles. We do not go on a missions assignment as such, but simply practice our Christianity by "going" (Matthew 28:19) as we walk down the street.

A beautiful, young Mexican woman, Alicia, was trying to get us to go on a timeshare presentation. As we exchanged pleasantries, she told us she was sad and that her boyfriend had gone home to Manitoba to his wife. We gave her a Canadian lapel pin, which we had attached to a Spanish Four Spiritual Laws tract, and a Spanish New Testament.

Previously she had considered all Manitobans to be bad, but since we were kind to her she changed her mind. We hope and pray that she will read the literature and accept our precious Saviour as her Lord.

Praise God from whom all blessings flow!

## Cubans Hungry for the Word

*Alvin Plett*

We like to take Spanish Scriptures with us when we go to Cuba. They are very easy to hand out, and it's a thrill to see the hunger for the Word.

- I gave a Bible and some literature to two guards at our resort. They immediately started reading and were still at it a while later.
- A tour guide on the bus devoured the New Testament I gave to her and was a long way into it by the end of the tour.



## Bibles Make Great Wedding Gifts



The NIV Couple's Devotional Bible is made to strengthen communication, encourage spiritual growth and enhance marriage in general among engaged and newlywed Christian couples. Inside is a full year's worth of devotions written especially for couples. Suggested donation: \$34.00



The Marriage Devotional Bible helps couples incorporate scriptural truth into their marriages. It provides a year's worth of marriage-enriching devotions to help couples strengthen their relations. Suggested donation: \$34.00

## Sharing the Good News with Joy

David & Katy Reimer

Together with our family, we enjoyed a recent vacation in Cuba. Before we left for Cuba, I picked up a number of Spanish Scriptures (New Testaments, *Four Spiritual Laws*, and a booklet for children, *The Story of Jesus*). We packed them, along with other items that we intended to leave as gifts for the Cuban nationals. We prayed very specifically for opportunities to witness and for direction as to whom we should give this literature to.

It was a joy to share our faith in Christ and then to present these NTs to people, who were thrilled to receive them – at the Maritim resort, to villagers in the Holguin district, and at the airport. Everyone

expressed great appreciation and treasured the Scriptures as the Word of God. Many began to share of their religious background – predominantly Catholic.

Maria, the maid who attended our rooms, was so excited to receive the literature that she went home and told her whole village about us Christians from Canada at the resort. Isabella, who prepared specialty dishes for us in the restaurant, was a new believer and was moved to tears when we blessed her with her own NT. She immediately asked for one for her friend, who was not yet a Christian, and also joyfully shared the news with her fiancé.

## Thank You



Phil and Norita Gour live in Alamo, Texas, and serve with Mexican Mission Ministries. They distribute thousands of tracts and other Scriptures to Spanish-speaking people on both sides of the border. We

received this note from them recently:

*Thank you to Arnold and Anne Reimer of Landmark, Manitoba, who have provided us with lots of Spanish Scriptures for distribution. We received a few cases*

*from them again recently. Our "adopted son" from Monterrey, Mexico, was out to see us, and we sent most of them back with him. We also gave a few to missionaries in Michoacan. We kept some for our own distribution, for the many Latinos we meet wherever we travel.*

*Arnold and Anne have supported our mission work for a number of years, and we enjoy sweet fellowship with them when they come to Bibleville here in the Rio Grande Valley.*

### LifeLight Ministries

### Fundraising Golf Tournament

Wednesday, September 21  
Minnewasta Golf and Country Club  
Morden, Manitoba

Contact Brent for more information.  
955-1316 (cell), 654-2993  
Email: bgillon@mts.net



Box 4904, Steinbach, Manitoba R5G 1R5



## Need for the Seed

Philip H. Durant



Juergen Hamm (Love Winnipeg) presents Chaplain Phil Durant (left) with New Testaments.

In my experience as a prison chaplain I have found that the name of your ministry, *LifeLight*, gives a message of hope to so many whose lives are full of darkness and despair.

Approximately 3500 prisoners are admitted and released from our institution each year. The numbers have risen fifty percent over the last several years due to the fact that our court system is overwhelmed and, consequently, many more men find themselves "remanded" for trial. Cases move so slowly through the system that many, once they get a trial set, are now released at court, having spent sufficient time behind bars to satisfy what would have been required had they been sentenced.

All this means that men are forever going to court to be remanded yet again and returning without being tried. The frustration of not knowing what is happening, the inability to have any control over their lives, and the separation from family and friends all take their toll. Hope is often replaced by despair, and anger abounds in their hearts.

These men are forgotten, the outcasts of our society. They are the dispensable and disposable people whom society would prefer to ignore and forsake as being unreachable and undeserving. This is Jesus' world, and I see Jesus in the cell

blocks of this dark place. He reaches out and touches people, accepting them as they are today – not as they ought to be. The light that shines in this pit is Jesus, and we need to help keep that light alive.

For some time we have been searching for easy-reading Scriptures, and the NIRV version (*The LifeLight*) fits our need perfectly. Many claim to have a Grade 6 or higher reading level, but many function below that level. Many are barely literate, and some of these men have signed documents and confessions without knowing the content, rather than admitting that they cannot read.

A few copies of *How to Find God* have found their way to the Headingley Correctional Centre and have been received as a breath of fresh air. Those who have received a copy have found the commentaries and questions both challenging and informative. Unfortunately, we haven't been able to meet the demand for these New Testaments.

We are impressed with your Scriptures and are anxious to obtain a reliable and continuing supply of Scriptures. I cannot stress enough the need for a *continuing* and *reliable* supply, since broken promises and disappointment have been a staple diet for so many of these men. We don't want to start with promises that we can't keep, and therefore it is very important that your sponsors are aware of the commitment they are making.

We have no budget with which to purchase Bibles so we can provide the words of life Jesus speaks to his brothers in the quietness of their souls, so we rely on the generosity of your donors. It is our fervent prayer that Scriptures will be made available to the men imprisoned at Headingley.

We are very grateful for the generous donation we received from the Love

Winnipeg Committee for Scriptures. The seed has been planted, and we pray that this will touch the hearts of many more so that there will never be a shortage of Scriptures for God's people serving here.

We pray that the Lord will continue to bless those who make the Word of God available as a light to the world.

*Philip Durant is a chaplain at the Headingley Correctional Centre in Headingley, Manitoba.*

The estimated cost for this project for the first year is \$3000 (for 600 New Testaments). If you would like to bless others with a donation for this ongoing need, please send your gift, together with the Reply Form, to LifeLight Ministries, Box 4904, Steinbach, Manitoba R5G 1R5. Cheques should be made out to "LifeLight Ministries."

Sean writes:

*I am presently in custody in a jail in Ontario. I am writing you because one of the Christian motorcycle clubs was at the big Friday the 13<sup>th</sup> event at Port Dover – a large gathering of motorcycles and their owners. The chaplain of the jail returned from this event with a very interesting New Testament, "Hope for the Highway." It was given to my cell partner. I fell in love with it and would like one for myself.*

*I am praying and trying to straighten out my life. My family doesn't talk to me or write. So it would be nice just to receive a letter. A pen pal would be real nice. If someone is interested, please and thank you.*

\* \* \* \* \*

We sent Sean a copy of *Hope for the Highway*. If anyone is interested in corresponding with Sean, call or write us for his address.

## A Worthy Goal

Allie Hulsmans

In March our youth group went on a short-term mission trip to Mexico. Each one of us had a Spanish/English NT from LifeLight with us. The people we stayed with told us that one of the goals for us was to get rid of all the NTs by the end of the week.

On Easter Sunday we had a sunrise service by a soccer stadium; that was where we felt the Lord was leading us. Some homeless men sat and listened. We came back and brought them breakfast and some Bibles. One of the guys in our group gave his Bible to Martin, one of the homeless men. With the help of a translator, he showed Martin the "Romans Road" (a way of explaining the way of salvation using selected verses from Romans), which we had all highlighted in our Bibles. He started talking with Martin, and we found out that he was a believer. He and the other men had decided to start a church where we had our service. It was great to give him this wonderful gift, the Bible!

## From the Mailbox

- *I would like a copy of the "Heart of the Outdoors" NT. I have someone special I'd like to give it to. I really love what your ministry does, and we enjoy the newsletter.* – Fiona
- *This small donation is my appreciation for the Bibles you are sending. I trust that you will pray for me as I give the Scriptures to people who are new in Christ whom I have met in my door-to-door ministry.* – Len
- *I didn't really know much about God when I was living in Port Coquitlam; we never went to church or learned about Him. Then I moved to Mission and met a girl who is a Christian and was brought up in a Christian family. She has taught me about God, and I have gone to church with her, as well to a Christian camp, and have learned sooooo much. I have given my life to the Lord and am very glad! I would like to be enrolled in a Bible correspondence course.* – Jenna
- *I have borrowed "The LifeLight" from the chaplain at this jail where I am incarcerated. I am seeking God now after being tired of the dark side of life. I would like to have my very own New Testament. Will you please send me one?* – Diane

## Inuit Revival Continues



and His Word.

Donors to LifeLight Ministries provided four cases of *How to Find God* (HTFG) and *The LifeLight* New Testaments, as well as children's material. They also paid the shipping costs to get these materials from Winnipeg to Coral Harbour.

The HTFG NTs were given to those, mostly youth, who responded to the invitation to receive Christ. It was so timely to hand them a NT that is understandable and easy-to-read and includes many helpful comments. The new believers were strongly encouraged to read them daily, to attend church regularly and to share what the Lord has done in their lives.

*The LifeLight* NTs were distributed among the pastors from different communities in the North. They were so thankful for these

resources which they could take home with them, on the condition that they would be put to good use. May this seed keep multiplying to extend God's Kingdom in these communities! In addition, the pastors from Coral Harbour were extremely appreciative of the children's material, which they had requested.

May God bless the generous donors with the knowledge that their contributions are going to help establish these new believers in their faith. The Word of God is truly laying a solid foundation for a growing network of believers in the North. We are labourers together with God.

It is often the praise and worship that brings new people into the church. It is fellowship that keeps them there, but it is the teaching of the Word of God that results in spiritual growth.

A continuing revival is taking place in the far North as God pours His Spirit on people who are hungry and thirsty.

Five hundred Inuit crammed into the auditorium in Coral Harbour for the Inuit Bible Conference, March 24-31. A marriage seminar, conducted by Steve and Jackie Masterson and Ian and Patti Nairn, took place during the Conference. The services lasted from three to four hours; it seemed as though the people could not get enough of the Lord

### Reply Form

Enclosed is my donation:

Bibles for Headingley \$ \_\_\_\_\_ General Scripture Fund \$ \_\_\_\_\_

Staff support for \_\_\_\_\_ \$ \_\_\_\_\_ Other \$ \_\_\_\_\_

Please send the following Scriptures \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_ Donation enclosed \$ \_\_\_\_\_

Name \_\_\_\_\_ Address \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_ PC \_\_\_\_\_ Phone \_\_\_\_\_

Credit card donations may be made at [www.donatebibles.net](http://www.donatebibles.net).

### Funds for Asia

Thank you to all those who responded to our "Funds for Asia" project. We have forwarded the funds to Back to the Bible for the South Asia Tsunami Disaster Fund.

Back to the Bible Sri Lanka is focusing on long-term and spiritual needs:

- Biblical and trauma counseling seminars
- Scholarships for Bible school students who have lost family members or their churches
- Hymnals, literature and Bibles for 300 churches
- Library packets for 300 pastors
- Audiocassette players for churches to use in ministering to their people
- Special radio programs specifically for the affected areas