



BRANDON VALLEY BAPTIST CHURCH

February 2023

Editor Janelle Daum

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“His father and mother did not know that it was from the Lord, for He was seeking an opportunity against the Philistines. At that time the Philistines ruled over Israel.”

Judges 14:4

We have been considering visionary faith and all of the different variations of it in the book of Judges. Just prior to the holidays we had introduced Samson into the discussion. We talked about the importance of character and how he had every opportunity to be a man of great faith. His home was characterized by faith. His growing up years were solid because of that sovereign foundation of faith. His

parents raised him according to the strict rules of the Nazirite vow. By all accounts, as he grew up, he was trained to be the kind of man that God could use in mighty ways.

But along the way he rebelled against that strict lifestyle. What's interesting is how God continued to use him, in spite of his rebellion. There's a basic principle at work in Samson's life... pride goes before a fall. Samson knew he was strong. The blessing given in Judges 13:24 was supernatural strength. Even his name spoke to that strength. The name "Samson" is a derivation of the Hebrew word for the sun, sometimes taken to mean "hero of the sun." The historian Josephus tells us that in his day the name Samson had come to mean "strong, or daring one."

God took this strong, daring man and literally began to impel him into service. God was going to deliver Israel through Samson, despite his headstrong rebellion. This whole experience of being raised in preparation for special service and being gifted with supernatural strength is pretty heady stuff for a teenager. Physically he was ready for it, but emotionally and spiritually he was headed for disaster. For whatever reason he never developed the character necessary to serve God in a righteous way and he never matured enough to accept God's desires for him. It's amazing to me, and somewhat encouraging, that God still used this broken, sinful man to achieve His sovereign purposes. It tells us that God can use anyone that He chooses to use.

Samson's rebellion begins with his desire to marry a Philistine girl. Judges 14:4 tells us that Samson didn't realize it but God was behind this because He was going to use it to strike against the Philistines. Samson only saw it as a means to rebel. We see his heart in v.2.

Samson tells his parents that he “saw” the woman and decided that he wanted to marry her. His parents tried to talk him out of it because not only is she a Philistine but she is also an older, experienced woman. The word translated “woman” here is the same word used later to describe Delilah. Samson didn’t care what she was or what she did. She was enticing to him and he wanted her. He tells his parents in v.3, “She looks good to me.” He was driven by his lust and he wasn’t going to listen to anyone who told him otherwise.

That was the character problem. Here was the man who was supposed to deliver his nation, but he couldn’t even exercise the self-control to marry a woman for the right reasons. He was driven by lust.

He was also ruled by impulse. Part of the Nazirite vow was that he was never to touch a dead body. Verses 5-9 go on to describe for us how he killed a lion with his bare hands. Later, when he passed that way again, he found that bees had settled into the lion’s carcass and it was dripping with honey. Impulse drove him to break his vow. He saw the honey in that dead body and he desired it, so he scooped up a handful and went on his way eating it.

That weakness of character gave way to a series of sinful actions. He married the Philistine woman but his anger over an act of betrayal caused him to leave her without consummating the marriage. Her father decided that Samson wasn’t coming back so he married her off for a second time to a Philistine man. When Samson returned, he found his wife married to another man and, in his anger, he destroyed all of the Philistine’s crops. From that moment on Samson was public enemy number one in the eyes of the Philistines.

His motivation for doing this tells us a lot about his underdeveloped character. In Judges 15:11 the Jews ask him why he has done what he has done. His answer sounds like a petulant child, “They did it to me, so I did it to them.” He wasn’t trying to deliver Israel, he was just seeking revenge.

He was also motivated by personal glory. His great strength was a gift from God for him to use to deliver Israel. But when the Jews captured him and took him to the Philistines as a peace offering, Samson broke the ropes that bound him and killed 1,000 Philistines using only the jawbone of a donkey. He should have given the glory to God for that amazing feat. He didn’t. He spoke of his own greatness. In 15:16 he says, “With the jawbone of a donkey I have killed 1,000 men.”

This was the testing phase of Samson’s life. Unfortunately, because of his rebellious nature, he failed the tests.

Don’t ever be dismayed by the testing phases that we face in life. We all go through them. Our character is always going to be tested by the fires of temptation. It’s called inner growth. If we exercise faith, and withstand temptation, we grow and God is glorified through our life and our actions. It’s a crucial part of our transformation into spiritual maturity. It’s God’s tool for helping us to take even greater steps of faith to His glory.

Blessings,
Pastor Randy

UPCOMING EVENTS FOR FEBRUARY AND BEYOND

EVENTS CALENDAR 2023:

Sunday's

9:30 a.m. Worship Service

10:30 a.m. Fellowship

10:45 a.m. Sunday School for the Whole Family

Wednesday's

6:30 p.m. - 8 p.m., Awana

7:45 p.m. Middle & High School Youth Group

Thursday's

3 p.m. Prayer & Women's Bible Study meeting in homes

6:30 p.m. Women's Evening Bible Study meeting in homes

Saturday's

February 4, 8 a.m. Men's Bible Study via Zoom

February 18, 8 a.m. Men's Bible Study via Zoom

Upcoming Events

Sunday, February 5, Noon - 2 p.m., Sunday School Social Event after Sunday School (Pizza & Games) – HS/College Age Group & Younger (Parents of younger age children may also attend)

Monday, February 6, Spiritual Team Meeting

Saturday, February 11, 8 a.m., Leadership Team Meeting

Sunday, February 12, Darwin Stoesz - Missionary with SEND Int.

Tuesday, February 14, 2 p.m., Discipleship meeting,
Valentine's Day

Sunday, February 19, 6 - 8 p.m., Youth are Hosting a Valentine's Banquet, Newsletter Articles are Due

Monday, February 20, Presidents' Day

MISSIONARY UPDATES

DARWIN & KAREN STOESZ



January 18, 2023

Expanded Scope / Same Mission / Location Change

We are excited to announce our new ministry. This ministry expands the scope of whom we are reaching yet continues the same mission of helping missionaries get to their field of service, stay long-term, and thrive in their ministry. The biggest change is the location from where we will be doing this ministry.

The International Treasurer of SEND, Ruth Kirtland, invited Darwin to help her with the growing demands of mission finances by stepping into the role of Assistant Treasurer. After prayer and asking other Godly people for wisdom Darwin has accepted this position. He plans to begin in this new role on or before August 1, 2023.

This position is virtual, and so we plan to stay in Kansas. The benefits of being in Kansas is that our housing costs are lower, it also keeps us closer to family and aging parents, keeps Clara in her current school, and puts Darwin in a similar time zone with Ruth Kirtland and financial institutions.

We felt that we were going to need to transition to the USA in the next few years as Clara got closer to college but feel that the timing now is the best as we feel God “releasing” us from our ministry that we were doing, and we look forward to what God has for us in the future.

This ministry we pray will use the gifts that God has given us, learning from our past accomplishments, but still trusting 100% on God’s promises and the continued support of God’s people. We also believe that this position will continue to fulfil what we have been doing, but just in a bigger capacity of helping not just SEND Japan missionaries but helping the great SEND International missionary community which is now approximately 450 missionaries.

This decision was not made lightly, nor did we make it quickly. This decision has come after prayer over the past six months and discussions with Godly people in our lives, family, and SEND International leadership.

Transition trip back to Japan this summer

Please pray for us as we make this transition and as we begin the process of making Kansas our new home. One of these necessary transition steps is to return to Japan this summer for 4-6 weeks to say “Goodbye” and clean up our items in storage. Currently we have preliminary dates of June 6 – July 11 for this trip. Pray that our churches and individual supporters will get excited with us about this new ministry as we need their continued financial support and prayers.

Support Update

This position just as in the past relies on the faithful prayers and financial gifts of you, our partners. Many partners have been with us for a long time, and some are reaching the end of their giving ability. Another factor that has affected the amount of support we need to raise is inflation – as we know many essentials are just more

expensive. We have lost supporters during this last four-year term, but we know that God will continue to provide for our needs. If we had chosen to return to Japan, we guesstimate that we would have had to raise approximately \$1,500 more per month. As it stands today, we are short approximately \$500 a month in monthly support. We know that this is a lot, but we trust God to provide.

Prayer / Schedule Update

Our tentative schedule so far is as follows. Of course, all dates are subject to change. Please pray for us especially for these events: Wednesday's Darwin will be helping with AWANA as much as he is able despite his travels

Jan 24 Emmaus Church Pastor's and Missionary Luncheon – Whitewater, Kansas

Jan 25 Buhler M.B. Church – Buhler, Kansas

Jan 28 Friends who have Japanese connections – Newton, Kansas

Feb 1 Whitewater Community Church AWANA – Whitewater, Kansas

Feb 8 Whitewater Community Church AWANA – Whitewater, Kansas

Feb 15 Whitewater Community Church AWANA – Whitewater, Kansas

Feb 22 Whitewater Community Church AWANA – Whitewater, Kansas

Feb 24-26 Faith Evangelical Bible Church – Henderson, Nebraska

Mar 4-5 Heartland Bible Church – Lincoln, Nebraska

Mar 13-17 Berean Academy Spring Break

Mar 20-24 John Brown University Spring Break

May 5 John Brown University last day

May 18 Berean Academy last day

June 6-July 11 Potential trip to Japan

Aug 1 Darwin to begin role as International Office Assistant Treasurer

Please pray:

1. Pray that Darwin's teacher Mr. Tsuneizumi and Karen's friend Yuko-san would put their faith in Christ.
2. Pray for Anna and Clara that they would have continued growing relationships with Jesus.
3. Pray for Anna at John Brown University and studies kinesiology.
4. Pray for Clara at Berean Academy that she would seek God and make good friends.
5. Pray for wisdom as we setup our schedule of activities for home service.
6. Pray for safety as we drive during these winter months
7. Pray for our new ministry assignment as we work out the details of the change in ministry.
8. Pray for our continued support needs. Many partners have been with us for a long time, and some are reaching the end of their giving ability.
9. That Anna and Clara will be able to adjust well to this significant change.
10. Our goodbye trip to Japan this summer would be able to accomplish the goals of saying goodbye and at the same time go through in a few short weeks all our items in storage.
11. Wisdom for Darwin as he begins training for this new position.
12. Wisdom and patience for Karen as she gets near the end of her education that she is doing online with Moody Bible Institute.
13. Housing for us as we would like to live in the Whitewater community.
14. That our supporters will continue to support our ministry as we still rely 100% on support

Thank you so much for your prayers, financial support, and encouragement.

Sincerely, Darwin & Karen & Anna (19) & Clara (15) Stoesz

AMANDA BENSON - PHILIPPINES



January 1, 2023

HAPPY NEW YEAR!

2022 has been a year with many ups and downs, but I love that I can look back and see the hand of God at work in each moment of it. It started with spending most of January quarantined because of Covid (both exposure and having it). But then it was such a joy to be back to in-person school in February. This summer, Marissa and I moved in together and started a house for new single female staff members. It has been a joy to have Lot living with us this year, and we will be having a student teacher staying with us for a couple months this coming March and April. This school year, I started my new role as vice-principal, which has been an adjustment but has been good overall. I have been co-leading a girls Bible study again and have had the chance to have some great conversations with students. I am in the midst of planning our Outdoor Ed week, which will happen February 6-10, 2023. In November, we no longer had to wear masks, and just a couple weeks ago, Marissa's parents came to visit us for Christmas!

This year has been a year of ups and downs personally as well.

I'm learning more about who I am and who God has created me to be. I'm learning to process emotions differently than I have in the past (which is hard...), and I'm also learning to relate better with others. God has grown me in my awareness of the spiritual battle I am in daily and has given me tools to fight it. He is giving me the ability to know and speak truth in times when lies seem so strong. He has given me a strong community to help sharpen me and encourage me in this process. I can say with confidence that I have grown a lot this year as a person and in my walk with the Lord.

As I sat and watched the fireworks at midnight last night, I thought about the fact that I don't know what this coming year will hold, but I know that whatever comes, each day has already been designed by God, and He is there with me each step of the way. I know I can trust Him, whatever comes my way. I can't wait to see what He has in store. I know this will be a year of continued growth in many areas of my life and relationships, and I pray that God would choose to use me in mighty ways for His kingdom and purposes in the year to come. I pray the same for each of you!

Praises

- We had a great end to the semester! It was awesome to see a live play, to have in-person concerts, to have multiple Christmas parties, and to do things we haven't done since before Covid.
- Marissa's parents have come, and we've had a great time together. We've had a good balance of relaxation and travel around the city.
- It's awesome to think back on this year and see the many things God has done.

Prayer Requests

- Pray for me as I continue to balance being Vice Principal and teaching, especially this month as I am finishing up the Outdoor Ed planning. Pray that the final details would fall into place for that and

that God would use it to work in the hearts of the students.

- We are traveling tomorrow to a different island to go to the beach with Marissa's parents. Pray for safe travels and that all the details would work out for transportation to our hotel.
- Pray that God would continue to grow me, especially as I process in different ways. Pray that He would use this processes for His glory.

Amanda

HARLAN MOSS - PRISON LIGHTHOUSE MINISTRY



January 2023

“We are therefore Christ’s ambassadors, as though God was making His appeal through us.” II Corinthians 5:20

When we are born again from above Paul says, “He is a new creation, the old is gone and the new has come.” Many years ago, an inmate told me that when he came to Christ, “It was like everything went from black and white to color!” Inmates have told me since Christ came into their lives, they can understand things more clearly.

I have a weekly Wednesday Bible study for the new inmates being processed (A & O). Several of the men who attend are from the general population. They are also part of a regular prayer group run by the inmates that meets every Tuesday. In their prayer times they pray for the prayer requests that are put in the prayer box in the back of the Chapel. At the end of my Bible study one of the GP men, Billy stood up to let the new guys know that they could write their prayer requests down and they would get prayed for at their weekly prayer time. After the Bible study, Billy prayed with an A & O man going through difficulties. I said to Billy, “Thank you for being a prayer warrior and praying with these men.” He said with tears in his eyes, “I know what it was like when I first came into prison and how

difficult it was, so I want to give these men hope and encouragement.” I thanked the Lord for how He was using these Christian men within the prison to minister to those who are hurting. They are working out II Cor. 1:3-5, comforting one another.

Another man from that prayer group, Jim, told me that a young A & O man came to him and asked how he could get right with the Lord. So Jim prayed with him to receive Christ into his life. Jim asked me if he could come to the office at the same time as this young man. When they both were in the office, I had the opportunity to go over the gospel and talk about the Christian life. This young man was ready for the change that Christ brings!

I have noticed that when the men in prison invite Christ to take over their lives and trust Him as their Savior, difficulties come their way! Five weeks ago Bryan came into prison for the first time and was broken. He told me his story, how he had committed his life to Christ in jail. His wife is a strong Christian so knew that he needed to get right with the Lord. A few weeks later he and his two cellies were taken to Segregation under investigation even though he did nothing wrong. A few days later in Segregation he was praying for God to give him a sign that He had not forgotten him. That same day I felt the need to visit Bryan, but because of the new rules, I was not sure if that would be possible. When I got to Segregation an officer let me talk with Bryan and give him a Bible. Now he is out of Segregation and Bryan told me with tears, “I asked the Lord to show me that He had not forgotten me and then you came that same day, and I knew the Lord answered my prayer!” Being part of God’s kingdom work is humbling! All praise to our Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ!

Your prayers and financial support are a blessing! God’s Word will not return void! Continue to pray for those who make the rules in the prison, so that the gospel will go freely throughout the prison!

In Christ, Harlan

SHAN REED - JAPAN



January 4, 2023

Happy New Year!

December was a flurry of activities and filled with opportunities for us to share the love and light of Jesus with friends and neighbors. One of my favorite activities was to hold a Christmas party for my English students. Most were able to attend and we enjoyed singing carols together, playing bingo- it was one lady's first time to play bingo!- and to give them gifts of a bilingual new testament. Pray with me that the students will take some time to at least look at the Bible and read some. Pray with me as I think about ways I can encourage them to do so.

Another fun event was the youth Christmas party. Our usual group from the Kongo and Komyo churches went to our sister church about an hour away. The students from that church planned the party and prepared everything for us. I was, again, excited to see the students taking on leadership of the event.

Three of our youth students were able to help me make and decorate cookies to deliver to members of the Kongo and Komyo

churches. I appreciated their help and enjoyed the conversation in a smaller more casual setting.

I have so many more things to share with you! Look for more updates and pictures in my newsletter next month.

* Praise God with me for the many opportunities to share his love during the Christmas season.

* Pray for my students who received Bibles to take the opportunity to read God's word.

* Pray for me as I teach English conversation classes, lead Bible studies, lead the youth group, and facilitate ladies' seminars this year, that the love, joy and peace of Jesus will fill my heart and flow through me so that God will be glorified.

May the God who gives endurance and encouragement give you the same attitude of mind toward each other that Christ Jesus had, so that with one mind and one voice you may glorify the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ.

Romans 15:5-6

Thank you for your faithful prayers, love and support of me and the ministry in Japan. Each of you are an important part of this ministry!

Soli Deo Gloria,
Shan in Japan

PAUL & JANET HARKNESS - AWANA



January 3, 2023

Greetings in the New Year. We pray you will continue to experience God's grace and hope this year.

We had a great holiday vacation time, and we're now back in the office, making plans for the months ahead. We were blessed to complete some projects on our house, yet we found time to relax and enjoy the season.

Please pray for us as we get "back in the groove." Also, the Lord's guidance as we make plans.

Don't forget, if you would like to receive our Newsletter by email rather than snail mail, please let us know.

How may we pray for you? Let us know.

Paul Harkness

Serving Nebraska, South Dakota, SE Wyoming, & SW Minnesota

ALPHA CENTER



Brandon Valley Baptist Church had the pleasure to hear Jenna, Nurse Manager at the Alpha Center, share about what the Alpha Center does and how we as a congregation can help. She was extremely informative and passionate about her role as a nurse and what this non-profit company does to help so many women and men from all over our community. We are proud to partner with such an amazing organization. Below is an article Jenna recently wrote:

SAVING A LIFE

--by Jenna, Nurse Manager at Alpha Center

Chemical abortion is the most common method of abortion. It now accounts for more than half of all abortions provided in the United States and is increasing in accessibility and demand since Roe was overturned on June 24, 2022. Several websites offer these “safe

and effective” pills in the mail, and South Dakota is seeing women travel out of state to access both chemical and surgical abortions. The chemical (also known as medical) abortion pill regimen is a two-pill process the FDA approved up to 10 weeks of pregnancy. The first drug, mifepristone (Mifeprex or RU-486) blocks the hormone progesterone in the body. Without adequate progesterone during pregnancy, the lining of the uterus will break down, preventing the baby from growing. The second drug is misoprostol (Cytotec). This pill is taken 24-48 hours after mifepristone to induce uterine contractions to expel the pregnancy.

The circumstances surrounding an unplanned pregnancy can cause a woman to feel that abortion is her only choice. Sometimes, a woman may feel regret after taking the first abortion pill and change her mind. The Abortion Pill Reversal (APR) process is available for a mother and her baby in that critical moment. The APR process requires immediately introducing progesterone into a pregnant woman’s system in an attempt to counteract the progesterone-blocking effects of mifepristone. The reversal process is most successful if started within the first 24 hours after taking mifepristone (and without having taken the second pill); however, there have been successful outcomes up to 72 hours after taking mifepristone. The woman must call the national APR hotline where she is connected with a medical professional who will assess her situation over the phone and connect her with a trained APR provider in her area.

Alpha Center is a trained APR provider in South Dakota. At Alpha Center, we have witnessed the Lord use the progesterone protocol to reverse death and rescue life. The ultrasound machine is a necessary tool used in this lifesaving process. When Alpha Center receives a call from the APR hotline about a woman in our area who has taken the first abortion pill and desires to continue her pregnancy, an

ultrasound is needed to evaluate the baby's heartbeat and assess for a viable pregnancy before progesterone treatment can begin. Seeing her baby's heartbeat on the screen after taking the first abortion pill is a beautiful affirmation of the resiliency of the mother and child, her child. The ultrasound machine is the critical instrument God uses to display and defend life. However, time is of the essence in the APR process. It needs to be started within 24-72 hours. With the Legacy Van, our hope is to go to a woman in need of APR that cannot travel to our center in a timely manner.

With the anticipation of the Legacy Van's arrival from being outfitted, we are needing to purchase a new portable ultrasound machine to use both on the Legacy Van and to bring live ultrasound presentations into schools and churches. Another goal in 2023 is to update our in-office, six-year-old ultrasound machine in order to offer our clients a clearer window to their wombs. If you are interested in contributing towards the purchase of these new machines, 100% of the gifts received back in the enclosed envelope will go towards our ultrasound campaign. I hope this information was encouraging to you as a demonstration of how your continued partnership is saving children in such a critical moment. Thank you for trusting our team to carry out the work that God has laid before us. Deuteronomy 20:4 declares, "FOR THE LORD YOUR GOD IS THE ONE WHO GOES TO FIGHT FOR YOU AGAINST YOUR ENEMIES TO GIVE YOU VICTORY."

THE VOICE OF THE MARTYRS



The **Voice**
of the **Martyrs**

Persecution & Prayer Alert (January 19, 2023)

“For as we share abundantly in Christ’s sufferings, so through Christ we share abundantly in comfort too.”

2 Corinthians 1:5 ESV

PAKISTAN: Official Threatens Christian with Blasphemy Charges

Sources: AsiaNews, Daily Times, The Express Tribune, Kross Konnection

A Christian security guard at the Jinnah International Airport in Karachi, Pakistan, was recently threatened with blasphemy charges because she insisted on following regulations. Thankfully, the incident was captured on video footage, documenting the entire exchange.

On January 7th, a female security officer stopped a vehicle from entering the airport’s cargo area because the driver did not have the necessary documentation. Her superior insisted that the vehicle should be allowed to enter, since the driver was a friend of his. Standing by the airport’s regulations, the Christian woman refused, which angered her superior. Threatening to “cut [her] up,” he further warned that he would file complaints of blasphemy against her. In

response, the security officer challenged him to go ahead with the accusations, stating that it is he who's disrespecting his religion. Video footage of the confrontation circulated on social media, bringing condemnation from many. Responding to the incident, the Civil Aviation Authority issued a statement announcing that the offending official has been dismissed and a detailed investigation was ordered. While the Christian woman was vindicated of the allegations against her, the incident demonstrates the treatment commonly experienced by religious minorities in Pakistan. Accusations of blasphemy are frequently used to threaten, punish or gain an advantage over others. **Praise God for the positive response of the authorities in regards to this potentially dangerous situation. Remember to pray for the numerous other Pakistani believers who are receiving similar threats because of their faith in Christ. Despite opposition, may they remain true to their convictions by not compromising their moral values and integrity. As a result, may the truth of God's Word continue to spread throughout Pakistan so that many will be reached with the message of the Gospel.**

PRISONER UPDATES

CHINA: Seventeen Months Without a Trial

Source: ChinaAid

On August 7th, 2021, police officers arrested Pastor Wang Xiaoguang and his wife Yang Rongli, along with ten other members of the Golden Lampstand Church in Linfen, China. For Pastor Wang and Yang, this situation was not unexpected, as the ministering couple had previously served prison sentences of three and seven years respectively after being arrested in 2009.

The 12 Christians initially received 15-day detentions; however, at the end of that term, they were further detained on suspicion of “fraud” because tithes and offerings had been received by the church. Each of the imprisoned church members were approached by the police, who demanded that they sever ties with the church and accuse Pastor Wang and Yang of fraud.

After encountering increasing pressure from the police, five church members ultimately agreed to comply and were released on bail. The remaining seven believers (including the pastor and his wife) continue to be held in prison after more than 17 months without a trial. The church’s lay leadership has especially requested prayer for Pastor Wang and Minister Yang, who are both elderly and not in good health.

Prayerfully uphold Pastor Wang, Minister Yang, and the other five church members who are presently being detained. May God provide each one of them the strength, endurance and health needed to endure this lengthy ordeal. Pray that court officials will proceed with the case, ensuring that true justice is upheld for these innocent believers so they can be rightfully acquitted of any possible charges and subsequently released. Continue to pray for other church members who are faithfully continuing in ministry, despite the absence of pastoral leadership due to Pastor Wang and Minister Yang’s detainment.

CHINA: Christians Released on Bail

Source: Bob Fu (ChinaAid)

With thanksgiving, Bob Fu from ChinaAid reported on social media that Wang Minghai and Wan Hongxia were released from prison on January 13th. The two Christians had been detained since their arrests in August 2021. They were charged with conducting “illegal business operations” due to their involvement with a private Christian

school.

Few details surrounding the release of these two Christian leaders are presently available. According to fellow prisoners, both leaders were referred to as “great joyful witnesses of the Lord” while in prison. **Please join us in praising God for His faithfulness, giving Him thanks for the release of these two believers from imprisonment. Pray that their legal troubles will be fully resolved so they can resume their ministry activities without fear of further harassment from the authorities. Continue to prayerfully remember other Chinese followers of Jesus who are still being detained for their faith, as well as their concerned family members, asking that each of these believers will experience renewed strength, comfort and peace.**

UNION GOSPEL MISSION SIOUX FALLS

January 2, 2023

Happy New Year From The UGM Family!

I can't tell you how thankful we are for your generosity, love and support. Last year, God used your financial support and prayers to impact so many lives — lives that were changed not only for a day but for eternity. **You truly made a huge difference in 2022!**

As this new year begins, I pray that we can continue to count on your prayers and financial support to provide meals, shelter, and hope for better days ahead. God is working every day in the lives of UGM guests who are struggling. Thank you for the vital role you play in supporting this ministry.

MISSION UPDATE:

Even though the Mission experienced a huge Pipe Burst and Flooding Disaster right after the Christmas Day Celebration, our team continues to stay positive and trust in God that He will provide for all of our needs. The Women's Center, Thrift Store and Distribution Center will remain closed until we can complete the restoration process. All donations are accepted by appointment only. Contact office@ugmsiouxfalls.com or 605-334-6732. Read more on this in the stories below and stay tuned for more details as they become available. Learn more about how to support these efforts at ugmsiouxfalls.com.

Wishing you a very blessed first week of the New Year!

Eric Weber
CEO

“You will be enriched in every way so that you can be generous on every occasion, and through us your generosity will result in thanksgiving to God.” - 2 Corinthians 9:11

CRISIS IN UKRAINE



From one of our church partners:

“We accepted Sister Yelysaveta* as a resident in our church. This widow has been asking me to protect her for a long time. She has children and grandchildren, but they abuse alcohol, insult her, take away her pension. At the beginning of September, she begged with tears, and we sheltered her...

We also have several elderly grandmothers from refugees living in our church, and we pray and want to organize more comfortable living conditions for them. Because they have difficulty moving, and the toilet and kitchen are far away. Whether it will be a separate apartment or indeed a nursing home, we pray that God himself will direct this matter.”

*Names changed for privacy

Missionary Contact Info.

Amanda Benson:

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Email: oboejo09@gmail.com

Address: 113 E. Leighton St., Brandon, SD 57005

Tax-deductible donations can be sent to: SEND International
PO BOX 513, Farmington, MI 48332, Missionary #169352

Paul & Janet Harkness:

Website: highplainsawana.org

Email: paulh@awana.org

Phone: 308.730.2468

Address: 1713 L ST, Ord, NE 68862

To partner with us by your donations:

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Phone: 605-940-4220

Shan Reed:

Email: shaninjapan@mac.com

Address: Ibukino 3 Chome 14-9-903, Izumi Shi, Osaka FU 594-0041
Japan

Darwin & Karen Stoesz:

Our physical address: 219 W 1st St Elbing KS 67041

Our mailing address: PO Box 33 Elbing KS 67041

Our main phone number for text and calling: 316-708-0127 (Feel free to send us a text)

How To Give To North American Baptist Missionaries:

Step 1: Go to the NAB's new missions webpage nabonmission.org.

Step 2: Click on the “missionaries” label.

Step 3: Click on the national missionary to whom you would like to designate your support.

Step 4: Click on the “give to..” button on the national workers page.

Step 5: Fill out the form. All gifts given through the NAB are tax deductible.

**BRANDON VALLEY BAPTIST CHURCH
PRESENTING A CHANGELESS CHRIST FOR A CHANGING WORLD**