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ICBM Newsletter

Update on Africa Trip

By Michael Smith, Retired ICBM Executive Director

In January 2024, I took a mission team to work with the blind community in Liberia, Africa. I preached a three-day revival at the blind village and we visited the school for the blind in Monrovia along with a small private school for the blind in Buchannon. Steve Hoyt, an instructor from Pilot Dog in Columbus, OH, was part of our team. We distributed white canes and he gave very basic instructions on the use of the cane. Mindy Shipman is a teacher of the visually impaired who also went with us and inspected both schools. One of our board members, Devin Otte, a certified instructor in braille, also went with us. He checked with some of the students to verify that they were receiving braille instruction at the proper grade level. We also purchased some food and took it over to the Buchannon school for the blind. We put some lighting up at the blind village for security purposes, and rewired their electricity.



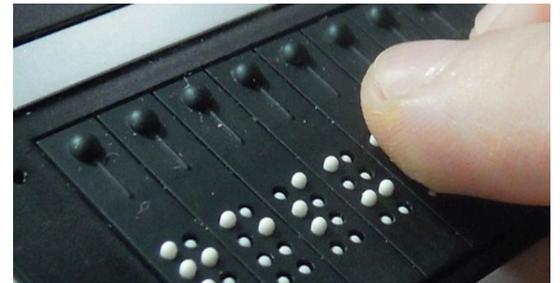
We will be returning January 2025, with more canes for the younger kids and I plan to preach another three-day revival at the blind



village. We have already shipped the canes ahead along with two braille bibles, and a braille concordance. I plan to leave these with the schools for the blind. The work will continue and we will see what God would have us do in the future. Please keep this ministry in your prayers.

Technology Upgrade

Technology is always advancing forward. It is a never-ending challenge to keep up with the changes. We have done well to stay up-to-date with the audio ministry devices through the years. However, we are slightly behind on the advancement of Braille technology. We have updated our Braille embossers through the years to keep up with the demands of printing braille productions. E-readers, or refreshable braille devices have been available for some time now, but have an expensive price tag that some can not afford. After discussing with the National Library Services (NLS) at the NFB convention earlier this year, they now have a refreshable braille device that is on a free loan-based system. Similar to the NLS Audio Players, a person would have to apply for and qualify for the e-reader. Once the blind person has received the e-reader, they will be able to use it until they passed on, then their family would send it back to NLS.



With these devices becoming readily available to the blind community, we need to adapt to this advancement in technology. These devices will have an SD card installed to be able to read a braille document. We need these SD cards and an effective way to mail them. Braille formatted documents are not large in occupying storage space, so any SD card storage capacity would work well. If you could donate new or used SD cards or if you want to help with a financial donation, this would help us greatly get this advancement started for ICBM. If you have any questions, please contact us.

Thanks
Giving

Heartfelt Greeting for the Holidays

This special time encourages contemplation of our thankfulness to God for His guidance and blessings. We mark Thanksgiving as a tribute to God's past benevolence and the new year as a symbol of optimism for God's future provisions. Christmas celebrates Jesus' birth, through which His sacrifice and resurrection grant us eternal salvation and reunion with God. May God's blessings envelop you and yours during this Holiday Season.



2024 Conferences

NFB & NCCB Conventions

At the beginning of July, I attended the National Federation of the Blind (NFB) convention. At the beginning of August, Mike and I

traveled to the National Church Conference of the Blind (NCCB). Both of these gatherings proved effective in reaching our



audience with materials. I prepared a suitcase full of Christian Braille Materials for each conference. We distributed all of the materials while attending, and have a list of people to add to our

mailing list for both audio and braille productions. It has been a pleasure the last few months being able to network and connect with many new people about the products that ICBM provides. Hearing



testimonies of how people came to know Christ is always a blessing to hear. We continue to share about God's word and love through these connections and they are able to happen because you support ICBM.

International Conference on Missions

The International Conference on Missions (ICOM) meets November 13-18 in Lexington, KY. We always look forward to making connections with other missionaries that may lead to the use our resources to minister to more people. The Africa Mission

Please visit us at Booth 742

Trip is a perfect example of this. Mike Smith met Matt Lee from Psalms 82:3 Mission at ICOM in 2020. Matt asked Mike how he could effectively minister to the Village of Blind people in Liberia. This connection, which was

made at the conference, has opened the door for Mike and ICBM to minister to this group of blind people that we had not met or known about before. Please pray that these connections we make at these conferences will guide people to the introduction or deepening of a relationship they need with Jesus Christ.

Donations

ICBM is able to provide our services to the blind community free of charge because of the generosity of our supporters. We invite you, if you are able and willing, to be a part of helping ICBM reach the Blind community with God's Love, His Scripture, and If they accept it, His gift of Salvation through Jesus. Please help us to spread the word of this invitation by sending donations by mail.

New Neighbors

We are pleased to welcome Hippo Valley Christian Mission (HVCM) as a neighboring mission. Our office building, located on KCU's campus, has had office space that was available for use when a missionary needed it. HVCM is a mission that started here in Grayson and has a deep connection at KCU as well. They were looking for a new office space in June, and started moving in at the beginning of July. This shared office space is encouraging for both parties and hopes to get more involved with students and staff of KCU. Hippo Valley has initiated conversations with KCU and we hope to



Recent Open House during KCU's Fall Homecoming

restart a Missions Club on campus to get students involved and interested in being missionaries in the future. I want to encourage you to check out their information at hippovalley.org.

While we have enjoyed the facility for five years, we have never had carpet in our offices. As Hippo Valley Christian Mission moved into the building, they elected to carpet their space. We took advantage of the carpet company already being in the building and had our offices carpeted too. It really is a significant improvement from the cement floor and we feel blessed to have carpet as cooler weather is arriving. As you think about your year-end giving, would you consider sending us a gift to help offset the \$3700 cost of the carpet?

Readers Needed!

Are you an expressive, fluent reader? Do you want to help ICBM with their mission to provide Christian materials that are not otherwise available to the blind? ICBM sends out recordings of Sunday School lesson books, daily devotionals, Christian Standard/Lookout magazine, and other materials to all visually impaired people who request them.

To read for ICBM, you must have access to a computer with a microphone, and a quiet time and place in which to record. If you live near Grayson, you can come to the ICBM office and record in one of our dedicated rooms.

Readers may work on their own schedule, reading as much or as little as they are able. Support is available for installing and using the free software that is used for recording. If you are willing to read for ICBM, please our office.

Visiting Your Church

If you would be interested in having ICBM come visit your church, please call or email us. We are looking to reach out as much as we can and communicate with you personally.

STAY IN TOUCH

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