

# Chapter 48

# Stories and Testimonies

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Throughout our history, God has done some amazing things through Open Air Campaigners. The following pages contain a sampling of true stories illustrating the impact this mission, in general, and our missionary staff, in particular, have had on the lives of people we've met or trained over the years. Many of these stories have taken place on the front lines of evangelism, as reported by our OAC staff who faithfully present Christ every day. We are grateful that God has brought to this mission men and women who are equipped and willing to put themselves in the midst of a spiritual battle for the souls of men, women, boys, and girls. Our staff have seen firsthand what God will do when we allow Him to be in control. May the following stories encourage and renew in you a fresh passion to share the life-giving message of the gospel to a lost and dying world.

## Three Testimonies From Rob

Rob George has served as an evangelist in Australia and has provided leadership at the national and international levels over the years. Rob shares the following three stories as a sampling of how he has seen God work.

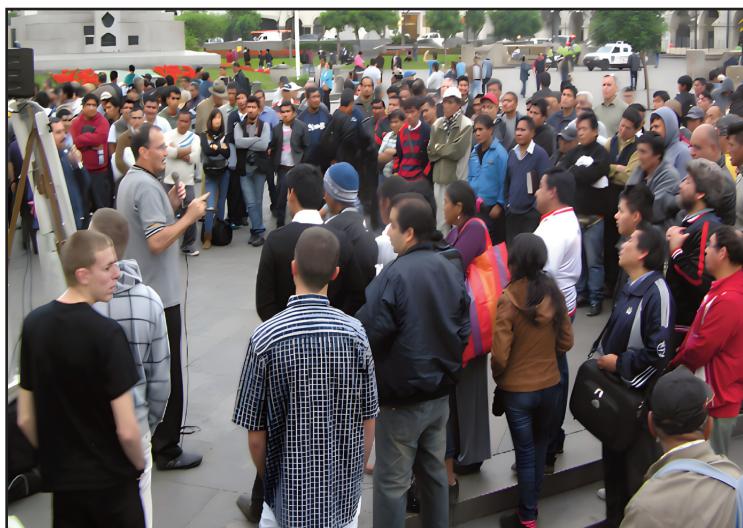
### Singapore

"In Singapore, in the week prior to Easter on one occasion, as we were setting up before our program, when a local church youth leader was there to lead a song before we started. He came to us and said, 'You were here at this school ten years ago. I was a student here back then. You prayed with us at the end of your program and asked us to put our hand up if we had prayed. I did not put my hand up, I was too shy, but I did pray and accepted the Lord that day. When I left school I went to Bible College and now I'm employed by the church that is attached to this school. You guys didn't know that I responded that day, nobody knew except me... and God. But I just wanted to encourage you to keep up the good work!'



## Schools' ministry

"In South Australia in Adelaide's Western suburbs we have the opportunity to work in schools. Kids say all sorts of cute things and sometimes ask wonderful questions. One day a boy asked, 'Do you work for Jesus?' He got that right!"



## Lima, Peru

"On one occasion in San Martin Plaza, Lima, Peru, I was being translated by David Proaño from Ecuador. We experienced what the old-timers refer to as a 'holy hush.' A big crowd, but you could have heard a pin drop. We could have gone on preaching for hours! I felt that I needed to get out of the way because the Holy Spirit was coming through! I wish it was always like that when preaching in the open air!"

## God At Work In Brazil

Dr. Wade Akins served with Pioneer Missions, based in Jackson, Tennessee, ministering in America and overseas. He has trained missionaries as church planters in 54 nations around the world. Here is a testimony he shared with us regarding OAC.

"The Lord used OAC to change my life. I met David Wilson when I was doing street and youth ministry in the Washington, DC area. I contacted David, and he taught me how to do the illustrated message. I got me an old truck and fixed it up and went to various areas, showed the film and did the illustrated message at nights.

"In 1982 God called me to Brazil as a full time missionary stationed in Belo Horizonte, Minas Gerais, Brazil. After a year in Portuguese language school, I contacted David and asked him if he would come to Belo Horizonte and retrain me in the illustrated message preaching method. He was in the New York office at the time. He came to Brazil and



WADE & BARBARA AKINS

trained me for three full weeks. We preached at the main downtown Plaza 7 of Belo Horizonte to thousands of lost people. (Editors note: This Plaza 7 location refers to Praça Sete de Setembro (September Seventh Square), a major public square in the downtown area of Belo Horizonte, Brazil. It's a central point in the city, located near the Central Station, and is surrounded by other important sites.)

"We also traveled throughout the interior, showed The Jesus Film and preached to thousands of people.

"After David left, I continued the ministry. I trained other Brazilians and missionaries how to use this method. Once, during Carnaval, I had a team and we preached at Plaza 7 for ten straight days 24 hours a day! Each year during Carnaval, we went to the city Salvador, Bahia where tens of thousands gather to celebrate with parades and drinking. We set up preaching stations along the parade route with the sketchboard and preached to thousands of people from 4 p.m. to 2 a.m. each night. I also had a special truck with a platform on top and preached to over three-quarters of a million people on top of the truck and on the streets.

"Today, my ministry has turned global and we still use this method in various nations; mostly in schools and children's programs. I have trained others who are volunteers to share the gospel using this method.

"I also use the God-Man message anywhere and everywhere using a napkin or a sheet of paper. I have a You Tube Channel that goes worldwide and my main message, The Cross of Christ, which can be viewed all over the world.

"So, all I can say is THANK YOU, DAVID WILSON AND OAC."



## From Students to Teachers

Dr. Jeff Brawner has been working in missions for 20 years. He has served as a pastor of two churches, a missionary to Brazil for seven years, and as the chair of the Missions Department at Mid-America Baptist Theological Seminary. He has trained church planters in Guyana, Honduras, Brazil, Nicaragua, Malaysia, India, China, Romania, Vietnam, Tanzania, Indonesia, Ivory Coast, and Nigeria. Here is a word from Dr. Brawner regarding his experience with OAC.

"I was taught the paint talk [sketchboard method] when I was a volunteer worker in Brazil. I was 21, very nervous, and was asked to preach my first open-air meeting. I got on top of a truck with a platform set up in an open football stadium, and waited for the crowd to come. 3500 people showed up! I started preaching the message, forgot the opening lines after about three seconds, recovered, and finished eight minutes later by giving a gospel appeal. People flooded the stage. I have now been in the ministry for 31 years. To date, that first sermon is still the largest crowd I ever spoke to!"

"Since that time, I have taught hundreds of individuals how to do the paint talk, and the people I have trained have taught several hundred more. We ended up using the paint talk message in combination with The Jesus Film throughout Northeast Brazil for many years. One of my co-workers stopped counting after he had preached it to 20,000 people. I use it more on a smaller scale now ... in one-on-one evangelism in coffee shops in America. Or, I take it into classrooms when I get to do evangelistic outreaches in South America.

"OAC impacted my life mightily, and I have seen the fruit of their labor. I really was never trained by an 'official' representative of OAC but, instead, by a disciple of one of your trainers. Now it has been passed on at least two generations more (and probably more than that).

"Thank you for all you do."



## Suffer The Little Children

Rev. Strother Gross is a chaplain and pastor who shares the following.

"I participated in training early in my pastoral ministry, at Lancaster Bible College, sometime around 1992. One person who has made a lasting impression on me was Eric Briscoe. We were in Kensington [an inner-city section of Philadelphia], having just finished the last presentation of the day. Everyone (except Eric) was in the van. We were all tired and ready to start the trip back to campus, some dinner, and rest. Someone said, "What's the holdup?" Looking out from the van, I saw Eric sitting on the curb with a boy who was about six or so. I got out of the van to see what was happening. Eric was patiently listening and sharing the fact that Jesus loved this young man. I was impressed greatly by observing him, and I realized that it might be possible God had brought us all here so that this encounter might occur. It certainly made an impression upon me, I have often recalled what dedication looks like.



"It has been many years since my first training. I have used the skills I learned in many different places. Vacation Bible School is probably the most used. Currently, I work in a retirement village and find the sketches are well received by patients with dementia and other challenges. It helps them to stay engaged with a message or group discussion."

## OAC Blesses The Local Church

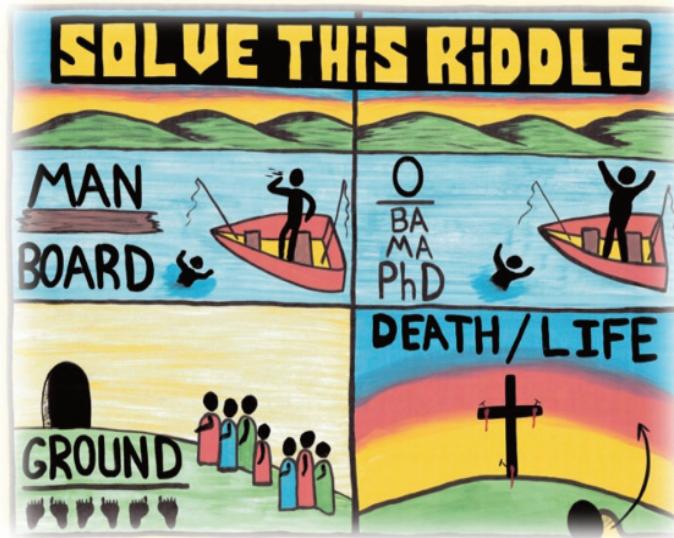
Testimony from Stephen Boom, pastoral assistant at Grace Bible Church (GBC) in Richmond, Virginia.

"We at Grace Bible Church are incredibly thankful for the ministry of Paul Adams. Since he and Carmina moved to Richmond, his impact on our church and this area has been evident. Paul is constantly encouraging the saints here in the work of evangelism, through both modeling and teaching. His passion for bringing the gospel to the lost is contagious! Over these past seven years of having the Adams at GBC, Paul and I have been able to partner together to bring hundreds of high school youth to Ocean City, Maryland, for evangelism training. Paul has also led mission trips with our youth overseas, and he regularly preaches at colleges across Virginia during the week. Paul has been doing this with churches and youth groups for 30 years! I say all this to give praise to God for his ministry, and those who so faithfully support, equip, and make him available to do it. Thank you, OAC! Paul is a true evangelist, both doing the work and training the saints ... may the Lord continue to bless Paul and raise up more men like him!"

## Not Quite Full-Time OAC, But That's OK

Here is an anonymous testimony from a person who almost came on staff with us permanently, but didn't quite make it; God blessed anyway!

"In the fall of 2014, I was interested in applying to go to the OAC training ... one of the requirements for the application was to attend an evangelism outreach with an OAC worker. I decided to go visit an OAC worker in a neighboring state. I contacted the worker, and we set a date for me to visit. I was still employed but not making much money. When it came time to go to the neighboring state, I only had enough money to fill my tank up to get there. I drove up and met the OAC worker and his family. They graciously said, after the outreach, I could stay the night in their guest room in the basement. That night we drove downtown to the state capitol for an outreach. A team of us went in two vans, and I think we took two "preach-o-matic" sketchboards. There was a big crowd that night, because it was the night they lit the giant Christmas tree in the Capitol area. The following picture [below] was what was posted on the boards. We were instructed to spread out and stand around the two boards and try to help people solve the four riddles on the board. The worker took us through the riddles so we would know the answers. The temperature that night was about 14 degrees. To my surprise, a lot of people stopped to try and solve the riddles. The answer to the last riddle was "life after death." When the puzzle solvers got that one, we asked what they thought would happen to a person after they died? That led to some very interesting conversations! Two of the many people I got to talk to that night were a young college couple from the state university in that state. They had a lot of questions, and we talked for about 40 minutes. Again, I was surprised because it was so cold! The Holy Spirit helped me answer their questions by showing them what the Bible said. And I finally got to share the gospel and what the Bible said about how a person makes it to heaven. Again, the Holy Spirit brought to mind scriptures to share with them and show how a person gets to heaven, by repenting and by faith, believing in Jesus' death on the cross and resurrection, in other words, how His death, paid in full for all our sins! The couple said they had a bad experience the week earlier at the state university they attended. They said there were people on campus who were shouting with megaphones about what perverted sinners they were. They got in an argument with them. They said they liked our method much better, because they got to have a conversation, ask questions, and learn what the Bible said. I loved talking with that



couple and others that night! It was an amazing way to share the gospel! My heart was touched deeply, and I had a greater burden to share the gospel! Plus, on the way home in the van, I heard about the conversations others on the team had with their people. That touched my heart even more! I was convinced that night that the Lord wanted me to complete the OAC application and go to the training in Boston.

“Now, the next problem was how was I going to get gas to get home? Well, when it was time to leave, The OAC worker shared that he felt the Lord wanted him to put gas in my car! I had never told anyone about not having gas or money to buy it! The worker had some big cans with gas in them. He generously emptied them into my car’s gas tank. Problem solved! Thank You, Jesus! I now had enough gas to get home! And on top of that, the OAC worker gave me a jar of raw honey from their bee hive!

“Though I did go to OAC training in Boston, I never permanently made the decision to be on OAC staff. However, the Lord helped me adapt what I learned that night to fit me ... the Lord helped me go on three college campuses in my area and share the gospel with many college students and others. He also provided others who would go with me. I thank the Lord for how He used the OAC worker and OAC to do this!”

## **OAC - A Ministry Of Encouragement And Discipleship**

As told by Caleb Painter.

“OAC has played a big role in my life, and I am ever thankful for this ministry. I believe the year I first did anything with OAC was in 2012. I was fourteen years old and ended up on a mission trip with Brian Harmon to New York, where we served with Richard Burley. We worked that week doing street preaching, kids clubs, and some subway ministry. In the span of a week, I went from nervously handing out tracts to having deep conversations with unbelievers about Jesus Christ. I was amazed at how OAC functioned and how effective it was at meaningful gospel proclamation and productive conversations. That first week helped me in my own faith to solidify what I believed about sin, the gospel, and the Scriptures.



CALEB PAINTER

“The next year, I went on another trip with Brian; I believe that year was in Washington, DC, with Tom Fox. The year after that, I took the OAC training in Boston with Aaron Wentz and Eric Briscoe. One of the most valuable things for me in being a part of OAC was the discipleship relationships I formed. At a very influential age, I found myself surrounded by men who loved God’s Word, thoroughly understood and defended the gospel, and loved the lost. Brian was a dear friend and mentor to me through high school. I even ended up interning with him for a

summer as he pioneered the open-air ministry in Mid-Michigan. Brian remains a good friend and mentor to me. And today, we still get to do ministry together.

"Through being a part of OAC, I learned what I wanted to do with my life. I found a deep desire to teach and preach the gospel. Two years ago, I became the youth pastor at the church I attend. When I was being interviewed for the position, I told the search committee that I wanted to bring Brian and OAC into the public school nearby. After working on it for a few months, we were able to start 'Finding Answers' at Fulton Schools. Right now, we meet once a week with the middle schoolers and once a week with the high schoolers. OAC helped in many ways to prepare me for pastoring.

"As I reflect on my time serving with OAC, I think what impacted me the most was my relationship with Brian. Here was a man who was serving faithfully in ministry and still being a faithful husband and father. He told me early on, 'Caleb, don't ever sacrifice your family on the altar of ministry.' Those words have haunted me--in a good way--as I seek to love my wife and raise my children according to scripture all the while pastoring. Tears come to my eyes as I consider all that Brian has meant to me. I still have a paintboard and use it occasionally at my church with the youth, VBS, or the kids' clubs we do. I am so thankful for OAC and pray that God would continue to use this ministry to further His kingdom."

## OAC Training Those Who Train Others

Here is a testimony from a brother who received training from us and then went on to duplicate that training to many others in multiple countries.

"My wife and I participated in an OAC training with Chris Schroeder in 1989 in San Leandro, California. After that training, we preached weekly on the campus in Berkley, California. We returned to our native country of Germany. Since 1995, we have had a discipleship training program which includes street evangelism. We train eight interns per year. The interns have come from Germany, Austria, Italy, Brazil, Croatia, China, Hungary, Romania, Norway, the Czech Republic, and Switzerland."



USING THE SKETCHBOARD IN MUNICH, GERMANY

## Ministry Beyond OAC

It is not uncommon for God to use former OAC staff to use what they learned with us to continue His Kingdom expansion. Here are a couple of good examples.

### **A Legacy For His Glory**

As told by the son of a former OAC staff member.

"My older sister was born in August of 1957, and I was born in March of 1958. At some point, dad and mom left OAC and joined what was then the Far Eastern Gospel Crusade (now SEND International). In 1961, we boarded the SS Tarantel, sailing from Oakland, California, to the Philippines, where dad and mom worked as church-planting missionaries.

"In 1970, not many months after his 40th birthday, dad was killed by a drunken policeman, and our family (now including two more daughters) moved back to the States. Mom got her master's degree and worked for many years as a high school counselor in Fresno, California. As for me, I attended school in Fresno, got married, and had two daughters of my own. After almost 20 years of working in the retail field, I felt God calling me to pursue the pastorate. I attended seminary and, in 2006, became the solo pastor of Parkdale Community Church, a small congregation in Parkdale, Oregon, a position I still hold. It was not until 2014, a couple of years after my mom died, that my wife and I were able to go to the Philippines. I learned the rest of the story about my dad's death and the legacy he left. In 1970, a scholarship fund was established in his name to assist with paying for the education of Filipino men and women who desired to pursue Bible college or seminary. That fund, the Nolan Willems Memorial Scholarship Fund, helped to pay for the education of quite a few pastors, educators, and Bible teachers. The funding lasted for over 40 years (we had the privilege of meeting the last recipient), and in those years, God has used those faithful folks to continue the work of the gospel in that country. We met pastors, Bible teachers, and even a seminary president who benefited from that fund.

"I share all this with you for a couple of reasons. First. Because I am confident that the training and experience dad received while working with OAC stood him in good stead during his time as a church-planting missionary. Second, to share with you the story of my father's life, death, and legacy, a strong witness to the truth that God works in the lives of his faithful witnesses, even if those lives end in what the world would consider to be a tragic loss. He has used what this world intended for evil for His glory and for the good of His kingdom."



## Word of Life Connection

Here is a second example of how God has used OAC training to further His Kingdom beyond our OAC borders.

Sam Frey grew up at Word of Life Bible Institute in Upstate New York, where his father worked. After serving on staff with us in the greater New York City area for several years, he left in 1991 to join Word of Life as its evangelism ministries coordinator. In this role, he has trained and led hundreds of teams into the open air in about 80 cities here in the States and in 14 nations worldwide. Our OAC connection with Word of Life is a testimony of God's ability to unite believers and organizations together for His glory. The following section is a compilation from Word of Life publicity literature and Sam Frey's written perspective, highlighting Word of Life's emphasis on open-air evangelism in the ministry God has entrusted to them.



## HISTORY OF OPEN AIR EVANGELISM

SAM FREY '80

*Pictured From Left to Right:  
Jeff Welch '14 & '15, Aaron Krause,  
Sam Frey '80, MaryAnn & Del '93  
Benner, Jim Harvey '88,*

*During the 1940s, Word of Life founder Jack Wyrtzen held street meetings in New York City. Today, the open-air evangelism team there continues to preach the gospel in towns and cities in the United States and around the world. We seek to become more efficient and helpful in reaching the lost and encouraging other believers to do the same. The rope trick and sketchboard are the premier tools used, although we have included puppets, drama, music, gospel illusions, prayer stations, and balloon twisting. Progress is being made toward more of a presence on the internet, including online follow-up lessons for new believers, evangelism information and aids, staff news, and church referral listings.*

*In 2019, the Lord allowed us to conduct 637 sketchboard meetings. The gospel was presented personally in one-to-one dialogue to 5,503 people, 325 of whom made a profession of faith in Christ as Savior! Also, the entire First-Year New York Bible Institute class and many staff went to New York City in April. During this event, 237 sketchboard messages were given; 2,990 heard the gospel in personal dialogue with team members and 119 souls made professions of faith in Christ! Throughout the year, the needs of 1,210 people have brought their requests to our prayer station. The ministry has also interacted with over 70 local churches.*

*These are a lot of numbers, but each represents one life forever changed. We praise the Lord for the God-glorifying, Spirit-endowed efforts of our ministry partners and countless others who have affected many souls. As a team, we're humbled and grateful to have played a small part in it.*

*Timeline* 1940s – Word of Life ministry was founded with Jack Wyrtzen holding street meetings in New York City.

Early 1970s – Jack Wyrtzen and Art Williams, Open Air Campaigners' national director, devised a plan by which Word of Life Bible Institute students could gain practical, personal, and open-air evangelism training and experience by joining Open Air Campaigners' staff in New York City. Open Air Campaigners supplied the ministry literature, tools, equipment, and lodging. Word of Life supplied the students with food for the group. This began as a designated team of students for weekend trips.

Early 1980s – Approximately 160 students took ten-day trips. They were given weekend training in New Jersey and then divided between Boston, Chicago, New York City, and Philadelphia. This program was repeated with the same students during the fall and spring quarters.

Early 1990s – The open-air evangelism department at Word of Life began with Sam Frey joining the Word of Life staff. Trips slowly transitioned to converging exclusively on New York City, and the ten-day trips shortened to six days. Training moved from New Jersey to the Bible Institute campus.

Late 1990s to 2017 – With the introduction of Missions Reality, New York City trips were reserved for first-year students. Trips became varied in length due to factors such as the addition of other ministry ventures and the availability of transportation.

2018 to 2019 – Second-year fall volunteer weekend teams formed. In April, all the first-year students went to New York City for two days of open-air ministry.



*SAM FREY AT THE BOARD*

### What Happens During Open-Air Evangelism

Open-Air Evangelism includes elements of tract distribution in the subway, sketchboard presentations, rope tricks, and kids' ministry.

### Open-Air Meeting Locations

New York City, Chicago, Boston, Philadelphia

### Housing Locations

Manhattan Bible Church, Fellowship Deaconry, Eric Briscoe's home, Pacific Garden Mission

### OAC staff involved through the years

Art Williams, Chris Schroeder, George Naggy, David Braun, Bob Ewerth, Joe Toy, Karen Boorse-Williams, Eric Briscoe, Gordon Loop, Ed Lowe, Lou Sari, Lisa Lundstrom, Billy Richter

Here is a testimony from one of the students Sam trained to do effective open-air evangelism who joined OAC for a summer of service.

"We were in Times Square having a session. I was leading it. I was from Word of Life for the summer ministry with Open Air Campaigners in the mid '80s. I do not remember what the board message was, but a young kid, probably around 10-12 years old, started heckling me. He was with the Lost Tribe of Israel, a black group that thinks they are the found tribe that was lost when the Diaspora happened. Well, leaning on a car was a black lady who was a postal worker. She was listening and jumped up and got the young boy's attention. She said, 'What color is your blood?' 'Red,' he answered. 'And what color is that man's blood?' 'Red.' 'That's right,' she replied, 'And that means all of us, black and white, are the same. Sin is what separates us and it is only the blood of Jesus that saves us, and makes us whole.' Wow!!! I was blown away and still to this day remember that lady."

## **Creative Evangelism**

Our staff typically use the sketchboard to illustrate the salvation message. But, sometimes the Lord prompts us to be creative and pursue alternative ways to share Christ. Here is an account as told by one of our OAC staff in Norway.

"Last spring, we got into contact with a young woman from an African Muslim family when we were out evangelizing. She mentioned that she was a Muslim, but during the conversation, it became evident that she had grown more skeptical of Islam lately and that she was seeking answers. She had already heard the gospel of Jesus through videos online, and she had read a little bit in the Bible. One year prior, she had found a Bible in her mailbox. Later, we found out that the Bible she had found in her mailbox had been put there by OAC evangelists when they were distributing Bibles in the area. We

exchanged contact information and met her again at a cafe where we continued our conversation, and we read a little bit in the Bible. She was then invited to several Christian gatherings and services, and after a while, she started calling herself a Christian and declared that she believes in Jesus.

“A little while later, she moved to another city, and we were anxious about how things would develop as she was completely alone and new in the faith. But our prayers were answered, and she could walk in the good works prepared for her. She was well received by Christians, even some with experience from Muslim countries.

“Her faith in Jesus could mean losing close and essential relationships, but despite all this, we are joyful that she now has Jesus as her Lord! Witnessing a miracle like this inspires awe and gratitude towards God.”

## God’s Faithfulness

The following is told by former Minneapolis branch director, Chuck Phelps, in his 1982 newsletter.

“ ‘If you don’t shut up, I’ll wrap this wrecking bar around your neck!’ Some years ago, that’s what a construction worker told me at a noon-hour meeting in a high school that was being built. In the same meeting, there was a man named Dusty. Dusty always gave me a bad time when I would go to the construction jobs he worked on. This went on for years, and then I lost track of Dusty.

“About two or three years ago, I found out where he lived and went to see him. He had retired from construction work and was in the hospital to have a kidney removed that was cancerous.

“Last winter, Dusty’s wife called me to say that Dusty was in the hospital once again and wanted to talk to me. I went right over to Unity Hospital and found Dusty in a room by himself. Dusty had just found out he was full of cancer and would soon die. He said the pain had been so bad he had thought of suicide and called me because he knew I cared. After all, I always returned even when he had given me a bad time. Dusty asked the Lord Jesus to come into his life that day!

“The next day, Fran and I went over to the hospital and prayed for him, asking the Lord to touch his body. The following day, Dusty went home from the hospital. This summer, he painted his house, put in a large garden, and worked with the construction crew for a few weeks. Praise God for His faithfulness!”



DUSTY, NOW A FOLLOWER OF CHRIST

## Long-Term Fruit

Oftentimes, our staff do not see immediate spiritual results. However, that does not mean God isn't working. OAC Jamaica director, Keith Phillips, shares the following examples of how the Lord has used OAC to conduct ministry that lasts the test of time.

### A Pastor's Journey

"In 2008, the director of Youth for Christ asked me to conduct a rally out in the country. After I gave the invitation, several young people came forward. While they were being counselled, a pastor came over to me, shook my hand, and asked me if I had ever visited a certain school out in the country. I told him, 'Yes, but that was nearly 20 years ago.' He said that was when he gave his life to Christ. At that time, he was only 10 years old. He was now pastoring two churches to the glory of God. In 2023, he was called to pastor a church in Edmonton, Alberta, Canada.

### A Church Leader

"About 20 years ago, I went to a high school for devotions. After the presentation, I gave an invitation to the students. Later, while I was packing up the equipment, a student came over to me and said, 'Uncle Keith, I gave my heart to the Lord, and I would like to come to your church.' I told her that I didn't pastor a church, but she would not take no for an answer. I had a helper with me, so I told him to get her phone number so we could invite her to youth fellowship at our family's church. She came that night, and she has never stopped coming. After being discipled and mentored, she was baptized. With a heart for evangelism, she continues to be one of the most active members of the youth fellowship, as well as in leadership roles in the Sunday School and evangelism teams. To God belongs the Glory!

### A School Teacher

"About two years ago, I visited a school that I hadn't been to because of Covid-19, and they were so excited to see me. After the devotions, I offered the students a correspondence course to learn more about the Bible. A teacher was close by, so I asked her if she would take the names of the interested students and make a list so that I could arrange for them to get the lessons. She said that she would assist. As we chatted, she said she has a Bible Club at the school. Then she said, 'If we don't get these kids between the ages of 12-18, we've lost them.' I said to her that most of the kids I meet today tell me that they got saved before the age of twelve. Imagine my astonishment when she said, 'I am one of them! I am 34 years old, and 25 years ago, you came to my school, and I gave my life to Christ.' Her Bible Club has 25 participants.

### At Camp

"After the devotions at a school, a little girl ran over and hugged me and said, 'Uncle Keith, do you remember me?' I said to her, 'Tell me about it.' She said 'Do you remember last year when you were at Bible Camp, and I gave my life to Jesus?' I asked her 'How old are you?' She said, 'Seven years old.' That means she was six years old when she gave her life to the Lord! Interestingly, at that same camp, when then they

introduced me as the speaker, a lady came over to me and said, 'When I was a little girl, you came to my church and did VBS. I gave my heart to the Lord, and I have never seen you again until today.' At the time of us meeting, she was 27 years old. All glory to the Saviour.

### **High School teacher**

"About two years ago, I was parking at the mall when a lady drove up right behind me and came out her car with a big grin. She said, 'Every time I see your van, I remember when you came to my school for devotions. I was only six years old, and I gave my life to Jesus.' I asked her what she was currently doing, and she said that she was a lecturer at a high school, and at her church, she teaches Sunday School and sings in the choir.

### **Praise Team Leader**

"Each January, the Keswick Convention is held across the island [of Jamaica], as part of the Keswick Fellowship events around the world. This year, para-church organizations were invited to set up displays to promote and highlight their ministry to the wider public. While at our booth, a young man came over and gave me a big hug. He said, 'Uncle Keith, in 2003 you came to my school, and I gave my heart to the Lord.' Now he heads the praise & worship team at his church, and was one of the worship leaders at this year's Keswick Convention."

## **OAC Evangelism Teams**

In these days of deception and darkness, there is still hope. God continues to draw individuals to Himself as the light of the gospel is being sought by those who want to hear. The following are testimonies from Lynchburg, Virginia, Liberty University students whom Eric Briscoe and his team trained and then took out for six days in the open air of Miami to share the Gospel of Christ.

**Grace:** "Talk about a life-changing trip! Not only was I given the space to have some really good conversations with people on the street, I was given the opportunity to learn about evangelism from some truly godly people who passionately love the Lord and are so full of wisdom. Their hearts were full of compassion, and their approach to sharing the gospel was both bold and gentle, showing me how to effectively communicate God's love. Through their example, I grew in confidence and deepened my understanding of the importance of prayer and listening intently to the Holy Spirit. It was a transformative experience that not only strengthened my faith but also ignited a renewed passion to share the gospel with others. I now have the tools to share the gospel to so many people around the Lynchburg area and back home in DC. I had a conversation with my hometown pastor about starting a kids' camp for kiddos in the neighborhood next door in order to meet more of the community and show them the love and truth of God's Word. I am in awe of the ways that God worked in me and through me during the Miami trip, and I cannot wait to continue to share the message of Jesus with the lost people of this world."

**Faith:** "This past week spent in Miami was amazing. It was obvious that the ministry there has such an intense impact on the community, and on me as well. Spreading the gospel and God's love to the children was so sweet, there is such a need in this area! The street evangelism on South Beach was also so special; it is crazy to see how God works. The conversations I had and seeds planted are sure to have an eternal impact, if not on anybody else, then definitely on me. The amount I learned this week about how to properly fulfill the great commission and evangelize to people that need it will forever have an impact on me and how I live my life. It was such a blessing to be on this trip and be poured into by these amazing leaders and be able to cover the city of Miami in prayer."

**Carter:** "This past week was an amazing gift of fellowship, discipleship, and evangelism! I was so blessed with the faith and pursuit of Christ I saw in my fellow students. The leaders also poured into us so much and modeled the joy and boldness of Christ! It was such a blessing to spend intentional time sharing the gospel with kids who are in tough neighborhoods and seeing their life and joy. God used the week to open my eyes wider to his faithfulness and encourage my trust in him to save souls as I obey the great commission."

**Kacie:** "During the trip, I learned much about myself and how to better evangelize. I valued all the leaders' input and stories. I especially loved hearing from Brian about having two conversations at once, one with God and one with the person. I enjoyed training for the kids' lesson and learning small details to help them listen better like keeping them engaged in the letters I write on the board. Most of all, I enjoyed talking to lost people on the street. I like being challenged and forced to learn more about the gospel. It pushes me to grow, and sharing the gospel reignites my passion for the Lord. I am very grateful that I was able to experience it again this year."

**Hannah:** "This week was wonderful! I was so encouraged to be able to spend a week learning how to share my faith alongside a team of believers!! The Lord taught me this week what it looks like to fully rely on Him for strength. John 15 illustrates how we are the branches, and Jesus is the Vine, and apart from Him we can do nothing. This week I was able to learn firsthand the abundance of fruit that comes from abiding in Him. I was also encouraged to see this type of faith and reliance on God modeled by the OAC leaders!!"

**Elise:** "My week in Miami was amazing! God taught me so much about myself and Him! I learned my heart for evangelism, the importance of trusting that God is working in everyone's life to bring them to Him. I was blessed through the change of culture and climate that I got to experience in Miami. The experience of street evangelism is one that not many Christians experience but we all should! I'm so grateful for this opportunity to love people in Miami!"

## OAC In Public Schools

With so much violence happening in our school systems in recent years, our Michigan director, Brian Harmon, shares that God is at work, even in the midst of much turmoil. He and his team have established an ongoing in-school Bible club outreach in multiple public schools in the state of Michigan.

As Brian and two youth pastors were entering a particular public school, the school's superintendent parked next to them and walked in at the same time. Past conversations with him were few, and Brian didn't really know how the superintendent viewed the Bible Club. During their short discussion on the way into the school, the superintendent said, "So many broken children. Some are so broken they are a danger to themselves and to others. Thank you, men, for what you are doing here. These kids need your consistency and something stable." This school had been on lockdown the day before due to a threat, so the superintendent's words took on fresh meaning. Brian also shared that three different teachers from three different schools pulled him aside one week to thank him for what he and the teams are doing in their schools. "We need this so much." "You are offering hope to these kids, and they need it!" "I love, love, love what you're doing here." Brian had not met any of these three teachers before, but it's undeniable that God is using their efforts to reach beyond just the students.

