

CELEBRATING 25 YEARS OF MINISTRY!

MAKING A DIFFERENCE

WINTER 2019

WE NEED THE HAND OF GOD TO FINISH THE JOB

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CENTRAL AMERICA
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PASTORS ERIC & MICHELLE JOHNS

PASTOR ERIC T. JOHNS

This year the Buffalo Dream Center celebrates twenty-five years of ministry! It is hard to believe we have been reaching out to people with the love of Jesus for a quarter of a century. This special anniversary reminded me that we can never give up. God has called us to finish what we have started.

There is story recorded in the Old Testament book of Second Kings. Elisha, the prophet of God, was a thorn in the flesh to the wicked king Joash. Again and again, Elisha went to Joash and called him to repentance saying, "What you are doing is wrong. Turn and worship the true God."

But Joash did not care. He had been raised to worship the false god of Baal. He never listened to the words of Elisha.

When Elisha reached about ninety year of age and was about to die, Joash decided to pay him a visit. Kings did not usually visit people on their death beds. It is even more unusual in this case because Joash did not even like Elisha!

When King Joash walked into the room the Bible tells us that he said. "Oh, my father, my father the chariot of Israel and the horsemen." He was referring to Elisha's mentor, Elijah, who was caught up into heaven by angelic chariots. But he also meant something else by his declaration. He meant that preacher had done more to save Israel than all of the chariots and horsemen put together. He meant that this preacher who stood for righteousness had done more to preserve the nation than all of the armies, chariots, and horsemen.

The king knew that Elisha had kept the nation from destruction. Joash did not agree with Elisha. He did not like him. He had laughed at him and rejected his preaching. But he knew in his heart that it was the man of God that saved the nation. So he saluted the prophet of God.

Do you know what Elisha did? He took the opportunity to preach a message to the king. He started off with an illustration. He said, "King, I want you to go get your bow." So the King went and got his bow. Then he said, "Now I want you to get some arrows." And he went and got some arrows. Then he told the king to open the east window and shoot the arrows.

The king obeyed the preacher, got his bow and he

shot an arrow out the window down into the ground. Then he shot two more arrows and stopped. Elisha said, "Wait a minute. You didn't finish your job. I gave you five or six arrows and you only shot three. Because you only shot three arrows, you won't win the complete victory. You will win three battles but you could of have won five or six if you would have finished the job."

But then Elisha did something special. When he told the king to take the bow and shoot it, he reached over and touched the king on the hand. 2 Kings 13:16 says, "So he put his hand on the bow, and Elisha put his hands on the king's hands."

As the king shot the arrows the hand of the man of God was on the king.

That's a beautiful picture. Elisha was saying to the king, "Whatever you are doing the hand of God ought to be on you all the time."

When I was a little boy I would ask my dad, "Dad, can I drive?" He would put me in his lap. I would put my hand on the steering wheel while sitting on my dad's lap. He would put his big hand around mine. We would drive. Then, I would come home and say, "Mommy, I drove home." But I did not really drive. The hand of my father was around me.

Many times I would drive that car and I would say, "I want to drive myself." My dad would say, "Okay." I would drive and look at something on the side of the road, and drive closer to the ditch. My dad would put his hand back on mine and he would steer it back on the road.

Every time my dad took his hands off there was tragedy and every time he put them back on there was security. Did you know that's the way every Christian ought to live their lives?

You say, "I want to do it myself." You will end up in the ditch. The king humbled himself and let the man of God put his hand upon him. We have to do the same. Some Christians have lost their fire. They have no passion. They used to have joy in serving God, but something is missing. They need the hand of God back upon their lives!

Joash had to learn something else from the dying prophet. He did not shoot all of the arrows. Elisha told him that he did not finish the job.

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Sometimes I have felt discouraged. Honestly, there have been a few times when I have wanted to quit. For the most part, I felt that way because I was doing things in my own strength. I had to get alone with God and get His hand back upon my life again. His presence gives me power to finish the job!

When His hand comes upon me I feel

like saying, "Give me some more arrows! I am not done with the assignment God has for me. I'm not going to waste my life. I'm going to give it all for this generation. My job is not finished until every lost person is healed and every family knows Jesus."

Maybe you are reading this article and the fire is gone, the joy is not there, and your smile

is artificial. You dread getting out of bed in the morning. You are always focused on the negative things around you. Let me encourage to get into God's presence and get his hand upon your life again. Stop striving on your own strength. Get filled with His strength. He has so much more for you to do for Him. Open up the window and shoot the arrows!

BOXES OF LOVE: TOUCHING A CITY FOR 20 YEARS

With twenty distribution sites in Buffalo and Niagara Falls, Boxes of Love helped 2,500 families with food and toys in December. That means more than 7,500 individual people were touched by the Christmas outreach.

It all began with Pastor Eric's week on the streets with Buffalo's homeless. This time, while Michelle was doing missionary work in Nepal, Pastor Eric was joined by his sons and sons-in-law throughout the week. Pastor Eric's father and other pastors also joined him at times during the week. Thanksgiving Day went on record as the coldest in the history of Buffalo. Temperatures were

below freezing most of the week. The local media covered

the community rallied around the Buffalo Dream Center with donations for Boxes of Love.

In early December hundreds of people came for the first two volunteer days to make three thousand bags of groceries. Wrapping gifts continued for about two weeks. Volunteers also showed up at distribution sites to give away toys and food. On Saturday, December 15 history was made at the Buffalo Dream Center's distribution site. Nearly four hundred families went through the line to receive toys, clothing, laundry detergent, and food. Kenmore Alliance Church encouraged their congregation to take part in a day of service. Their volunteers set up a huge clothing store, allowing people to get clothing for all the members of their families.

The Buffalo City Mission worked closely with the Buffalo Dream Center this year, providing canned goods,

turkeys, grocery bags, wrapping paper, and even dinner rolls for the Christmas Eve outreach. The Buffalo City Mission also helped with improvements to the BDC Outreach Center by installing racks for pallets.

Due to the partnership with the Buffalo City Mission, the Buffalo Dream Center had an abundance of food. With more than enough to help the families registered for Boxes of Love, the Buffalo Dream Center was able to supply other local community centers and churches with food for their food pantries. Six pallets of food were loaded into a truck from Bridge City Church, located in Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania. Several other distribution sites took place throughout Buffalo in which hundreds of families received bags of groceries.



An outreach was held at the downtown bus station where many homeless men and women received special Boxes of Love made especially for them. A choir sang Christmas carols and worship songs as Christians took over the bus station. Many received prayer and were invited to the free dinner on Christmas Eve.

The twentieth year of Boxes of Love was the best year ever! The Buffalo Dream Center is looking forward to serving the community for many more years to come.

BOXES OF LOVE TESTIMONIES

Leslie Ordiway

Our team traveled from Pennsylvania to Buffalo to volunteer for two weekends with Boxes of Love. During the large distribution at the Belle Center, we were helping outside as people came to get their groceries. There were many volunteers out there including a hockey team. One young man drew my attention when I overheard someone ask him, "How's your wing?" They were quite far from me and thinking back now I'm surprised I even heard this. I kept my eye on the young man and eventually decided I would approach him and ask him if I could pray for him. I tapped him on the shoulder. He was very tall. I asked him, "What's wrong with your shoulder?" He said it had popped out and it was back in, but it still hurt. That sounded so painful. He seemed very receptive when I asked if I could pray for his shoulder. I simply commanded it to line up



and for pain to leave in Jesus' Name. Brandon thanked me and we went about helping with the distribution.

Several minutes later I spotted a friend of mine talking to Brandon and I knew he was asking how his shoulder felt. Jim looked over at me and gave me the thumbs up! Later I learned Brandon's answer was, "Actually it feels great, like really good!" He was doing shoulder circles and smiling from ear to ear whenever we looked his way.

Victoria Shurr

I received a phone call from a social worker stating she knew of a family in desperate need. She said the family was a single mom, two sets of twins, and some other children. Some of her children were sick and needed extra attention which made life more difficult for the mom. We decided to take extra special care of the family. When we dropped off their presents and food we also included other things they needed. We were even able to provide mattresses. When we dropped the items off, the mom wasn't home. However, the next day we received a voicemail from all of the kids and the mom thanking us. You could tell the family was truly blessed.



Nathaniel Johns

One day I was able to lead a team that delivered Boxes of Love directly to the homes of families. My team and I walked up to a little blue

house. When I stepped up on the porch and knocked on the door, a little boy's head popped out of the window and his face lit up. Then he ran inside. After a few seconds a small girl started screaming, "Christmas is here! Christmas is here!" When they opened up the door they were so happy to receive all of their food and presents for Christmas. If we did not deliver the food and toys this family would not be able to have a special Christmas. This is how it is with many of the families who receive Boxes of Love.

Pastor Eric Johns

During Boxes of Love we get to help thousands of families. However, every year there are some families that truly touch your heart and stand out in your mind. One night, end of Love couple to run deliver minute" I was able to give comfort to a woman who house had burned down that week. She and her husband lost everything in the fire. The simple act of delivering food and toys brought joy during the difficult time they were facing.



CENTER OF HOPE SCHOOL IN INDIA NEEDS TO BE COMPLETED

For more than twenty years Pastor Sagar has overseen the Center of Hope in Guntur, India. The Center of Hope is a Christ-centered home to twenty-three children and widows. It is also the home of a Christian school providing a good education to approximately one hundred children. The school includes English classes. Pastor Sagar also helped plant and now oversees seventy-eight churches in surrounding villages.

Recently government inspectors threatened to shut down the school at the Center of Hope due to the small size of the school building.

Construction began on a new building. Through donations from the Buffalo Dream Center and Network of Related Pastors, the first phase of



construction was completed. However, the Indian government shut down the school. They said the

construction now has to be completed before they allow students to return. The main reason for the closing of the school is the anti-Christian sentiment

in the Indian government. It is becoming increasingly difficult to preach the Gospel in the area in which the Center of Hope is located.

\$20,000 is still needed to complete the school building which will be named "Michelle Academy". Pastor Sagar's desire is to complete the building by March so that the students can return for the new academic year. Please consider giving so that the children can return to school and keep learning about Jesus.

FOUR HUNDRED PEOPLE FILL THE BUFFALO DREAM CENTER ON CHRISTMAS EVE

This was the fourteenth year that Hearts for the Homeless and the Buffalo Dream Center partnered to serve a free Christmas Eve dinner to people in need. Two buses were rented to transport many homeless men and women from downtown Buffalo. The buses were filled to capacity! Families also walked from different areas of the city and the neighborhood surrounding the Dream Center.

Four hundred people attended the event. Volunteers from across Western New York and Canada helped by riding the buses, serving the

food, and even cleaning up after everyone left the building. Everyone in attendance enjoyed a program filled with games, music, and prizes. All of the children received Christmas gifts. A delicious homemade lasagna dinner was served as well as halal chicken biryani for the Muslim families. At the end of the night, more than fifty people gave their lives to Jesus.



CHILDREN'S GOSPEL TELEVISION PROGRAM REACHING ASIA

Shine Star TV, pioneered by Pastor Asher Mansha, has been broadcasting in the city of Karachi, Pakistan. The cable station has been reaching more than twenty million people. But Pastor Asher's desire has been to use satellite technology to reach seventy-nine countries in Asia. On January 5, 2019, Shine Star TV moved from cable to satellite with funding provided for three months. This station is now broadcasting the Gospel of Jesus Christ in the most unreached part of the world reaching countries such as Afghanistan, Iran, Iraq, North Korea, China, Turkey, and other countries in Asia and the Middle East.

Michelle Johns has filmed eighteen episodes of "Kidz Club with Michelle". The show brings the Gospel to life with illustrations that are enjoyed by both children and adults. Pastor Asher plans on filming more episodes of the children's Gospel show, which is the first of its kind in that part of the world, when

Michelle visits his country later this year.

The cost for keeping Shine Star TV on satellite is \$8,000 per month. A donor gave enough money to put Shine Star TV on satellite television for the next three months. However, Pastor Asher is in need of many more partners. If you would like to help continue to reach people who have never heard the Gospel, you can make a donation to Shine Star TV by giving to the Buffalo Dream Center.



OPEN DOOR TO NEPAL

MICHELLE JOHNS

The Lord opened a door for me to go to Nepal this past fall. Nepal is a very poor landlocked nation nestled in the Himalayan Mountains. Many Nepali people live in tiny, remote villages in the hills and mountains. A number of villages can only be accessed by narrow, rough mountain trails. One third of the nation lives off of less than \$1.00 US per day. More than 51% of the nation is illiterate. Up until 2008 it was the world's only Hindu kingdom. Prior to the government change in 2008 there was a brutal civil war in Nepal killing more than 19,000 people and leaving thousands of people displaced. The country has not yet fully recovered from the war. Although there is more freedom for the Christians, it is still very limited. There are anti-conversion laws punishable by fines and imprisonment if caught. These laws are strictly enforced. Foreigners are closely monitored while they are in the country.

During my two week stay in Nepal I preached the Gospel in three different parts of the country, two of them being very remote. A very good friend of mine from Chennai, India translated for me and ministered with me. First we spent time with a pastor in Surkhet Valley. He is planting a strong local church in that area. For three days I ministered in his church. Many people were touched by God. Nearly the entire church of seventy people were filled with the Holy Spirit. Many were set free from years of demonic oppression. One girl testified after ministry saying,

"I feel lighter." After her Hindu husband committed suicide,

she became very depressed. She had to move back home with her family and they had been taking care of her for a long time. She was depressed, suicidal, and was tormented in her mind. During our times of ministry everyone was so hungry for God and nobody wanted to leave. We would start around 10:00 a.m. each morning and finish five or six hours later. The Holy Spirit moved in a powerful way.

After Surkhet I flew back to the capital of Nepal. For the next two days we rented a bus and drove more than two hours up and through mountain trails to a very remote area to help a new church. The pastor and his wife were sent to this area to plant a church. When they arrived there were only three Christian families. Now they have approximately sixty people in their church. There was a lot of witchcraft and demonic activity in this area and a lot of the people were plagued with sickness, disease, and bondages. We had two powerful days of ministry in this place. Once again the people were so hungry for God. Almost the entire church got filled with the Holy Spirit. Many were set from demonic bondages and healed from sickness and disease. One little boy, who was severely mentally and physically handicapped and tormented by demons, improved significantly during the two days of ministry. On the first day he laid on a blanket in the back of the room crying and moaning very loud the entire time. He had repeated seizures and his body was very stiff and tense. At the end of the first day we laid hands on him and prayed for him. When we came back the next day, he was not crying or moaning. His body was not shaking from seizures. He was very peaceful,

relaxed, and he was much more focused on people. Then half-way through the day he rolled over, got up on his hands and knees, and crawled across the church. We were able to minister and encourage his mom as well. Her husband left her and so she was feeling abandoned and overwhelmed with her situation to the point she did not want her child. By the end of the second day, after being ministered to, she was feeling more encouraged and strengthened by the Lord. She realized how much she loved her child and her faith grew for complete restoration for her son as she saw the improvements in him over the two days.

I finished my Nepal trip by ministering in a Bible School. I taught the students for two days and then I ministered in their church. Originally I was only supposed to teach from 9:00 a.m. until 12:00 p.m. After the first day the students told me that they wanted more so I could take a one hour lunch break and then come back and teach them for three more hours. We did this two days in a row. We had powerful times of prayer during which the Holy Spirit spoke to the students concerning their futures and the things He wanted them to do.

We held outreaches in schools, visited many believers in their homes, taught at an afterschool program, and ministered to the hotel staff and people in the airport. Everywhere we went the Lord had divine appointments for us – people who needed a word of encouragement and a touch from the presence of the Lord.

Who knows how long the nation of Nepal will remain open to the Gospel?

Approximately 97% of the country has never heard the name of Jesus. The harvest is ripe. The laborers are few.





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BUFFALO, NY 14213

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TWO TEAMS AND THREE COUNTRIES IN CENTRAL AMERICA

In January a team is departing for Honduras. The team, mostly comprised of men, will be doing work on a missionary base which rests near Montaña de la Flor. A remote tribe, the Tolupan people, lives on the mountain. The team will also be traveling up the mountain to distribute food and share the Gospel with the tribe. Two members of the team will be from Guatemala. They are planning to travel back by bus to Guatemala with Michelle, Mikayla, Alex, and Nate Johns.

In the meantime, Pastor Eric, along with some others, will fly to Guatemala to be a part of the second team which will work alongside House of Refuge Street Ministries. The team will help reach men and women from the streets, hold outreaches to children and youth, and train leaders.

When most of the team returns to the United States, Pastor Eric, Michelle, and their children will travel to El Salvador with Steve and Karla Stoffelsen, the directors of the House of Refuge. The team will hold meetings in churches, imparting strength to the people as they reach their nation with the Gospel.

NEEDED ITEMS

When the Buffalo Dream Center takes a team overseas, each member of the team packs an extra suitcase filled with things that can be used to help the people in remote areas. When team members share the love of Jesus, they are ready to bless the people with many of the items listed below. Please consider collecting these items for upcoming trips to Honduras and Guatemala. Call the Dream Center to arrange a time to drop them off.

- Flip flops: All sizes/ages/genders
- Crayons
- Colored Pencils
- Pencils
- Pens
- Erasers
- Balloons
- Tooth brushes
- Tooth paste
- Stickers
- Candy (No chocolate)
- Jump ropes
- Frisbees
- Small toys & stuffed animals
- Nail polish
- Travel size toiletries
- Multivitamins
- Summer children's clothes