



“Then the King will say, for I was hungry and you gave me something to eat, I was thirsty and you gave me something to drink, I was a stranger and you invited me in, I needed clothes and you have clothed me, I was sick and you looked after me, I was in prison and you came to visit me.”

Matthew 25:35-36

November, 2019

Dear Brothers and Sisters in Christ,

Greetings to each one of you in the name of our Lord Jesus. Time has flown by so swiftly, and soon we will once again gather with our families to give God thanks for His goodness to us.

This year’s newsletter marks a very special milestone for Guyanese Outreach (GO) as we give thanks to the Lord for 25 years of faithfulness to our service in Guyana. The Board and I are grateful for your prayers, encouragement, and financial support, which have made all of the amazing accomplishments possible. It would be impossible to write about all that has happened, but on this special occasion of our 25th anniversary, I will try to highlight as much as possible.

Humble Beginnings

In August of 1994, I made my first trip to Guyana, accompanied by my sons, Earl and John. My sons were only able to stay with me for two weeks while we tried to assess how we could help. All too soon, the day came for them to return. I felt great sadness as I watched them board the plane for the U.S., now I was alone and fearful of the unknown journey ahead of me.

It had become quite clear to us that humanitarian aid was needed as the country was in dire need with great suffering. Through prayer, we knew that the physical needs must first be met, and then the spiritual needs will follow. I remained in Guyana and began by teaching the women to sew, under their houses, while I continued praying for the Lord’s direction.



Ruth teaching the women to sew

Six weeks into my stay, His plan was revealed to me. I was guided to return home to collect the humanitarian aid to begin to fill the needs of the poor, and then travel back and forth to distribute the humanitarian aid as needed. As I look back, I was audacious to question Father God. I said to Him, “How can this be? It was a hardship to buy my ticket in the first place.” He lovingly said to me, “Ruth, trust Me.”

In trusting His promise, I returned home to collect the humanitarian aid, but Earl and I also had a plan in progress to secure a building for educational purposes. We had no money to rent a place but strongly felt that through prayers a place would be provided.

Our First Building

I returned to Guyana three months later, and our first building, adjacent to the Skeldon Primary School, was given to us by Mr. Dale Bisnauth, Minister of Education. With Earl’s guidance in the planning process, we began to renovate the building. Pastor Alim Mursalin and many local volunteers helped sacrificially with labor.

The renovation was costly. Help came from Brooklyn Park Lutheran Church (BPLC), GO’s largest supporter, as well as Hope Lutheran Church. We also received a very small grant from the Government of

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GUYANESE OUTREACH MISSION

"GO THEREFORE AND MAKE DISCIPLES OF ALL NATIONS, BAPTIZING THEM IN THE NAME OF THE FATHER AND THE SON AND THE HOLY SPIRIT, TEACHING THEM TO OBSERVE ALL THAT I HAVE COMMANDED YOU."
"MATTHEW 28:19-20"

Our first building, adjacent to the Skeldon Primary School (top left) needed a lot of renovation. Fortunately we had many wonderful people from the nearby village offer to help (bottom left). When finished (top right), we dedicated it to the Lord as "Guyanese Outreach Votech" with a plaque bearing the Great Commission. (bottom right)

Guyana, and individual donations from many, many of you faithful brothers and sisters. Some of whom prepared numerous spaghetti dinners for fundraisers, which received matching grants from Lutheran Brotherhood.

While the renovation was taking place, our Board and faithful friends began collecting the humanitarian aid in the U.S. as the Lord had directed.

Guyanese Outreach Votech

GO was the first NGO to start computer and sewing classes in Skeldon, Corriverton. We are grateful to Pastor Dave and Donna Heinrich for believing in the "Call." They were the first to send short-term Mission Teams to Guyanese Outreach.



Thank you to all those you helped with the spaghetti dinner fundraisers.



GO's first computer classroom in the newly renovated Votech.

During their first trip, the team not only delivered humanitarian aid and taught how to worship, but traveled with five computers on the plane! It was exciting to watch the team teach the people of the village how to use a computer. We are also very grateful to the many individuals and businesses that donated the 286's that served us well for a time and were later replaced with newer models.

Computers were new to the people in Corriverton. There is a prominent businessman who has a flourishing business because of GO's classes. Many local businesses have employed students who received training from GO.



The women in the community, made dresses, and decorative items to beautify their homes, while also making crafts to sell in the market.

GO had the first graduation of its kind in Skeldon. (left) It was a joyful day as the Minister of Education gave the commencement address and the students received their certificates. They could now apply for better jobs.

Reading Program

During this time, as we continued teaching the computer and sewing classes, my son, Earl, realized that illiteracy in the area was extremely high. It was his vision to start a pilot “After-School Reading Program” at our Votech. The children were in school all day and came to GO at 2:30 in the afternoon. We served a snack before each lesson. The program was very successful, and with Earl’s direction, the literacy class was expanded and held in several local churches.



Students from the local Primary School enjoyed our After-School Reading Program at the Guyanese Outreach Votech.

Humanitarian Aid

In 1995, GO sent two forty-foot sea containers filled with humanitarian aid to Guyana, with the help of Dick and Madeline Olender and son, Greg. We are grateful to the Onan Corporation in Fridley. Dave Jacobsen, was very kind and with the help of Tom Gerrety, provided the crates and space on weekends to pack the aid. AAA Cooper Transportation would then truck the crates to Savannah, Georgia, and then on to a ship to Guyana. We were blessed by the generosity of Mr. Singh in Guyana and through his shipping company, DIDCO Trading Company, a huge amount of humanitarian aid, was shipped with no cost to GO.



(top row l-r) Humanitarian aid being sorted before shipping. GO volunteers packing crates. Dear friend of GO, the late Jim Schutz.
 (bottom row l-r) Crates ready for trucking to Savannah. Ship arriving in Guyana. Crates making their way from Georgetown to Corriverton



Orealla Hospital



Mabaruma Hospital



Skeldon Hospital

Several hospitals in the area received aid. The Orealla Hospital received its first dental chair, delivery bed, etc. The hospital in Mabaruma received its first EKG machine as well as several wheelchairs etc. The Skeldon Hospital also received an Infant Incubator, EKG machine, and other equipment. THE AID WAS GIVEN TO ALL IN NEED REGARDLESS OF RACE OR RELIGION.

Mission Teams

While we continued to send humanitarian aid, several short-term, mission teams also went to Guyana.



A STEM team (above) of 30 people conducted VBS, built a 2-bedroom house, in ONE WEEK, for a woman and her children after she lost her home in a fire.



Jeff and Kathryn Johnson donated the draperies for the dedication of Pastor's Alim's church while Kathryn (left) taught women how to make additional curtains.

Chris Bursack, Robb Krueger, and Eldon Wegschied taught an Alpha Course (right). It was the first time that all denominations came together for an event. All the churches received a book on how to present Alpha.



Abstinence was taught for the very first time by Rita Krueger from BPLC, Pastor Rita Erickson, and Beth Kachman from Bloomington Assembly of God Church (left). They used Dr. James Dobson's course. HIV-AIDS was extremely high in the country. For the very first time, GO introduced group participation where the high school students shared their feelings and pain, which helped many of them come to accept that abstinence from sexual activities would keep them from HIV-AIDS.



GO also collaborated with the Mayo Clinic, and the Government of Guyana to bring Dularie (left) to the U.S. for heart surgery and then returned her to Guyana living a healthy life.



Mary Lou Schultz taught a Workshop for the Sunday School teachers in the area on "How to Teach Sunday School"

The First Library

GO is grateful to Jack Weiland of the Charisma Foundation and also Peter Gresser of Children's Chance for sending a sea container of books to Guyana. We were able to establish the first free library in the village filled with thousands of books of all types. Teachers used our library and internet services to assist them with class preparation. Students visited daily to checkout books to enjoy at home and to help with their homework.



(above l-r) (1)The sea container was filled with hundreds of boxes of books that were unloaded and transported to GO in Corriverton. (2 & 3)The boxes were literally stacked to the ceiling as they waited to be sorted and recorded. (4) Children of all faiths enjoyed the new library.

Time to Move and Time to Grow

The time came to move from Skeldon. The building had been renovated and beautified, but the PTA joined with the school's headmistress and decided they wanted the building back. After nine years, the government took back the building.

As an organization, GO had already determined that it was time to hand over the keys as Father God in His goodness had already prepared another place for us. The keys were handed over with great peace.

One member of the PTA, a few years later, said to me, "I am truly sorry, for I was the instigator that created the problem to have GO return the building." Through prayers, we realized that we had given enough fish. We had delivered the much needed medical equipment to the local hospitals and provided large amounts of clothing, educational materials to schools, and toys to kindergartens. Now it was time to teach them "how to fish." This then ended the humanitarian aid.

A New Building

God had a plan. We are thankful for the local Lions Club, at No. 71 village, who granted us permission to use and occupy their former building. We were blessed to receive a ten-year lease on the building, with the guarantee to renew for another ten years.



Signing a ten-year lease with a guaranteed option for another ten years.



GO's new home. The former Lion's Club building in No. 71 village

The building had not been used for four years, and it needed a lot of renovation. All 12 foundational posts were all rotten. It had concrete walls, but with open spaces, which brought in a lot of dust. There were no windows, and all the doors had to be replaced. We were faced with a cost that far exceeded our small budget. The cost of the renovation, even with a grant from the EU through the Guyana government, GO's cost exceeded 18,000, but the Lord was faithful, and the renovations were completed.

Upon completion of the renovations at No. 71 village, we soon realized we could not accommodate the Literacy Program, the Computer classes, plus a library, and an area for sewing and crafts.

The "Tent"

We needed to build an addition. Upon direction of the Lord, we were directed to build a "Tent." It would give us the space we needed for all our classes and community affairs.

At the time of planning the construction of the Tent, we had no money. Our budget was exhausted. But the direction of our Lord must prevail. We needed 70 sheets of galvanized zinc, 80 sacks of cement plus the cost of nails and carpentry, etc.

As we prayed, I was directed to speak to the manager of the hardware store who was very understanding that we needed supplies on credit to build a Tent but could not pay until 3 months later.



Once again we are renovating a building, both inside (top), and outside (bottom)



The posts and frames for the "Tent" went up (left) followed by the galvanized zinc roof panels (right)

Without hesitation, he agreed to give us the needed materials on credit for three months. We were able to return the remaining paint from the renovation in exchange for 40 bags of cement. BPLC and Hope Lutheran Church brought some of our needs to the congregations. We were grateful for the prayers and help that came to purchase more cement and zinc panels.

The Tent was completed and dedicated unto the Lord with a message from Pastor Errol Inshanally. We were happy that several members of the Lions Club were present, including many of the students that graduated from the Computer and Literacy classes.

The Rotary began to use the tent to deliver aid and hold their Spelling Bees. The elderly in the community used the tent to collect Pension books. On the weekends, family movies were shown on a large screen for the people of the villages.

Through prayer, we knew that God had called us to this village with the first school of its kind. Children and parents of different religious backgrounds, including those from the surrounding villages, came to borrow books. GO's presence and help to the community has always been appreciated. My heart continues to be touched with your help, prayers, and financial support to the less fortunate in the surrounding village.

However, we were faced with a few problems, one of which was from the rainstorms that effected the children. We were advised to use plastic tarps to keep the rain away. But the heavy rainstorms would rip and shred the plastic. We were again advised to put some pieces of zinc with a slant so that when the rains came, the water would go into the street. Sadly, this did not help. We avoided putting any type of walls on the tent because when teams were presenting their programs, the villagers would have the opportunity to listen. Finally, the lattice walls were the best solution. We had learned from our mistakes.



(top) Ruth sits under the newly completed "Tent" with its concrete floor, beautiful wood-
en desks and benches. The Tent was also avail-
able for community groups to use for events
and meetings. (bottom).



(1) Battling the rains with plastic tarps was impossible. (2) Finally, lattice walls gave us the protection we needed. (3) We could now hold classes without getting wet. (4) We are grateful to Nadira Pattison from Canada (in red) for her assistance toward education. She also brought much needed basic school supplies for the children.

Building Again?

After a few years, the Tent required additional repairs. The vision God gave us was to rebuild OVER the Tent. We needed more space for all classes and space for visiting teams to assist with education, community functions, and churches for spiritual needs.

In September of 2016, Mark Olson (right) and I flew to Guyana. Mark presented the floor plan to the carpenter, making sure the carpenter understood the plan for a solid foundation. In many of the past Newsletters, I have mentioned the struggles to raise funds to complete just the first floor of the building. Upon reaching out to my dear friends Jerry and Tiffany Blackwell, the Lord touched Jerry's heart in a very special way, and they committed a very sizeable financial gift that allowed not only the first floor to be completed but the ENTIRE THREE STORY BUILDING.



The Persaud family and friends here in the Twin Cities also played a big role by helping with labor and costs to paint exterior and interior of our beautiful building. GO also thanks Dave and Srisuda Arneson, their generosity helps GO to keep the doors open and in addition, ensures that the children receive a healthy snack before lessons. We are grateful to ALL of our donors over the years. Your blessings have helped to achieve our vision to improve the lives of those we touch in Guyana.

This marvelous building is dedicated to the Glory of God. We are most grateful to each one for your love, the sacrifice of prayers and financial contributions.



(top left) The foundation of the "Tent" needed to be strengthened to support the new three-story building. (top middle) Concrete posts and blocks begin to shape the first floor. (top right) Work on the second floor progressed on schedule. (bottom left) Detail work on the interior of the building. (bottom right) The finished building, ready for painting. Dedicated as the **Guyanese Outreach Youth Learning Centre**.

New Doors Opening

While the construction was in progress, a new relationship started with two Lutheran Churches in Kentucky through an LCMC conference in Iowa. God moves in mysterious ways. Pastor Dave Shockey of Hebron Lutheran Church and Pastor Blair Fields of Hopeful Lutheran Church and their teams made their first trip to Guyana and got acquainted with GO's programs and with Emmanuel Lutheran Church. They brought 5,000 SOJ (Story of Jesus) booklets that were distributed to many churches in the area. Also, while in Guyana, the need for a missionary to assist Emmanuel Lutheran Church and GO was discussed.



Short-term mission teams from Kentucky filled their luggage (left) with **5000 copies** of "Story of Jesus" booklets. The booklets were distributed to many of the local churches (right).



Not too long after, I flew to Ethiopia and joined Pastor Dave Shockey and a team from Hebron and Hopeful Lutheran churches from Kentucky to start a three-way partnership with Ethiopia, Kentucky, and GO.

We were delighted to meet with the Rev. Dr. Wakseyoum Idossa, President of the Ethiopian Evangelical Church Mekane Yesus (EECMY), to discuss the partnership. President Wakseyoum was very receptive to our idea for a three-way partnership, as well as the desire for a cross-cultural leader to come from Ethiopia.



(above) The three-way partnership was led by Wondimu Mathewos Game, Director of Mekane Yesus International Society. He met with Ruth and the pastors and representatives from the churches in Kentucky. GO thanks Wondimu for his heart for missions.



As plans progressed, Girma Gutema and his wife Salome (left) were chosen to serve for three years as cross-cultural workers in Guyana. However, the visa process was very difficult. Girma was finally able to get a visa to Guyana with the expectation of Salome's arrival. Salome continued the process for a visa, but sadly, her aged mother died. Girma then returned home after having spent only one year in Guyana.

GO, and Emmanuel Lutheran Church were blessed to have Girma. We were sorry to see him leave. He taught Sunday School and prepared Sunday School lessons that could be used by many churches. He also worked with the youth and adults, started a home church, and many other activities. During GO's construction, Girma was very helpful in many situations and assisted with the math class.

Evangelism and the Churches

Throughout the years, Guyanese Outreach has worked to assist the local churches in the community however we could. We were able to donate a projector and audio amplifier to Emmanuel Lutheran Church to assist them with open-air evangelism. In the early years, GO held one of its Functional Literacy classes at this satellite location.

Pastor Rakesh, of Living Waters Church, which is very near the Guyanese Outreach Learning Centre, occasionally works with GO on some of our projects. He currently teaches a Bible Club for the students of the local Primary School. He focuses on maintaining a strong moral compass and loving your neighbor. These teachings have gained him the respect and approval of the many parents who monitor the classes. In the past, they have even held a Christmas Pageant, featuring the story of Mary and Joseph, and the birth of baby Jesus.

Summer Programs

GO maintains a welcomed presence in the community during the summer months by offering a popular Summer Program featuring classes on many topics, including Enhanced Reading and additional Computer / Tablet Math classes. Thank you for your continued support of this important program.



GO presents Emmanuel Lutheran Church with a new projector and amplifier. (top) Pastor Rakesh's Bible Club sings "This Little Light of Mine." (middle) Attendance is high for our Summer Programs. (bottom)

Today and the Future...

Presently, the Functional Literacy Program remains very popular. The Computer / Tablet Math class consists of grades one, two, and three. Parents can see their children's progress through the worksheets they bring home. We continue to serve a snack each day before the classes. The best gift we could give to the children is education for through it; they have hope and a future.

We are presently working along with the Massiah Primary school in the village, by assisting in a feeding program that caters lunch for 22 children. The government has closed the Sugar Estate in Skeldon. The cane-cutters have lost their jobs which creates a hardship to maintain their households. We desperately need your support to allow us to commit to providing the food staples (rice and flour), as well as chicken, fish, vegetables, split peas, black-eye peas, garbanzo beans, and more to this important community program.

GO continues to have needs, and we seek your help. Staff in Guyana need lessons on how to prepare Web Pages and App Designs. We also need help to prepare Sunday School lessons for children and adults along with Bible Study leadership. We are also hoping to start a Home Church Program.



The Guyanese Outreach Computer / Tablet Math Class (top left), and the Functional Literacy Program (top middle), remain very popular with the community. Thanks to your generous financial support, we continue to be able to provide a nutritional snack to the children afterschool each day (top right). The children that we serve through our classes and programs, are very appreciative of your support (bottom left). They watched their older brothers and sisters graduate from GO Programs and be offered better paying jobs, more opportunities, and even start their own businesses.

**ALL BECAUSE OF YOUR GENEROSITY!
THEY THANK YOU!**

For 25 years, the Lord has led us on a beautiful and loving journey, I have tried to show some of the highlights from the journey in the Newsletter. Unfortunately, I feel certain that I have missed a few moments that have happened over the past 25 years. Please accept my humble apology if I have left something out of the story that involved you or your team. It was not done intentionally.

GO is a tax-exempt and approved 501 (c)(3) charitable organization. Please pray and seek our Lord as you continue to help us serve in the mission field. His command. "Go ye therefore and teach all nation..."



The Board of Guyanese Outreach and I give Father God, ALL the Glory, Honor, and Praise for serving in Guyana for 25 years. We continue to pray daily for His plans and directions for GO. This mission would not have been possible without your help. Your sacrifices of prayers, physical and financial help and encouragement have brought us to bear fruits in Guyana, as we look forward to the next 25 years!!!

We wish you and your families a Happy Thanksgiving, a Blessed Christmas and a New Year filled with many Blessings.

Ruth