



*Dr. M. G. McLuhan,  
President*

## The Servant of God's Highest Glory by Dr. M.G. McLuhan, President

The Lenten and Easter observances have recently reminded all of us as believers of the great sacrifice that Jesus made for us at Calvary. It is very good for all of us who claim Christianity to make a mental and important journey back to Golgotha every year. However, one of the Apostle Paul's great statements about the cross has always made me think about the place that Calvary and the cross have in our daily thought pattern and our spiritual activities. The scripture that I am thinking about is found in Paul's letter to the Galatians, chapter 6, verse 14. It reads "But God forbid that I should glory, save in the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ, by whom the world is crucified unto me, and I unto the world."

The cross of Christ was the key to Saint Paul's life, and his life itself became the best human exponent of the power and saving grace of the cross of Christ! Consequently, it has occurred to me that, as God's servants, the cross of Christ should be the central expression and proclamation of our lives. Paul himself was the epitome of what a minister of the Gospel should be. If Christ's cross was the central theme and purpose of his life, it should be the same in our lives today! As a long-time minister of the Gospel, I have often studied this great statement by Paul, and wondered if I could honestly say the same? I am powerfully impressed with the centrality of the cross in all of our thinking, preaching and serving as ministers of Christ's Gospel. If the cross of Christ is not the central theme of our living and thinking, then what is? Why are we serving as God's ministers if the cross of His Son is not the genuine central theme of our lives?

The moment of Christ's death on the cross was the central moment of all God's moral and spiritual dealing with mankind. Without the cross, we as Christian ministers have no real message from God to a sinful and lost world! At the moment of Christ's death, God did something for mankind that man could not do for himself. It brought God's grace to helpless and sin-bound humanity. In reality, the cross of Christ is the highest exhibition of the glory of God. It exhibits in the most profound manner the justice of God. It exhibits in a special manner the love of

God. It reveals in perfect harmony both the justice and the love of God. It also demonstrates to fallen humanity that God has provided a truly propitiated pardon—a pardon for which the highest price was paid, even the blood of the Son of God! God's justice is thus upheld in its true integrity, and His mercy is vindicated not on the basis of mere forgiveness on the basis of love alone, but also upon the fact of a truly redemptive sacrifice which paid the price that God's holiness demanded.

Another reason why we should glory in the cross is that it is the best security for the happiness of man. It secures pardon and true reconciliation with God for the sinner. He has nothing to do but accept God's overture of mercy to be reconciled with His Creator. He has nothing to

As the magnificence of the cross seizes us, we recognize that we are indeed new creatures in Christ. We can exult in who we are in God's family. Ours is no mere new acquaintance or cordial attachment. It is not self-righteous boasting! We can sing amid the fires of persecution and say, "Call me madman, despise and mock me, seize me with the hand of violence, load me with chains and drag me to your dungeons, and even lead me to the fiery stake; still I will glory in the matchless redemptive cross of my risen and living Lord!!!"


In closing, let me say to all of our many pastors and Christian workers in IMF, "Keep your eyes upon the cross, until the full-orbed glory of its majesty becomes the symphony of your true glorying."

*Dr. M. G. McLuhan is President of IMF. He has served as a pastor/evangelist for several years, as a missionary in South Africa for 11 years and as an Associate Pastor of Mt. Paran Church in Atlanta, GA (11,000 members) for 16 years. Dr. McLuhan has over 50 years of ministry experience as a pastor, evangelist, lecturer, missionary and President of the International Bible College in Minot, ND, and as President of Berea Theological College in Pretoria, South Africa.*

### Easter Blessings...

**"Jesus said to her, 'I am the resurrection and the life. whoever believes in me will live, even though he dies; and whoever lives and believes in me will never die. Do you believe this?'"**

—John 11:25



bring of his own and nothing meritorious is asked for. The cross provides an immediate salvation with a two-fold provision of power—the power of love as a new motive, and the power of a new life—and the life of the Holy Spirit.

As a shepherd of human souls what should be the things that we encourage our followers to glory in about the cross? First, the full comprehension of our Redeemer's person that it gives us. Second, the access that it gives to believers - to the blessings procured for us by the life and death of Jesus our Lord. We can glory in the cross because through it God provided reconciliation between Himself and us, plus the added blessings of pardon, holiness, joy, victory over the world, and eternal life. It also impresses us as believers about what we should not glory in, such as worldly wisdom, earthly honors, worldly riches, self-righteousness, etc.

Notices will be published in four consecutive issues upon each written request to our office. Please limit notices to name, address, phone and a maximum of 50 words describing your ministry. We recommend that all our ministers make their tapes, reference letters and other pertinent ministry information available to all inquirers.

Please address correspondence to the address indicated in the individual member's ad or by writing them in care of:

**NETWORKING**  
**International Ministerial Fellowship**  
**P.O. Box 32366**  
**Minneapolis, MN 55432-0366**

All mail will be forwarded directly to appropriate members for their timely response to you. Current IMF members may call our office for addresses and phone numbers in order to make direct contact.

### Individuals Available for Ministry

#### **Rev. Michael Cremer** **Stillwater, MN**

"It takes one to know one" is the theme of my ministry. I've been in prison four times and I have lived a sinful life. God has expressed His amazing grace in me that He might offer hope to many who think life is hopeless. I'm available to teach/train individuals for prison ministry. I am affiliated and involved with Prison Fellowship and Network For Life. For more information, please write to: P.O. Box 894, Stillwater, MN 55082 or call (612)430-1440. (2)

#### **Rev. Christoph Lameter** **Los Angeles, CA**

I am one year from completing my Ph.D. in Theology from Fuller Seminary in Los Angeles. I am willing to let the Spirit lead me as I am currently able to move into new areas of ministry. I was a speaker at the recent IMF Conference, am a native German, have diverse denominational, cultural and business experience with comprehensive knowledge. For more information, please e-mail to clameter@i-m-f.org or call (626) 454-2472. (2)

#### **Rev. John McDonald** **Australia**

John is an Australian who serves as a missionary to the United States. He is a soloist and has a prophetic teaching and anointing. John has been given a word for the nation — America, this is your day. God's day of visitation will result in revival or judgment! John is available for single or short-term ministry. For more information, write to the IMF office, c/o John McDonald. (4)

#### **Rev. Gerry Mestek** **Elmhurst, IL**

Gerry is an ordained minister (1995) with IMF

and has been a member in good standing since 1993. Prior to joining IMF, he held ministry credentials with the Assembly of God, Illinois District. He has ministered as an evangelist to the motorcyclist community since 1984, under New Covenant Ministries, a tent ministry, which he founded. He is now seeking a position as pastor, assistant pastor or youth pastor in a local congregation. For more information, please write or call: 601 W. Comstock Ave., Elmhurst, IL, 60126, (630)941-3709. (2)

#### **Rev. Jack Nantais** **Chancellor, SD**

Jack is an ordained minister with IMF (1996) and teaches a message of God's grace. He is looking for a pulpit where the congregation has the vision of reaching their community with the healing power of the Holy Spirit to the hurt and wounded believer, as well as the unsaved. For more information, please write to: 46122-268th Street, Chancellor, SD 57015 or call (605)526-4320. (2)

#### **Rev. Edwin Phillips, M.Div.** **Kapaa, HI**

I am intimately acquainted with ministry to those in pain and suffering as I have spent thousands of hours in Christian counseling, as well as church growth and development. I also have eight years of pastoral experience, as well as five years experience as a hospital and hospice chaplain. I have been married for fifteen years and have three children. For more information, please write to 4917 Ali Ali Road, Kapaa, HI 96746, call (808) 822-3117 or e-mail to arkangl@aloha.net. (2)

#### **Rev. Bob Silling** **Harrisonburg, VA**

I have been with IMF since 1986 and am available for church services, revivals, evangelistic outreaches outside the church, crusades, prison services and any other place where I can preach the Word. I am willing to travel anywhere in the U.S., Canada and overseas. I have been on several foreign mission trips, conducted open air preachings and have sixteen years experience in leading outreaches. For more information, please write to: 290-B Rocco Ave., Harrisonburg, VA 22801, call (540) 433-4849 or e-mail to bob1053@juno.com. (2)

#### **Rev. Larson Mutembu** **Australia**

### Positions Available

Are you planning to visit Africa? If you are, then plan to visit Zambia and minister in our God First Team affiliate churches and also in other charismatic churches in different towns. For more information, please write to: P.O. Box 169, Warburton, Victoria 3799, Australia, or fax to (613)5966-5499. (2)

#### **Rev. Michael Pilla** **Minneapolis, MN**

We are an inner-city ministry in the second year of a church plant in South Minneapolis. We are looking/praying for a person to come in and take

over the music ministry. This person must be called to the city, be spirit-filled and able to lead contemporary praise and worship on Sunday mornings. This is a paid, part-time position. If interested, please write to 121 West Franklin Ave., Minneapolis, MN 55404. (2)

#### **Rev. Ben Tippett** **E. Palatka, FL**

Victory Christian Fellowship is looking for a young couple or single person to help develop a Youth Ministry who is also experienced in music (keyboard). This is a new church and would require outside employment. The church is growing and has plans to build a 200-seat multi-purpose building. For more information, please write or call, P.O. Box 741, East Palatka, FL 32131, (904) 325-3699. (3)

### PASTORAL LETTER

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For address changes and name removals, see instructions on the mailing panel. The contents of this publication and other Fellowship bulletins, publications or announcements are subject to change without notice. If you are interested in submitting an article to be published in the Pastoral Letter, please mail or fax a copy of your article (no more than 500 words) to IMF. Every article submitted is subject to a full review by the IMF Editorial Committee.

# Department of Foreign Missions

## A Look at IMF Agency Missionary—Lee Anne Risk



**Lee Anne Risk**  
*Missionary to Mexico*

Lee Anne served as the Director of Souls' Harbor Church Day School and later ministered as head of the preschool department of the Jesus People Church. (Both churches are in Minneapolis, Minnesota). She also served as full-time Director of Faith Farm Missionary Training Institute located in Cokato,

Minnesota.

She completed courses through Bethany and Christ for the Nations Institute and took short-term missionary trips to Mexico, the Northwest Territories and Haiti. She joined World Indigenous Missions and helped start a language school and later a church—Agua Viva—in Zacatecas, Mexico which continues today under a national pastor.

She is the mother of three children (now adults) who grew up in Mexico. After a serious auto accident, Lee Anne returned to the United States and joined the faculty at Maranatha Christian Academy in Minneapolis where she taught high school Spanish.

In 1993, Lee Anne returned to Mexico and the ministry she helped found in Zacatecas. She is kept very busy serving as a youth minister and teacher in a church organization. She works mostly with the youth in the city, organizing and planning activities and outreaches. She organized Youth Quake 96—a boot camp outreach that mixes the American youth and Mexican youth. Everything is bilingual. Lee Anne works with two orphanages and the indigenous Indians in her area. She understands the Mexican culture and their life style.

Today Lee Anne is a missionary to Zacatecas, Mexico, and surrounding areas, where she has been ministering both in Mexico and for a time in the United States by bringing missions groups into the area.

Her primary role now is one of “facilitator” for Latin American Christians. Lee Anne says, “My goal is to help connect Latin Americans with resources and people in the United States, by helping them take their rightful place in God's plan to reach the unreached.”

Currently she resides in the city of Zacatecas, the capitol of the state of Zacatecas in the center of Mexico. (It is about eight hours from the Texas border and six hours north of Mexico City.) Zacatecas is

a beautiful colonial city situated in the heart of the central plateau, nearly two miles high. This keeps the weather much cooler than surrounding cities and it occasionally gets snow in the winter. Zacatecas is the capitol of the state by the same name and so is the base of the University there. With students coming there from throughout the region, the potential for reaching the whole country of Mexico is very real. These students can come to know Jesus as Savior and then go back to their homes to continue to spread the “Good News.”

In recent years Lee Anne has been intimately involved in various other ministries:

**Mark Dewitt's University**—Lee Anne serves as the Director of Missions and Outreach. This is a Christian school with emphasis in music and ministry training. Students from over fifteen countries come to attend classes varying from instrumental and vocal to counseling and ministry. The school offers spiritual and technical preparation and formation of psalmists and ministers from countries around the world.

**Terremoto** is a short-term summer missions project that teams up Mexican and American teenagers in a cross-cultural outreach. They spend their time in “boot camp” training to evangelize on the streets and then go to ten different cities where they put their training into practice. The coordination of the food for boot camp and team development is handled by Lee Anne and her team in Zacatecas. This is a major project for the summers.

**Medical Missions**—Strategic Alliance directs medical teams into remote unreached areas of Mexico. They help plant churches in addition to meeting medical needs as they are equipped.

**Orphanage**—The orphanage at Morelia has approximately forty children. Their needs are great. Teams are taken there to work on construction projects, medical needs, general maintenance, ministry and “loving” these children.

**Radio**—Lee Anne has been able to raise funds to purchase equipment and air time for the radio station that is now producing five-minute broadcasts directed to youth. These are being distributed to Zacatecas, Fresnillo, Aguascalientes and San Luis, with plans to broadcast all over Latin America in the future. “Radio in Mexico today has the same impact on youth as it did in the States in the 1960's and is a tremendous way to reach the youth here,” states Lee Anne.

**RAMD “Reconciling the World of God”**—

This is a missionary training institute for lay people directed by Paul and Kathy Cagle. They do two extensive outreaches each year and many local outreaches. Lee Anne reports that three of the students have already started local missions.

**Transcoso Outreach: “The Gang Work”**—

Missionaries were never allowed to minister in this town before last year. Gangs ran freely and it was considered the most dangerous town in the area. Lee Anne says, “By a miracle of God through prayer, Pastors Luis and Horacio have developed a work that aids in gang kids being won to the Lord along with their parents and families.”

**City-wide Crusades**—One is held each year

in Zacatecas and two in Transcoso. They try to involve all the churches in the area. Often these campaigns are assisted by ministry teams from the United States.

Colleagues of Lee Anne say, “It is this plethora of experience and her desire to minister, to make a difference in people's lives, that uniquely qualifies Lee Anne for the task at hand.” Through her valuable ministry Mexicans have been won to Christ and those who came to minister have their lives changed forever. They return to the United States to their families and churches changed and renewed in their commitment to Christ.” Lee Anne asks, “That you consider the possibility of a visit to the mission field in Mexico. You could come with a group or just on your own. One thing is certain—you will be blessed!”

“We have many needs,” says Lee Anne. “You could be the one God has chosen to meet one or more of them. Specific needs change from time to time, but many are ongoing. Some of the possibilities are: musical instruments, sound equipment, studio (radio) equipment, short-term helpers and teachers. The most important and valuable thing you can do is pray for the work here.”

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If you would like to support Lee Anne Risk or any of our other missionaries just send a check made out to IMF (on a separate piece of paper indicate who it is for) and we will see that it gets to the correct missionary. If you have questions about our Missions Department or our missionaries, please call Marlyce Miller, IMF Operations Manager for Foreign Missions, at the IMF Office, 612-571-5967.



# Welcome to the Family...

900 Members Plus!

*The IMF Board of Directors, officers, staff members and other IMF members welcome the following new members of the IMF family. All together, these new members bring with them numerous years of ministerial experience along with a wide variety of educational backgrounds and ministry fields.*

**Patrick Craig, Novato, CA**, joins IMF as an ordained member. Patrick is the Associate Pastor at Adobe Christian Center in Petaluma, CA.

**Judith Craig, Novato, CA**, joins IMF as a licensed member. Judith has been leading the music ministry at Adobe Christian Center and is also a mentor in the Heart to Heart ministry, along with being a worship leader for women's retreats.

**Robert Garton, Cuba**, joins IMF as a licensed member. Robert and his wife are planting a church in Toledo City called New Life Community Church.

**Ollie Malone, Springboro, OH**, joins IMF as an ordained member. Ollie is part of the pastoral staff at Hillcrest Church in Dallas. Throughout his previous experience he has held positions as worship leader, lay pastor and a member of the Board of Trustees.

**Joy Neet, Athens, GA**, joins IMF as a licensed member. Joy has developed her ministry skills through her campus work with Bulldog Christian Fellowship. Joy will be attending Reformed Theological Seminary where she will work toward a Master of Arts in Missions and Evangelism.

**Douglas Spurling, Three Rivers, TX**, joins IMF as a licensed member. Douglas was raised in Minnesota and has started a church called Above & Beyond Christian Center in Three Rivers, TX.

**Gordon Thayer, Minneapolis, MN**, upgrades from licensed member to ordained member. Gordon has been with IMF since 1992 and continues his work relating to recovery from alcohol and chemical abuse. He is now involved with an outreach to Native American Reservations and Canadian Reserves along with heading up men's support groups.

**Sheila Thayer, Minneapolis, MN**, upgrades from licensed

member to ordained member. Sheila continues to support her husband Gordon with the outreach to the Native American Reservations.

**Russell Hill, Winfield, AL**, upgrades from licensed member to ordained member. Russell has been a member of IMF since Jan. 1995 and is pastoring a church in Winfield.

**Barbara Meyers, Gardner, MA**, upgrades from licensed member to ordained member. Barbara has been with IMF since Dec. of 1992. Barbara serves on the board of deacons at her church and preaches when the pastor is away. Barbara has also started a Sunday service at the Gardner Visiting Nurses Association, Adult Day Health Care.

**Steven Troglio, Crestwood, IL**, joins IMF as an ordained member. Steven is the Youth Pastor of his church in Trafford, PA.

**Troy Aldridge, Auburn, AL**, joins IMF as a licensed member. Troy has held the position of Associate Pastor and is now assisting in any way he can in his home church in Opelika, AL.

**Joseph Amon, St. Petersburg, FL**, joins IMF as a commission to preach member. Joseph is working for a Christian school where he helps students prepare for their G.E.D. test, teaching students how to play soccer, working with computer and software.

**Tom Gibson, Coon Rapids, MN**, joins IMF as a licensed member. Tom created His Ministries Unlimited through which he will take the gospel of Jesus Christ to the Cities. The ministry is multi-faceted to reach the lost.

**Dennis Hager, Westerville, OH**, joins IMF as a licensed member. Dennis will be graduating with a Masters in Biblical Studies. Dennis' goal is to pastor to convalescent centers with word and music.

**Gertrude Proctor, Alamogordo, NM**, joins IMF as an ordained member. Gertrude is the Assistant Pastor at her home church in Tularosa, NM.

**Michael Pilla, St. Paul, MN**, upgrades from licensed member to ordained member. Michael pastors a church in St. Paul, MN.

**Kenneth Raymes, Evansville, IN**, joins IMF as an ordained member. Kenneth is assisting in a teaching capacity in Evansville, IN.

**John Sykes, Wildwood, MO**, joins IMF as an ordained member. John is the pastor of Grace Community Bible Church, Maryland Heights, MO.

**Arnold Teater, Azle, TX**, joins IMF as a licensed member. Arnold is the founder of Christian Campfire Ministries in TX.

**John Thomas, Minneapolis, MN**, joins IMF as a licensed member. John has developed a ministry called Glorybound that is geared to the restoration of families.

## Eight-year Veteran Accepts New Company Role!



IMF Staff members and friends at Brenda's going-away party: front row (L to R) - Jessica Corbett, Marcy Bray, Brenda Zillmer, Joe Zillmer; back row (L to R) - Len Bray, Lew Miller, Marlyce Miller, Karen

Brenda Steinhorst-Zillmer, who began working for IMF at the early age of eighteen, has accepted the General Manager position for a new company that will be serving churches via the Internet. The company, Genesis On-Line Distribution, will offer a large variety of well-established paper, office and party products to churches.

Brenda, who sort of grew up with our General Secretary's daughters (the office was in the home for nine years) progressed over the years from a part-time typist to Ministry Administrator, overseeing all of the office operations of the Fellowship.

One computer consultant told us after training her for four hours, "She's one in a thousand." We think she's one in a million and we wish her every continuing success. She will be surely missed, but promises to stay close to all of us and to help out when she can. God bless you Brenda!

— Love All the IMF Office Staff

# I Hate That Word!

by IMF Member, Rev. Bill Earman

The word that causes this consternation is “Why.” Why do I have to live like this? Why am I here? Why do I hurt so much? Why can’t my children visit me? Why do I take so many pills? Why doesn’t anybody love me?

A very simple reply is “Why *not* you?” You are not alone, and your hurt is not unique. There are millions of others who are hurting, just like you.

A deeper theological question is “why” did Jesus die on the cross. The humanity of the God-man Jesus cried out as he endured the pain, “‘Why’ hast thou forsaken me?” God did not forsake Christ on the cross. It was God, Himself, who gave his own human life as a sacrifice for all our sins upon the tree. Jesus did not want to go through the suffering and pain and yet in God’s divine plan, there was a reason.

This discussion leads to three of the ways that God works with us as Chaplains:

1. God works with us by performing miracles in our lives. Use the life of Jesus, beginning with the miracle at the wedding (water to wine) as the Biblical illustration.

2. God is our constant companion during our life’s journey. Use the entire Book of Exodus as the Biblical illustration of this. God went with the Jews out of Egypt and provided what they needed for the journey.

3. God gives us the strength to endure those things in our life that we cannot change. Use the Biblical illustration of Jesus praying in the garden, just before He is taken to be tried. He asked God to take the cup from his lips, but God did not. Instead, he gave Jesus the strength to endure.

Then we come to the question of “Why do bad things happen to good people?” In other words, “Why does God allow suffering?”

When we are suffering, we will not always be able to work out why. God never told Job why he was suffering, but He did tell him that there was a good reason. God asked Job to trust Him. Perhaps our suffering is a result of some sin. If so, we can ask God to reveal the specific sin. That kind of condemnation may come from Satan, but never from God. If there is a specific sin, we need to be repentant and ask for forgiveness and cleansing. God will never leave us with some nebulous feeling of guilt. If no specific sin can be identified, then we ask God to guide us,

heal us, and give us the peace that can only come from Him.

*Rev. Bill Earman serves as a chaplain in nursing homes, hospitals and in-home for the elderly. As a chaplain, his pastoral duties include legal management, health management and non-denominational ministry (Christ-centered). Bill is a tireless worker for those less fortunate people that society sometimes forgets. He seems to live by a quote from Albert Einstein, “From the point of view of daily life and without going deeper, we exist for our fellow men, particularly for those on whose smiles and well-being all our happiness depends.”*

*If you have questions, please write to or call 4550 8th Street, Vero Beach, FL 32968 (561-562-3684).*

## His Messengers, written by Char Bendickson

*When pain and fear get so intense  
Once can no longer cope;  
When the future seems so dismal  
And you have lost all hope,  
God calls upon His messengers  
To help you find your way;  
To counsel, love, and nurture you  
Through each and every day.*

*His messengers are common folk  
so much like you and me;  
They may be common laborers  
Or have a high degree.  
It doesn't really matter which;  
God uses them the same,  
To carry on His work for Him,  
To love and help the lame.*

*His messengers are common folk  
They do as others do;  
When they get up each morning  
Their hair is all askew.  
They have to put on shoes and socks  
Just one foot at a time,  
They even fret a little when  
They have to wait in line.*

*His messengers are common folk  
They know life isn't fair,  
So planted deep within their heart  
is joy that they can share.  
They have a love for Jesus  
Which goes beyond their self,  
To reach the poor and lonely ones  
Others left on the shelf.*

*His messengers are common folk  
Who love and serve the Lord.  
They're covered with God's armor;  
His Word becomes their sword.  
Their battle is another's pain  
Which they will help to heal,  
By prayer, and love, and nurturing,  
Until God's love you feel.*

*His messengers are common folk  
Like others whom you know,  
Once you have spent some time with them  
You see their inner glow,  
A glow that lights the path for them  
So they more easily see  
The work that God has planned for them  
To help set others free.  
His messengers are common folk*

*I know, because you see,  
That it was only common folk  
He sent to rescue me.  
They saw my fear, they felt my pain,  
Their love showed me God's grace;  
And so each time they came to me  
I saw my Father's face.*

*And since I am just common folk  
A messenger I'll be.  
When I submit my will to Him  
His plan I'll surely see,  
Then I can give to other folks  
The gifts given to me.  
So they may know the love of God  
That they may be set free.*

*And so I give my thanks to God  
For all the common folk.  
For messengers that hug and cry  
And share a funny joke.  
And I lift them also in prayer to Him;  
I pray that they'll be blessed  
With messengers, just common folk  
When they're put to the test.*



## Intercessory Prayer Group

by Dr. Ron Keller

*Dr. Ron Keller  
Coordinator of Prayer*

How does being in independent ministry affect our prayer life? Being an independent minister has many advantages and disadvantages. For those of us who serve the Lord in these chosen ministries, apparently the advantages outweigh the disadvantages.

Being an independent minister is a privilege. It is a special calling from God. Only He can give us the grace, strength and faith to press on in ministries like these. Without the support of another Christian organization, denomination, or structure (besides IMF), we press on in faith, trusting Jesus alone to be our provider. We do not have the usual props and security that come with serving in a typical denominational congregation.

Through many years of functioning this way, I have discovered that prayer is an absolutely essential element of independent ministry. Because we do not have the back-up or "safety net" of an organization, we always walk on the edge of extinction. Our life on this edge gives us more realistic opportunities to walk by faith, not by sight. Walking by faith, for us as independents, is not only a theory, faith principle or a neat verse to memorize. For us, it is truly a way of life.

There is no predetermined, clearly spelled out path for those called to independent ministry. Day-by-day and moment-by-moment we are given the wonderful opportunity of responding to God's gracious call. What an adventure! What a way to live!

Our prayer life is rich, intimate and attentive. Because we need God's constant direction and guidance, our spiritual "ears" are attuned to His voice. We live in His presence, seeking the gentle and quiet promptings that only His Holy Spirit can give to us.

Our lives are focused on prayer, ministry and Jesus Christ. Our focus is not on pleasing our constituents, denominational politicians, or meeting superficial criteria for ministry. Our eyes are focused on Jesus Christ and new ways to be his prayerful, attentive disciples at the close of this millennium and into the next.

Our prayer life is inseparable from our ministry. Our ministry is inseparable from our prayer life. Without prayer, we have no ministry. God has graciously blessed us with this wholesome perspective.

*Since, then, you have been raised with Christ, set your heart on things above, where Christ is seated at the right hand of God. Set your minds on things above, not on earthly things. For you died and your life is now hidden with Christ in God.*

—Col. 1-3

*Ron Keller, Ph.D., is the Coordinator of Prayer Ministries and is an ordained member of IMF. He is the author of ten published books and is a counselor, workshop leader and speaker.*



*Dr. Susan Shaw*

## Women as Ministers

by IMF Member, Susan J. Shaw, M.Div., Ph.D.

### "The Nature of Female Spirituality"

Tucked away inside the sixteenth chapter of Acts, we find a brief three-verse passage that reveals much about the nature of female spirituality.

Not much is made of the woman, Lydia, the "dealer of purple cloth," (as we are told in verse 11), by traditional scholarship. Yet, this is a woman merchant who had evidently been active in the markets of Thyatira, and had managed to maintain a successful business as a "soft goods" salesperson—no small accomplishment in the culture of her day!

She is presented to us as a "worshipper of God," and not a Jew, which suggests her Greek roots and her "conversion" into the faith of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob. Gentile women were particularly drawn to becoming "God-fearing," because women were often accorded great civility and respect in Jewish society, given their primary role in the command to "be fruitful and increase in number," demanded of the Hebrews early on (Genesis 1:28).

Furthermore, we are informed in verse thirteen that the time of our encounter with Lydia is the Sabbath, which suggests that the "Jewish" convert had given up her business responsibilities in order to observe God's fourth decalogical commandment to focus upon God for one full day of the week (Exodus 20:8).

It is also most curious that the author of this portion of Scripture indicates that the Sabbath search for the place of prayer led directly to a gathering of women. Where were the men? Women were not only forbidden to lead their own worship services, but were not counted as human beings for the purpose of forming a *Minyon* (the necessary twelve-person group for official Jewish liturgical practice). Yet the women had gathered, waiting patiently for males to arrive so that their formal worship could begin.

Paul's audacity in engaging strange women in conversation closely parallels Jesus' unconventional conversation with the Samaritan woman at the well (John 4:7). Perhaps we should not be surprised that this unique woman, Lydia, who was clearly unafraid to rebuff her pagan heritage, would eagerly embrace the message Paul poured forth to her and the other women who had gathered to welcome the Sabbath queen (verse 14).

Considered by many to be the very first European convert to Christianity, Lydia demonstrated the intense depth of her conviction by opening her heart and her home to strangers who had become brothers and sisters through the blood of the Lamb!

The lesson for us all, however, may rest in the very last phrase of the passage (verse 15). It was Lydia's "persuasion" that ultimately convinced the disciples to "stay at her house." It was, no doubt, that same fierce sense of conviction and conversion that led to the persuasive power Lydia utilized to convince others in her household to be baptized through the saving power of the Lord, Jesus Christ. Would that all of us might seek to demonstrate that same persuasive power as we share our faith with those God places in our paths!

*Dr. Susan J. Shaw has over thirty years' experience as a professional educator, academician, administrator and businesswoman. A Messianic Jew, baptized as a Presbyterian, Susan came to a personal knowledge of the Savior twenty years ago and has dedicated herself to theological study ever since.*

*As a professionally trained music educator, she holds a M.Div. from Alliance Theological Seminary (CMA) and an M.Phil. and Ph.D. in Theological and Religious Studies from Drew University (United Methodist).*

*A professional both in and out of the classroom, in both the public and private sectors, Susan has had wide experience as a student, a teacher, a parent of students and an academic administrator.*

*It has been her prayer and goal, for most of her years as a Completed Jew, that she have the opportunity to develop professional academic programs in theology and religious studies for women (and interested men).*

## by Elizabeth Ann Tinics, E.A.

### IF YOU ARE AUDITED

In this country, we have a voluntary compliance system of taxation. This means we each report to the government our income and deductions and compute the amount of tax due.

To ensure that the tax laws are followed and the deductions on a return are legitimate, the Internal Revenue Service has the authority to audit tax returns.

### Types of Audits

There are generally three types of audits. Each begins with the taxpayer receiving a letter from the Internal Revenue Service.

*Correspondence audit.* The IRS requests that certain information be provided by mail. If it is necessary for you to provide any documentation, be sure that you mail only copies (never originals). If the IRS finds that you owe tax and you don't agree, you may request an office audit.

*Office audit.* The letter you receive from the IRS will ask you to call for an appointment. The items the IRS is questioning will be listed in the letter. You or your representative will call for an appointment by the date indicated and take the documents supporting your income and deductions to that appointment. At the IRS office, a tax auditor will review these documents and discuss points of law that are relevant to your tax return. If an agreement is reached with the auditor, your case will be closed. If you don't reach an agreement you may appeal. (See *What if I don't agree with the IRS*).

*Field audit.* This type of audit is normally used to audit business returns. The auditor may come to your home or business to examine all the books and records for that business. A field audit may also be conducted in your Enrolled Agent's (EA's) office, an especially good idea if your bookkeeping was done there as well.

### How is a return selected for audit?

Normally a tax return is selected for an audit based on a combination of factors, including the amount and type of income and deductions. For example, if you operate a business or have rental property, your chances of being audited are slightly higher. In addition, taxpayers with large casualty losses, medical expenses, charitable contributions, or employee business expenses have a greater chance of being audited.

You should never omit legitimate deductions simply because you're afraid of being audited. First, only about two percent of tax returns are audited and, second, you could still be audited even if you don't take advantage of all the deductions to which you are entitled.

Since you're more likely to be audited if you have failed to report some income, you can limit the risk of being audited by accurately reporting all of your income.

### What should I do if I am audited?

If you get a letter from the Internal Revenue Service about an audit, the first thing you should do is to inform your Enrolled agent. He or she can advise you on the things that need to be done and the procedures for any type of audit.

For an Office Audit, you will need to gather all the documentation to prove the amount of income you received and the amount and legitimacy of your deductions. You will need to put the receipts and related documents into categories so they can be presented in an organized manner to the auditor. It will not be to your benefit to simply take a large bag of receipts and dump them on the auditor's desk.

### Who can represent me at the IRS?

Remember: It isn't necessary that you go to the IRS office yourself. With a properly executed power of attorney, Enrolled Agents, CPAs or attorneys can represent you at an audit. Any of these three types of professionals may present your records and argue points of law with the Internal Revenue Service. These individuals are familiar with tax law and IRS procedures and can often do a better job of defending your position than you would be able to do alone.

If you choose to go to an audit alone and become uncomfortable, you may stop the audit at any time by telling the revenue agent you want to get representation.

### What if I don't agree with the IRS?

If you don't agree with the auditor, you have the right to appeal your case using the following procedures:

First, you may appeal to the auditor's supervisor. If you do not reach agreement with the supervisor, you may take your case to the Appeals Division of the IRS. An agreement can often be reached at this level. Appeals officers are often more knowledgeable of tax law than auditors and, if appropriate, want to avoid unnecessary litigation.

If you don't agree with the appeals officer, the IRS will issue a Statutory Notice of Deficiency. You have 90 days from the date this notice is issued to file a Tax Court petition and have your case heard. To do this you do not need to pay the tax in question.

Depending upon the amount owed, you may elect to file

your case in Small Case Tax Court where an attorney is not needed. Otherwise, you would file your case in regular Tax Court.

As an alternative to Tax Court, you may pay the amount of tax in a question and file a suit for refund in either a U.S. District Court or U.S. Claims Court.

Most cases are settled before they reach the Tax Court. An EA can handle your case from the audit through the appeals process, up to the point where you elect to file in Tax Court, the U.S. District Court or U.S. Claims Court.

*Liz Tinics is an Enrolled Agent authorized to represent clients before the IRS. She is available on a fee basis (with discounts to IMF members) for accounting services. Liz will answer short, direct questions for IMF members without charge. However, extended discussion on tax matters will have to be negotiated on a "discount" fee basis (1-800-748-6415).*



## Give & Take

*An exchange program to help redistribute new and used equipment and materials for church and minister utilization*

**Rev. Jan Bracht  
493 Lassie Circle  
Hudson, WI 54016  
(715) 386-8790**

### Items Needed:

— used, soft-covered Bibles to distribute to prisoners

*For information on how to participate in the Give & Take program, please contact the IMF office.*

To correct your name or address on our lists, please send this entire address panel and mailing label from your Pastoral Letter to:

I.M.F.  
P.O. Box 32366,  
Minneapolis, MN 55432



Richard Amundson  
Founder & President,  
TENTMAKERS

## Developing Leaders in Your Church

Guest Writer, Sue Sjoblom, Church Relations Coordinator  
TENTMAKERS Leadership Training

*Tentmakers Training Helps Maximize Strengths for Service*

Put 30 people in a room along with five Tentmakers instructors, add enthusiasm and challenging assignments, sprinkle with encouragement and affirmations, mix well, and what do you get? Thirty people ready to serve the Lord and lead with greater competence, relational ability, and confidence.

After nearly twenty years, Tentmakers continues to mold and shape leaders for the church with its successful, life-changing training courses. Traditionally known around the country for providing youth ministers to churches, the organization is starting to focus on its greatest strength—training.

Currently Tentmakers offers courses for lay volunteers, youth ministers, pastors, other church and para-church leaders, and high school and college students. What kind of person is suited for Tentmakers training? A person who:

- ♦ wants to be able to build relationships with all sorts of people without having to worry about making a good impression;
- ♦ is tired of trying to figure out how to get people excited about the Bible or to get

enthusiastic participation in a small group;

- ♦ is uncomfortable speaking in front of people;
- ♦ has trouble successfully completing programs or projects in his or her church because of a lack of volunteers, or volunteers who don't follow through as asked;
- ♦ wants everything he does in his ministry to have a worthy purpose;
- ♦ ends up "winging it" through a youth group meeting or a Sunday School lesson more often than they would like to admit;
- ♦ can't find time enough for family and friends because of ministry responsibilities;
- ♦ wants to walk closer to the Lord and develop spiritual disciplines;
- ♦ wants to get people to own a vision for ministry—not just go through the motions;
- ♦ feels caught because of sinful habits or discouragement from the past;
- ♦ needs to take a fresh look at God's purpose for his or her life;

- ♦ wishes they had more people helping out in their ministry;
- ♦ wants to share a devotion or sermon that makes people weep—or laugh!; or
- ♦ wants to make the most of their life to reach people for Jesus Christ!

*TENTMAKERS is uniquely positioned today to be instrumental in "equipping the saints for the work of the ministry." Who are the true tentmakers in our congregations? They are men and women from all walks of life who feel a calling to serve God more effectively with the gifts they've been given. Since 1979, TENTMAKERS has trained thousands of staff and lay people in leadership and ministry skills. To find out more about our course offerings, please give us a call at (800) 989-TENT. TENTMAKERS is an associated ministry with IMF. We fully endorse and recommend their youth ministry training program and their pastoral leadership and management training services. For more information on TENTMAKERS training, please call the IMF office at (612) 571-5967.*

*Richard Amundson founded TENTMAKERS Youth Ministry in 1978 and continues to serve as President. In 1987, he founded Wilderness North, a leadership training camp in the Superior National Forest in northern Minnesota. Richard is a 1974 graduate of Luther College in Decorah, Iowa, and currently resides in Eden Prairie, MN, with his wife, Londa, and four children.*