

Facing the Future



At the beginning of 2021, I shared with our church a lesson entitled, “Ring Out the Old, Ring In the New” (quoting Alfred Lord Tennyson). The lesson looked back in remembrance, forward in anticipation, and upward for guidance and strength. Covid had robbed our small congregation of four leaders, each a truly worthy model (Hebrews 13:7-8). Their passing reminds us that no one—even the most integral and cherished—is permanent. We must be preparing for the future, just as Paul prepared Timothy, which raises the question, “Who is your Timothy?”

What if we are in denial about our mortality, or even territorial? “This is my work, done my way, giving me satisfaction”—which unintentionally

ensures it will die with me. It takes courage to face the future, to plan for it, to pass the baton. Is there no place left for me? Just the opposite! Do all you can while you can (Ecclesiastes 9:10), working hard also to include and equip the next generations. Rejoice in their new skills. Encourage them in new opportunities. Support them in creating and adopting more effective tools, even as some of us keep using traditional tools (see page 8).

Who better to develop new tools than new generations? This *Action!* features “Faces of the Future”—just a few of World Bible School’s growing, forward-facing team. Our goal is to speed the Great Commission to its successful conclusion (Revelation 7:9). The Lord has brought each of us, old and young, to the Kingdom for such a time as this!



YOUR MILLION DOLLAR OPPORTUNITY!

In November 2020, a family that loves World Bible School for its world impact presented WBS with an extraordinary gift and a motivating challenge. **Their gift: \$500,000.** They asked us to challenge other major donors to raise an equivalent amount during the remaining time in that year. They urged us to take the result—their \$500,000 plus an equivalent \$500,000 to be raised in December—and use the total of \$1,000,000 to inspire and challenge the brotherhood in 2021 to give with similar liberality, each giving in proportion to the Lord's blessings. They (and we) believe that the Great Commission is so great that it deserves great vision, great faith, great sacrifice and great effort.

By God's grace, December's total response from 46 major donors, including WBS Board members, was \$512,010! They have set the pace in the race to share Jesus with as many individuals as possible. We are impressed with, and deeply grateful for, the sense of urgency they give to the Great Commission. The resulting \$1,000,000 (the family's gift in November plus responding gifts in December) forms the largest match or challenge in the history of WBS.

We are now coming to you, as friends and supporters of WBS, asking you to follow the example set by these visionary leaders. **Meet their challenge by cumulatively giving \$1,000,000 in 2021!** It is the size of the heart, not the size of the gift, that matters. What seems little to you may be the most valuable gift in God's eyes (Mark 12:41-44). Your \$1,000,000 added to the original \$1,000,000 will apply \$2,000,000 to speed fulfillment of the Great Commission.

If you know that postal WBS typically enrolls over a million new students each year (page 8), if you understand the potential of WBS Lite App with WhatsApp (page 2, at right), then you know that "fulfilling the Great Commission" is not mere talk. Between postal and digital methods, we have access to literally millions of learners. Your contribution goes toward enrolling hundreds of thousands worldwide to learn the Bible, recruiting more Christians as their teachers (study helpers, mentors, coaches), connecting with follow up, and much more. We call this "You. Sharing Jesus."

The target is the individual who needs Jesus, the person like Joseph (page 6) or Sharon or Bee (page 7). 2020's generous giving has positioned WBS well. As the Lord works through you, 2021 will see unprecedented Gospel impact in our world where Covid is causing many to seek spiritual answers. Appropriately, we are calling 2021's unique opportunity the **Care Challenge**. Let's rise to the challenge of responding positively to so much that is negative! Let's face the future with bold resolve! Let's turn Covid cares into *Kingdom care*—with the **Care Challenge**.



WBS REBOOT: Reaching an Audience Potential of Millions!

BY TIM YAEGER BIRMINGHAM, AL

WhatsApp is the most popular messaging app in the world with more than 2 billion users across 180 countries. How can WBS tap into this opportunity? Well, a little more than two years ago we asked that question and ultimately the answer became **WBS Lite**. This is a new student app we recently launched as part of the WBS Reboot project. WBS Lite is uniquely designed to link to WhatsApp.

A great many who use WhatsApp do not have email addresses. So, WBS Lite allows them to register using their WhatsApp account (no email required) and to send messages to their study helper using WhatsApp. A study helper doesn't have to know how to use WhatsApp. Online study helpers use what they are accustomed to on the website for messages. The student uses what they are accustomed to on WhatsApp. The technology connects behind the scenes, out of sight from those using the tools.

Another benefit of WBS Lite is the ability for students to download the app, WBS courses and the WBS Study Bible, then do their studying offline. Many students cannot stay online for long periods because of the high cost of data plans. WBS Lite helps to solve that problem by being very "lite" and friendly on data, allowing many more students to make progress with WBS.

What does all this technical talk mean? WBS can reach more seekers with the Gospel of Christ in more ways than ever before. God has paved the way to scale mountains to proclaim His word

continued on p7



CURE 2021

By now, millions of people around the world have received the Covid-19 vaccine—a preventative measure created to reduce our chances of contracting the virus should we get exposed. But what about our prolonged exposure to the things of this world? Just as Covid-19 can result in death, sin in our world can result in another death—spiritual death. The soul-saving reality is there is a cure for sin: Jesus.

The Bible warns about the world's influence. Paul states clearly in Romans 12:2, *Do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed*

Come See Us!

WBS celebrates partners! That is our planned theme—"Friendly Faces"—for the May Action! One longtime partner is Abundant Living, Harding University's service for seniors and retirees. Organizer Kay Gowen now has passed the baton to Teresa Castleman. Lord willing, the Abundant Living



Retreat will be held in person (limited numbers) at the Edgewater Hotel in Gatlinburg, TN, April 19-22, 2021. Register online at abundantlivingseniors.com or call 501-279-4055. John and Beth Reese and Brian and Sondra Davis plan to be there with World

Bible School's booth and sponsored lunch. Brian has been selected to serve as WBS' next president, beginning January, 2022. Whether at this event or another, we look forward to the Lord granting us opportunities to see and to bless each other (Romans 1:11-12).



*by the renewal of your mind. Our minds are renewed by focusing on our Father and His endless love. His words fill our hearts and feed our souls. Lamentations 3:22-23 affirms, *The steadfast love of the LORD never ceases; His mercies never come to an end; they are new every morning; great is Your faithfulness.**

In this *Action!* John Reese introduces the **Care Challenge**. With him, I encourage you to join WBS and continue to get God's Word into the hands of millions by paper and online Bible courses. In January, our technical group updated the WBS teaching site, launched a new WBS App and invited the world to begin studying the Bible on their smart phones. The WBS App links with WhatsApp which some 2 billion people use *every day!* Now that's what I call efficient worldwide distribution of the life-saving vaccine that shares the cure for sin! As never before, apps let us share the Bible (by download) and its message of hope (through interactive study). Please partner with WBS by taking on the **Care Challenge** to spread the one vaccine that cures now and eternally: Jesus Christ!

Pat Brown is always available to talk to friends of WBS—individuals and churches. Contact him at pat@worldbibleschool.net.



Action!

EDITOR: JOHN REESE

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REMEMBERING MILTON WILSON

Editor's Note: 2020's hardships hit many hard, including our congregation, Highland Village church of Christ in Austin. Covid attacked our preacher Jason Butler and his wife Christina, and claimed the lives of our elder Bob Fleming and his wife Mary Beth. Heart problems took our WBS deacon Jim Cravens. Then Covid struck again, taking Milton Wilson on the last day of 2020. Here is an edited excerpt from my part in Milton's memorial.

Milton was like Johnny Appleseed, who was reputed to have planted fruit trees wherever he went. Milton planted optimism, appreciation, and the Gospel seed, and lived to see much fruit from his labors. His firstfruits were his own family who share his strong faith.

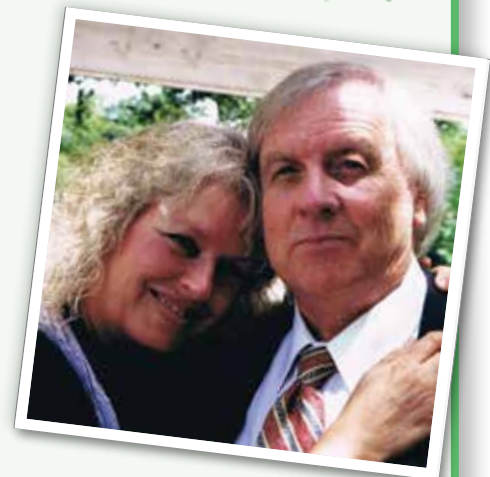
To a rich spiritual heritage, Milton added two other great advantages: His marriage to Sue, his beloved and wise companion for 56 years, and his education at Sunset School of Preaching (now SIBI).

Sunset teachers included Tex Williams and "Abe" Lincoln whose African mission experiences led the young Wilsons (at age 25 and 21) to South Africa in 1969. They worked in Port Elizabeth and Pietermaritzburg and were regulars at the Southern Africa Bible School (now College, SABC). Often Milton was the final highlight speaker of the lectureship.

Their South African work was during apartheid which attempted to separate races. But the Wilsons worked among all the races. Milton loved people and urged them to prepare for heaven. For example, one night in the 1970s the Wilson family was traveling between Port Elizabeth and Sunday's River when the car broke down. Eventually a tow truck arrived. The family piled into the cab with the driver.

As they travelled, Milton taught the driver, Andrew Maroon. Andrew was baptized the next day. Decades later, Milton visited Port Elizabeth again and a large contingent of church members came from Sunday's River. They told how Andrew Maroon had started a thriving congregation there. The seed Milton had planted in a driver's good heart had produced hundredfold!

Many such seeds were sown in South Africa, Missouri and elsewhere. When the Wilsons moved to Austin, Milton brought his 600 sermons. He was a favorite here at Highland Village. Milton was also a great promoter of SIBI, SABC and World Bible School. Our most recent WBS event in Austin was a great success, blessed in part by Milton's energetic promotion. We share Milton's mission, of which he wrote, "I just want to go to Heaven. And I want everybody that I can influence for good to go there with me."



Milton and Sue Wilson



Milton was a dynamic preacher of the Gospel.

Blessed by Billie Dykes

Billie Baird was born in Williford, AR, and married Burrell Dykes in Searcy. They raised their family in the Houston area. Her son-in-law, Ken Wallers, observes, "Billie will be remembered for her faith in God, her legacy of godliness and serving others. Much of her life was centered around church administration and outreach activities including working at Southeast church of Christ in Houston with WBS efforts that touched the lives of thousands internationally and in prisons." Billie was the first of her family to attend college, graduating



Lake City and Pearland congregations, where she was instrumental in recruiting many new teachers."

from Harding College. She received her airplane pilot's license in 1948, before she could drive a car. She applied her analytical mind to WBS efficiency, learning after age 60 to use computers and mail merge for in-depth Bible teaching as students answered WBS questions. JoAnn Wallers writes, "My mother did indeed teach WBS for a long time and for a time also led the WBS programs at both the Clear

FACES OF T

Editor's Note: In this issue of Action! and the next, we are pleased to introduce the part of the WBS team that Tim Yaeger leads in specialized technology. We begin the introductions with Tim's assessment. WBS is blessed with a remarkable combination of Gospel passion, biblical soundness, God-given talent, and cutting-edge training and experience. The median age of Tim's



**TIM
YAEGER**

As **Vice President of Technology & Digital Strategies**, I am grateful for the talent God has assembled the past three years while I have been at WBS. In my prior career, I have worked with agencies global and local, managed small clients to corporations as large as Gerber Life, served as a minister and held many technical and web support roles. Never have I experienced the team focus and common vision that I have at WBS. Everyone is aligned around the common goal to equip Christians to share Jesus and to introduce seekers to the Bible. We have learned to work cross-generationally, cross-culturally, and across

paper and digital media. God has used our combined experiences to prepare us for this age's unique opportunities to share Jesus with more lost souls across multiple languages, demographics and cultures, both traditional and digital.



**WILLIAM
BUSH**

William earned Bachelor's degrees in Convergent Media and Interactive Digital Design, with a minor in Biblical Texts from Freed-Hardeman University. His Master's degree in Media Management is from Austin Peay State University. As Athletic Director of Broadcast and Digital Media at Lipscomb University, he was the executive producer for all Lipscomb Athletics' broadcasts on ESPN and managed all athletic videos

and digital graphics. Since June 2019, as the **Digital Media Director** for WBS, he is Product Manager for **Mathetis** and directs digital marketing and social media strategies. William is married to Anna.



**JENA
MADELEY**

Hailing from Amarillo and a graduate of Texas A&M University, Jena worked at the B-1 Simulator at Dyess Air Force Base for 22 years, working her way up to Database Manager. Mission work took her to Chipata Bible College, Zambia, where she taught Communication and with the church, Ladies' and Children's Bible classes. Back in Abilene, she joined WBS as an Internet Support Associate in January 2017, and now serves as the **Digital Support**

Manager overseeing WBS internet Support and the **worldbibleschool.org** website.



**EDIE
CONNEL**

Edie, of Abilene, TX, is the widow of well-known minister and singing instructor Bob Connel (married 53 years). She is also mother and grandmother to many—including us! Her 60-year career in physical therapy continues, now part time. Her history with WBS goes back to the mid-1950s when she heard Jimmie Lovell promoting Bible correspondence teaching. After retiring from full-time PT in 2000, Edie helped Kit Mullins initiate WBS' technical department, then worked alongside Jonathan

Towell and now Tim Yaeger. Edie assists teachers and, with Sherri Hays, coordinates WBS' Follow Up Partners.



**GEORGE
ACHARD**

Born in Myanmar (Burma), George grew up in Florence, AL. Soon after his graduation from Freed Hardeman University, WBS put to work his specialty in Computer Science and Interactive Digital Design. Now in Nashville, George's role as a **User Experience Designer** focuses on attractive interfaces and the enhanced usability of interactive WBS tools. He has redesigned the **worldbibleschool.net** website, helped bring the vision of **Mathetis** to fruition, and is working on revamping the **worldbibleschool.org** website.

REACHING THE WORLD

A Changed Life

BY **JOSEPH KHISA VIHIGA, KENYA**

I am Joseph, a young man from Kenya, born into a poor, polygamous family. After my father died, my stepmother and her elder children chased my mom and me away. I grew up in my grandmother's home under spiritual values. The hard life compelled me to rely mostly on God for divine intervention. Later, I was appointed to be one of the church leaders. Our church pastor was caught in adultery with a woman, the church treasurer. It was unbelievable! I questioned the pastor about his misbehavior, and he became wildly mad. Discouraged, I stopped going to church.



I shared my predicament with my paternal uncle. I accompanied him one Sunday to the church of Christ. I introduced myself and they embraced me. The class teacher saw spiritual potential in me and advised me to study the Word of God with WBS. I began online WBS lessons immediately. From God's Word, I discovered that the church belongs to Christ and not to humans. I also discovered the true baptism. I realized that I was lost! I confessed my sins and demanded a true, purposeful baptism.

The devil is a terrible schemer! At that time, the government banned all public gatherings due to Covid. My WBS study helper encouraged me to obey God. He linked me to a WBS contact person, but nothing came of that. So, my uncle organized a church service in his house, which was followed by my baptism in the nearby river.

Learning with WBS has changed my mind and life. The Word of God is now guiding me in everything I do. I seek to study more and to teach others to see light as I have seen. May God continue blessing us all.



H E F U T U R E

technicians is 37. The Board and other managers likewise bring a relevant array of mature perspectives to WBS' focus on the Great Commission. WBS is facing the future and, by God's grace, is well-positioned so that "the Word of the Lord may speed ahead and be honored" (2 Thessalonians 3:1).



BRITTANY BROWN

Brittany and Rusty have three children, ages 7, 5 and 3. They are missionaries in Cuenca, Ecuador, where Brittany works online for WBS. Brittany graduated from Harding University in Child and Family studies with a minor in Bible and Religion. Her mission work has also taken her to China with China Now and to Knoxville, TN, for a new church plant. Brittany's specialty is customer service support, and she is the **Project Manager** for **Spoken** which connects with global populations seeking experience in hearing and speaking English. Christian "coaches" use her design to share the Gospel by means of audio Bible verses shared on the **Spoken** app.



ANDREA WALKER

Andrea and Murry in Round Rock, TX, have two young children. With a background in nursing, Andrea loves serving others. She now enjoys being able to focus on people's spiritual health. As WBS' **Mathetis Community Coordinator**, Andrea authors the Mathetis monthly newsletter and "Dear Mentor" newsletter. Andrea also responds to questions from our online outreach campaigns. She says, "I want to make sure everyone has a productive and encouraging experience on **Mathetis**. This study tool can be utilized to teach the Gospel in many ways, to a variety of age groups and to meet a large spectrum of learning goals. Reach out to Andrea at help@mathetis.org.



DEREK DRAKE

Derek studied Broadcast Journalism and Ministry at Harding University. He serves as a minister of the Gospel at Loveland Heights church of Christ in Loveland, OH. He and Sarah have three sons, ages 9, 5 and 4, with another child expected. For more than a decade, Derek's "tent making" was digital journalism for local media. Most recently, he served as a social media consultant for media outlets globally, teaching them how to reach more people with the news through "organic posting" and paid marketing. He has long wanted to combine his business experience with his passion to help seek and save the lost, a desire now being fulfilled as a **Digital**

from p2 WBS Reboot

around the world. We hope to see our system flooded with more students from more countries, leading more souls to enter the Kingdom of God! Who will teach them? Faithful Christians like you. Christians who obey the Great Commission and take action to share Jesus! **Register to become a study helper at worldbibleschool.net.** Learn more about features of the Reboot and view the tutorials at worldbibleschool.org/resources.



Media Associate with WBS and **Mathetis** focusing on social media, content and marketing.



KAMI HIEB

Kami and Brandon live in Cedar Park, TX. They have three children, ages 8, 11 and 14. Kami received a degree from the University of Texas at Austin in Public Relations. She became a WBS Study Helper in January 2014 after hearing John Reese speak at her congregation. She started volunteering regularly in the Cedar Park WBS office in September 2018, then joined the staff in April 2019 as a **Digital Support Associate**.



ANDREW MAACH

Andy graduated with a degree in Missions and Computer Science from Freed-Hardeman University in 2015 where he met his now-wife Hannah. He went on to be a software engineer with the Department of Defense and briefly returned as an instructor at Freed-Hardeman. He and Hannah live in Crossville, TN, where he works as a **Senior Software Engineer** for WBS and currently is working on the WBS app **Spoken**.

WE ARE SO GRATEFUL FOR THEM

(and more to be introduced) —and you— in our partnership to fulfill the Gospel mission of WBS.

NYC Baptism

Brother Tucson Redd worships with the Metro church of Christ in Oklahoma City, OK. During 2020's COVID shutdown, he reached out to eight business associates and friends around the

country, inviting them to join his **Mathetis** class using Zoom teleconferencing. In this online class, he used videos and class materials from the Mathetis website, and the Mathetis Bible Class curriculum entitled *Reaching Those Wondering What to Believe* to teach the first 13-week class.

Brother Redd and his classmates really enjoyed that first study. So, he set up a second Mathetis Zoom class, *Seeking Those in Need of a Savior*, with nine people. After studying the lesson "How Can I Be Born Again?" one participant, Sharon Bond, realized she needed to become a Christian as the New Testament directs. Sharon lives in New York City. Brother Redd got help from his own brother, Dr. Harold Redd, minister at the Midtown church of Christ in Memphis TN, who put him in touch with Dr. Olu Shabazz, minister at the Harlem church of Christ.

Sharon was baptized by Dr. Shabazz. She was anxious about attending a congregation where she knew no one. Fortunately, another Zoom class participant, Marlo Brooks, happened to be a member at Harlem, which made introductions much easier.

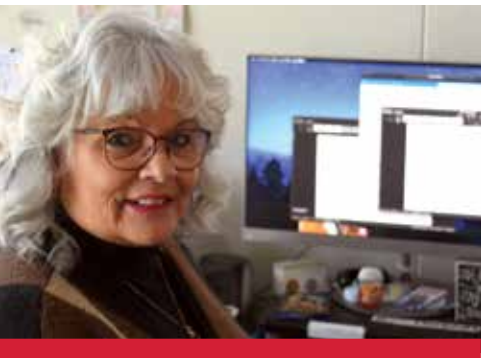


In Thailand, **Udorn Inthong** shares the faith with Bee. Look closely and you'll see that Udorn uses WBS Study Bibles.

POSTAL TEACHERS

Amidst great advances in technology and tools for sharing the Good News of Jesus, teaching with printed lessons by mail is as important as ever. WBS' technology investments are, in fact, enhancing postal teaching to be more effective.

BY **SHERRI HAYS** CEDAR PARK, TX



I work in World Bible School's Cedar Park office and communicate daily with WBS teachers. Over sixteen years, many of them have become dear friends to me. Recently, I received two phone calls from elderly WBS teachers with similar concerns. They said

they had quit teaching because they heard that WBS was going completely to computers and the internet. Both ladies felt they were not able to make the change.

I assured them that postal teaching continues to be very important to World Bible School. Approximately 94% of our students are postal students. At present, the Covid Pandemic has slowed down postal activity. Many countries restricted travel, which also restricted flights that carry mail. What these teachers might have been hearing is that we are using new technologies, but these are also helping postal teaching to have faster turnaround times. For example, many congregations use a tool called Dropbox whereby they receive scanned copies of their students' paper answers. In many countries, we ask postal students for their WhatsApp number. Americans may not be familiar with WhatsApp (and they don't need to be), but in other countries it is the most popular method for instant messaging. Having a WhatsApp number makes contact much swifter for follow up personnel and helps to overcome postal problems. Even teachers who don't use the computer still get lesson answers (or printouts

of the same) from our offices and teach in their normal way. **So, they can know that, rather than hindering postal teaching, technology is enhancing it.**

When the 83-year-old called, a fresh batch of postal applications had just arrived. I



You. Sharing Jesus.

POSTMASTER:

Send address changes to
Action! World Bible School
P.O. Box 2169
Cedar Park, Texas 78630

asked her if she wanted to resume teaching by taking these new students. She was delighted with the prospect and took as many students as I could offer! **We have many ways to connect with seekers. Teach through WBS in the way that fits your abilities!**



UPCOMING...



Friendly Faces