



MISSIONS FOCUS

From bulletin: July 31, 2022

Our Missionaries, their health and ministries affected by Covid-19

The Church Around the World August 2022 Newsletter

From today's bulletin / Missions Report from Missions Team

This newsletter is available online or in the MC Lobby. Each brief article has a prayer prompt so the reader can engage with the Lord in uplifting and asking God to further his kingdom and bless those who faithfully follow Christ. Some subjects highlighted: Sharing Christian Literature around the world in the midst of Global Instability and the trials of believers in Cameroon, Myanmar and India.

The entire August 2022 newsletter follows [this page](#):

Thank you for reading about and praying for our missionaries, countries and people locally and globally!

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significant news for christians

Some news that's encouraging—some disturbing. Read with discernment. Watch and pray.

THE Church Around the WORLD

August
2022

CLC International: Sharing Christian Literature amidst Global Instability



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CLC International: Sharing Christian Literature amidst Global Instability (1)

Even amidst a deadly pandemic and a devastating war, CLC International has stayed on mission. Formerly the Christian Literature Crusade, CLC aims to make evangelical Christian literature available to all nations so that people may come to faith and maturity in the Lord Jesus Christ.

Founded in 1941 in England and currently serving 47 nations across 5 continents, CLC focuses on spreading the gospel through Christian book and Bible production and translation work. CLC distributes these resources through Christian bookstores, bookmobiles, websites, and e-books. Materials represent various denominational perspectives and have been published in 25 different languages.

CLC implements its global vision at the local level. Its book centers—started by cross-cultural missionaries—are designed to meet the needs of each specific community, so you might find one in a traditional retail location in London, a busy market center in India, or a remote part of Central Asia. While some locations are thriving, others have experienced financial hardship increased by COVID-19. Here's a sample of stories both challenging and inspiring from the countries of Spain, Bolivia, Benin, Kenya, and Burkina Faso.

Spain (2)

CLC began in Spain in 1966, opening bookshops in cities countrywide. CLC Spain also distributed Christian literature in other European countries and in Equatorial Guinea—the only Spanish-speaking country in Africa. Unfortunately, this ministry has struggled financially over the last 12 years. Several bookshops closed, and staff was reduced. Finally, CLC Spain made the difficult decision to close.

“There has been a huge outpouring of sadness and yet also appreciation for CLC Spain. The ministry has been highly valued for 55 years, so it was indeed a sad time for our staff [to realize] that we were no longer able to continue,” a representative shared. “The COVID-19 pandemic hugely affected the ministry.”

Another small book chain, Vida Libros, opened a location in CLC's former spot and hired at least one former CLC staff member to work for them.

Bolivia (3)

Missionaries Gamaliel and Marlene Padilla started CLC Bolivia in 2013. Initial sales and the contacts they made were encouraging, but maintaining enough funds was a consistent challenge. COVID-19 made financial stability even more difficult. Despite incredible efforts and sacrifice, CLC Bolivia had to close in 2021.

Humberto Urrutia, the Regional Director for CLC in Latin America, quoted Jeremiah 29:11

PRAYER FOR THE PERSECUTED

Recommended Scripture:

Genesis 13:5–15:21 | Matthew 5:27-48 | Psalm 6:1-10 | Proverbs 1:29-33

Jesus' audience must have wondered if they'd heard him correctly. Was he really asking them to love and pray for their oppressors? (See Matthew 5:44.) Yes—and he asks the same of his followers now. Jesus knows about all the Christians experiencing persecution worldwide. And he also knows where those persecuted believers can find healing and strength to extend grace: in the mighty power of God.

Lord, help all whose grief seems unbearable to find strength in you—strength sufficient to fuel forgiveness. Amen.

More prayer prompts are available in *The One Year Pray for the Persecuted Bible*.





in an email and added an additional comment about the situation: “We praise God for the commitment, hard work, and sacrifice shown by Gamaliel and Marlene and their team and we pray for them as they look to the Lord for guidance for their future.”

Benin (4)

Cotonou is the home of CLC Benin’s only bookshop, which opened in 1998. When COVID-19 was raging, people saved money for essentials while the border to Nigeria was closed. Sales took a major hit, making it a struggle to pay supplier invoices. Thankfully, recently donated funds almost exactly matched what was needed to pay off that debt. Continue to pray for Benin, a country where voodoo—practiced by an estimated 40 percent of its population—is recognized as an official religion.

Kenya (5)

CLC Kenya began in 2017. The single Nairobi location is home to retail, wholesale, publishing, and print-on-demand services. Their current emphasis is on encouraging, developing, and supporting local authors. CLC recently engaged 10 authors to collaborate on a two-book anthology called *Thriving in and after Crisis*. Topics include marriage, solitude, accountability, youth, parenting, pastors and ministry workers, integrity of God’s promises, teenagers, and children.

Burkina Faso (6)

CLC Burkina Faso began in 1991 with one bookshop in the capital city of Ouagadougou. Sami Luc Noufe, the current national director,

took over leadership in 2017 after having already served in CLC since 1991.

Since its founding, the bookshop has struggled financially, with two moves and a former national director dealing with a family crisis. Combining this with economic and sociopolitical unpredictability made it almost impossible for Luc and his only colleague, Gérard, to meet expenses. Both men were assistant pastors, but Luc eventually made the sacrificial decision to concentrate solely on CLC.

Sales in 2020 decreased by only 2 percent, and in the first quarter of 2021, they increased by 168 percent. There is now enough money in the local bank account to pay for upcoming international orders. CLC Burkina Faso and the CLC International Office are very encouraged with this progress!

Romans 12:2 says that we must be “transformed by the renewing of [our minds]” (NIV), a guiding principle throughout CLC’s history and work. While health, finances, and other factors remain unpredictable, CLC International will continue to spread the gospel and see God renew people’s minds and transform their hearts. You can support CLC International, including efforts to assist Ukrainian refugees, by visiting clcusa.org.

Financial support for this project was provided to CLC International as a Tyndale House Foundation grantee. Tyndale House Foundation is a grantmaking organization that partners with Christian ministries around the world. To learn more, visit tyndale.foundation.



Pray for Aung Hte and his family as they seek safe, permanent shelter. Pray for their faith to grow despite the persecution they have faced, and pray that their relatives hear the gospel and see Christ reflected in the lives of Aung Hte and his family.

Cameroon: New Believer Threatened, Homeless (7)

A Christian brother is facing hardship after leaving Islam to follow Christ. After his girlfriend found out about his newfound faith, she reported him to his Muslim family, who locked him in a room for more than 24 hours to try to force him to recant. The Christian brother fled after his release because his family threatened his life, and he is currently staying with another believer while he looks for a new home. Despite the opposition, the Christian brother remains committed to Christ.

“He is firm in his commitment to follow Jesus,” a frontline worker said. “He wants to devote more time to studying the Bible.”

Please pray for peace, comfort, and joy in Christ for this Christian. Pray also that this believer’s family will come to know Christ and cease their persecution of him.

Myanmar: Family Expelled after Placing Trust in Jesus (8)

After Aung Hte and his wife came to faith in 2017, his in-laws expelled him and his family from their land and home. His family became destitute and was forced to live in a tent on rented land while Aung Hte worked in a remote fishing village to provide for their needs. In Myanmar, it is common for families that practice animist beliefs to forcibly remove family members from their land in an effort to appease the spirits.



India: Hindu Mob Assaults Christians; Police Arrest Believers Instead (9)

Last fall, about 500 Hindu nationalists beat and stoned more than 60 Christians and detained them, accusing them of forcefully converting Hindus to Christianity. When police arrived, they watched the attacks occur, but then detained the Christians instead of those in the mob, who were vandalizing vehicles belonging to the believers. Some of the Christians were taken to jail but have since been released on bail.

Pray that those who were detained remain firm in their faith despite the persecution they’ve endured, and pray for mental and physical healing for those injured in the attack. Pray that the Holy Spirit will help all the believers forgive their attackers. Pray also for the Hindu nationalists to be convicted of the hatred in their hearts, and pray for them to hear the gospel and experience God’s forgiveness and love.