Brethren in Christ U.S.

Annual Report

January 1, 2025 - December 31, 2025

Multiplica

As Jesus ascended into heaven, he told his disciples that they would be his witnesses locally, regionally, and globally – multiplying to share the Gospel with the world (Acts 1:8).

This July 24-27, join us for **General Assembly 2026** in Miami, Florida, where our theme – Multiplica – invites us to strengthen and multiply our leaders, congregations, and ministries so more people may experience new life in Christ!

bicus.org/general-assembly-2026

A LETTER FROM THE NATIONAL DIRECTOR

Dear Church Family,
Jesus told his disciples, "In this world you will have trouble," (John 16:33). Those followers experienced the reality of his words: the crucifixion of Jesus, persecution in the early church, even martyrdom for some. However, despite the "trouble," the Church flourished and grew.

When writing to the church in Thessalonica, Paul remembers how they "welcomed the message [of the gospel] in the midst of severe suffering with the joy given by the Holy Spirit," (1 Thessalonians 1:6). Again, in spite of "trouble," the Church flourished and grew.

In every generation since, the Church has been shaped by both trouble and triumph. In fact, triumph is often the fruit of patiently enduring hardship, adapting with wisdom to the changing context, and relying fully on God and his strength to live with faith and hope. These characteristics produce resiliency, in both individuals and congregations.

Resiliency in the face of adversity is not new to God's people; it has been a hallmark of faithful discipleship through the centuries. Resiliency is deeply spiritual. It grows through prayer and trust in God's presence and power. It absorbs disappointments, setbacks, and opposition. It is strengthened in a community of like-minded brothers and sisters and is motivated by a deep commitment to the mission of God in the world. It is comforted and inspired by recalling that Jesus not only said, "In this world you will have trouble," but continued, saying, "take heart! I have overcome the world."

The stories in this Annual Report feature resilient individuals and congregations that have endured hardship and trouble but, through God's help, have overcome. We pray their stories encourage you in your own adversity.

May we all follow Jesus with patience, wisdom, courage, faith, hope, and love, no matter what challenge may arise.

Blessings in Christ,

Alan Robinson
National Director

A Legacy Gift's Impact on Children's Ministry

Ann* loved children and gave her time and resources to serve them, both in her personal life and in her church, Paramount BIC in Hagerstown, Md. Her passing last year was keenly felt by the congregation. However, Ann's dedication to children continued.

Her estate plan included a generous bequest for Paramount which has enabled them to hire a children's ministry director. "I cannot think of a better way to honor her gift than to invest it in our children's ministry," says Jacob Harrison, lead pastor.

The BIC U.S. Legacy Society honors people who – like Ann – have included a gift to future BIC U.S. ministry in their estate plan. Current membership is 133 with the potential to provide nearly $5 million in ministry funding. Our goal is to grow to 250 members by the BIC's 250th anniversary in 2028.

Learn how to become one of those 250! Visit bicus.org/legacy-society or contact Mark Templeton: templeton@bicus.org.

**Name changed.*

BACK TO LIFE

Envisioning Church Growth Beyond Numbers

Church growth. How do you measure it? Is it last Sunday's attendance? Do you track weekly giving? Or are there other things, less visible but ultimately more important, that indicate a congregation's growth?

LifeHouse Church, a BIC congregation in Abilene, Kans., has asked many of these questions over the past two years.

In 2023, Pastor Brian Emig was hired as their new lead pastor. LifeHouse was coming out of a challenging season; once a body of over 200 people, the congregation had dwindled to less than 20 as multiple pastors came and went. The congregation had gained some stability under the interim leadership of Bishop Ron Bowell and Robert Levis, now pastor at CrossRoads Church in Salina, Kans., but Pastor Brian and LifeHouse still had an unknown road ahead.

Growth would be crucial, but rather than measuring LifeHouse's growth by their weekly attendance, Pastor Brian's focus was on spiritual growth. "Individual's growth is really what I'm keying in on," he says. "I want to see people grow in their spiritual walk."

As they've pursued this fresh vision, three markers of growth have emerged: expanding volunteers, missional attitudes, and transformed hearts.

Expanding Volunteers

As a benchmark of growth, volunteers may be a surprising first step, but it was a crucial early win. Brent Potter has attended LifeHouse for eight years and serves on the church board, giving him a front row seat to many of the congregation's more painful moments. As the congregation shrank, more and more was asked of the remaining volunteers, including Brent. Coupled with emotional strain, it took a toll. "We were in sad survival mode," he remembers.

So, when new volunteers began offering their time and talents, Brent got his first glimpse of LifeHouse's future. People stepped up to run tech and lead music. Soon they had enough volunteers to start recording and posting YouTube videos of their services again. "Suddenly it wasn't just a small handful of people running things," he says with a smile. He is still an active volunteer, but today, one of his greatest joys is sitting in Sunday morning services with his grandkids.

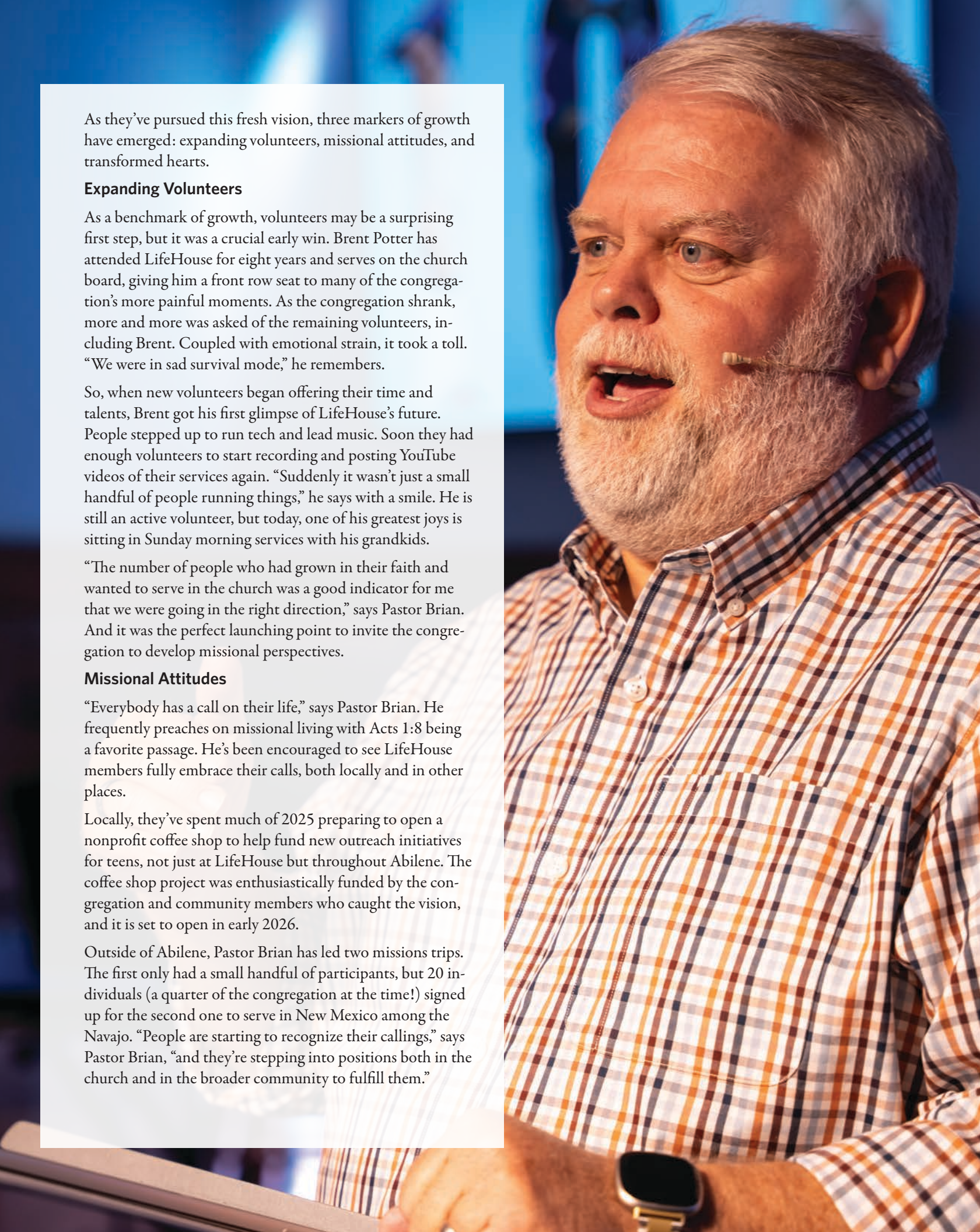
"The number of people who had grown in their faith and wanted to serve in the church was a good indicator for me that we were going in the right direction," says Pastor Brian. And it was the perfect launching point to invite the congregation to develop missional perspectives.

Missional Attitudes

"Everybody has a call on their life," says Pastor Brian. He frequently preaches on missional living with Acts 1:8 being a favorite passage. He's been encouraged to see LifeHouse members fully embrace their calls, both locally and in other places.

Locally, they've spent much of 2025 preparing to open a nonprofit coffee shop to help fund new outreach initiatives for teens, not just at LifeHouse but throughout Abilene. The coffee shop project was enthusiastically funded by the congregation and community members who caught the vision, and it is set to open in early 2026.

Outside of Abilene, Pastor Brian has led two missions trips. The first only had a small handful of participants, but 20 individuals (a quarter of the congregation at the time!) signed up for the second one to serve in New Mexico among the Navajo. "People are starting to recognize their callings," says Pastor Brian, "and they're stepping into positions both in the church and in the broader community to fulfill them."



Transformed Hearts

Perhaps the most important – yet least tangible – sign of growth has been the healing, transformation, and restoration of people's hearts, best told through their stories and testimonies.

In 2025, one of LifeHouse's former pastoral couples, who left under painful circumstances, contacted Pastor Brian, asking if they could attend LifeHouse again. He enthusiastically said yes, but later paused, concerned the rest of the congregation may not be equally excited.

His worry was needless.

Their first Sunday back, the couple was welcomed with open arms. "It was a tear fest in here," says Pastor Brian, his own eyes glistening as he tells the story. "I don't use the word miracle lightly..." he says, struggling to find the right words to adequately encapsulate the divine transformation everyone involved had experienced. "If it's not a miracle, it's close." The couple are now active, involved members of the LifeHouse community.

A Vision of Growth

Today, over 120 people attend LifeHouse on an average Sunday – truly remarkable considering where they were just two years ago. But their vision was never to reach a specific number of attendees or members, and the growth they've experienced is so much more than a number.

"Vision is so important, yet so misunderstood," says Pastor Brian. Vision isn't the project of getting more volunteers, leading more service trips, starting a coffee shop, or even baptizing a certain number of people.

"It's not the project," Pastor Brian continues. "Vision is about where people end up in their relationship with God."

Scan the QR code to watch more of LifeHouse's story.

Reflecting Mutual Identities

The Thriving Congregations Initiative's Impact after Two Years

Perched on a mountain, just off I-83 in New Cumberland, Pa., Fairview BIC was one of the first participants in the Thriving Congregations Initiative. For them, the initiative came at just the right time.

"Beginning in 2021, Fairview went through a three-year revitalization plan," says Lead Pastor Denise Rupp. The following year – perhaps by happenstance, perhaps by divine appointment – Cohort A of Thriving Congregations launched, providing an ideal next step for Fairview. "We were ready to learn to thrive, not just survive," says Pastor Denise.

Fairview is a small congregation in an aging community. Angie Hoover, a member of the church board, says demographics are their biggest challenge. "We are in a community that is elderly," she says. "It has been hard to get a younger group."

Early in the Thriving Congregations program, congregations receive statistical demographic analyses of both their community and congregation to identify opportunities for connection and outreach. In Fairview's case, "we learned that our church statistics match the community demographic," says Pastor Denise. "As such, our outreach model needed to reflect our mutual identities."

Now entering the program's second half, this knowledge base allows them to experiment and try new things. Pastor Denise has already seen the congregation's outlook change. "There's been a renewed desire to reach out and impact the community in tangible, outside-the-box ways."

Andrea Dimino serves on Fairview's Congregational Learning Community (a team of 3-6 people who are liaisons between the Initiative and participating congregations), and she's noticed a spiritual shift. "We're more active in corporate prayer and are seeing God answer petitions on behalf of the congregation and community." Both Andrea and Pastor Denise are excited to see Fairview expand into the community, enlarging to reach new people and places with the love of Jesus.

From her perspective on the church board, Angie is excited to see how the makeup of their congregation expands through the Initiative. "I believe Thriving Congregations is helping push Fairview outside our comfort zone, to work harder for our community."

Photo Caption: Members of Fairview BIC's Congregational Learning Community (L to R: Kitty Rife, Andrea Dimino, and Pastor Denise Rupp) collaborate with their Thriving Congregations coach, Naomi Smith (far right).

U.S. CONGREGATIONS

24,675 WORSHIPPERS
on average attended weekly services at

231 congregational sites across 19 states

1051 people began or renewed relationships with Jesus*

893 individuals baptized*

29 ministers licensed

10 ministers ordained

446 ministers currently licensed or ordained

Number based on 80% of congregational sites reporting.

WORLD MISSIONS

Our Global Team:

69 GLOBAL WORKERS
– including BIC U.S. employees and partners – located in **22 countries**

12 participants in the missionary development program

69 ministry scholarships awarded to international leaders

$167,895 sponsored 815 children in the SPICE program

51% SERVED AMONG
least reached people groups

53 international church plants supported

44 INITIATIVES
supported through the partnership handbook
learn more: partnership.bicus.org

Where Hope Takes Root

Living Between Fear and Faith in the Middle East

By a global team member

When our friends in the United States hear the phrase "the Middle East," they often picture endless deserts at war, crowds of protesters, soldiers at checkpoints, terrorism, and constant danger. It can sound like another planet, inhabited by people somehow different from us, as if their souls were immune to pain, joy, or hope.

But here in our host country, our mornings begin with the call to prayer echoing over the hills with neighborhoods washed in sunlight as children walk to school, laughing together. It's not so different from a morning in any American town.

Many of our assumptions have been shaped by sensational headlines and by tragic events that have stained the reputation of Arab peoples. Yet as believers, we're called to seek the truth — even when it unsettles our own narratives. The truth sets us free, even from our fears and myths. And today, more than ever, both the world and the Church need that freedom to see others with clear eyes and open hearts.

Reality and Perception

Three months after our arrival in the Middle East in 2023, the events of October 7 unfolded, and the war in Gaza erupted. Those were days of deep uncertainty for us as foreigners living in a country near the conflict. We had never lived so close to the echoes of a real war. The air itself felt heavy, and every conversation carried an unspoken tension while peaceful protests filled our streets. Images of soldiers and paramilitaries, rockets streaking across the sky, and buildings reduced to rubble appeared nonstop on TVs in cafés, markets, and supermarkets – a tireless witness to the horror.

We comforted friends and neighbors who mourned loved ones. I vividly remember when our friend lost several cousins and uncles in a single rocket strike. Her cry filled the hallway of the language center where we studied, a sound of disbelief and sorrow that is hard to forget. My wife held her close, both in tears, with nothing to offer except shared grief and prayer.

One morning, amid those tense days, our neighbor knocked on the door to ask how we were doing. Seeing the worry on my face, he insisted – kindly but firmly – that I join him for a walk through his family's fields in a nearby village. Along the way he encouraged me, comforted me, and spoke hope into my heart. That day the roles were reversed: we, who had come to bring faith and encouragement, were the ones who received hope, wrapped in our neighbor's warmth and generosity.

Even in the shadow of war, life didn't stop. Markets buzzed with voices and aromas, street vendors sold falafel and boiled corn, and children played soccer on dusty streets. That quiet determination to live became, for us, a lesson in hope.

From afar, many imagine this region consumed by hatred and violence. Yet what we've discovered is a people profoundly hospitable, sensitive to others' pain, and full of a warmth that dissolves prejudice. The real danger isn't living among them. It's allowing distance and ignorance to rob us of the chance to know them – and to rob them of the chance of hearing the good news.

Fear and Calling

There were moments when we honestly considered returning to the States. The constant news, uncertainty, emotional fatigue, and distance from family weighed heavier than we wanted to admit. Some nights, after putting the kids to bed, we lay in silence staring at the ceiling, wondering if we had made the right choice.

Friends in America, moved by love and concern, called to ask why we hadn't returned yet. Their voices echoed our own inner question: Is it really worth staying? They wanted to make sure we were safe. And truthfully, we wanted that reassurance too. But in time we realized that safety doesn't always align with purpose.

Amid our doubts and homesickness, something deeper began to take root: the conviction that God hadn't brought us here by accident. Each time we saw a local friend smile with gratitude, each time a simple conversation turned into a moment of encouragement or faith, we were reminded that the Lord's calling isn't measured by comfort but by faithfulness.

We learned that faith doesn't mean the absence of fear; it means moving forward even while your heart trembles. And we came to understand that *home* isn't only where you were born, but where God asks you to stay, love, and serve.

Staying wasn't a heroic act; it was a quiet decision – to remain where we sensed his peace, even when that peace shared space with tears and longing.

Peace and Presence

The Middle East is not just a backdrop for conflict – it's a fertile ground where hope takes root. After all we've lived through in the last two years, we remain convinced that God is still at work in this land. We see it in small acts of kindness, in honest conversations, and in the quiet faith that grows even amid sorrow.

Staying here hasn't been easy, but it has been good. In this land of contrasts we've learned that real peace doesn't depend on circumstances, but on the faithful presence of the one who never leaves us.

Written in Fall 2025.

"I CHOOSE TO FOLLOW **JESUS**"

The Fruit of Compassion

Gregory saw nothing admirable in Christians or the Church. To the husband and father of three in Malawi, church was a waste of time. Instead, he sought satisfaction through drinking and promiscuity.

That is until the Food Relief Project came to his town.

Starting in 2024 and continuing to early 2025, Malawi and much of southern Africa suffered extreme drought and harsh storms. Crops were destroyed right before harvest, seedlings shriveled without enough water, and food scarcity left many hungry – including Gregory and his family.

To help, the Malawian BIC Church launched the Food Relief Program, which BIC U.S. supported through the Global Compassion Fund. Emulating the unconditional love of Christ, the project gave basic food staples to those most severely impacted, regardless of religious affiliations.

Gregory assumed he would not receive aid because he was well known in the community for his habitual criticism of Christians. Yet, in his family's moment of greatest need, it was these very Christians who extended a helping hand. "I could not believe that people from the church had decided to bless my starving family with a bag of flour," he recounted.

Gregory had never imagined such love was possible, and he was moved to change. "Today I choose to follow Jesus," he said, tears in his eyes, bag of flour still in hand.

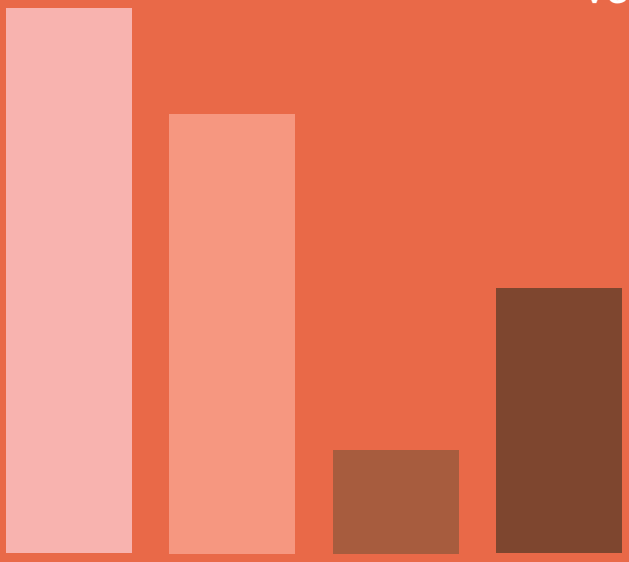
In the year since giving his life to Christ, Gregory's spiritual journey has been transformative. He participates in all church activities, and his dedication and humility deeply inspire fellow believers.

Gregory's remarkable shift from skeptic to disciple demonstrates the power of God's love to restore and renew. Flour can become more than flour; money can be more than aid. In the mighty hands of Christ Jesus, all can be transformed for the glory of God.

Name changed for privacy.

$90,648 was distributed from the Global Compassion Fund.

Locations in 8 countries received aid including Cuba, India, Malawi, Mozambique, Nepal, Venezuela, and Zambia.



- Disaster recovery - $38,180
- Food aid - $33,363
- Reconstruction projects - $4,950
- Other - $14,155

Our donors make this work possible; 13 congregations and 38 individuals contributed to the Global Compassion Fund in 2025.

Motivated by Christ's love, the BIC family collaboratively responds to international natural disasters, humanitarian aid crises, and extreme poverty through the Global Compassion Fund; close relationships with local churches and partners facilitate quick and effective responses. Learn more at bicus.org/global-compassion-fund.

LEADERSHIP TEAMS

Leadership Council

Alan Robinson,
national director,
chair

Heather Beaty,
bishop of the
Susquehanna
Conference

Ron Bowell,
bishop of the
Midwest Conference

Bill Donner,
bishop of the
Pacific Conference

Bryan Hoke,
bishop of the
Atlantic Conference

Jonathan Lloyd,
director of BIC U.S.
World Missions

Mitchell Martin,
director of finance and
shared services

Aner Morejon,
bishop of the
Southeast Conference

Rob Patterson,
bishop of the
Allegheny Conference

Lynn Thrush,
bishop of the
Great Lakes Conference

General Conference Board*

Tom Law,
board chair,
Pacific Conference

Ray Chung,
member-at-large

Rachel Diaz,
secretary, Southeast
Conference

Sherri Flohr,
Allegheny
Conference

Adam Forry,
Atlantic Conference

Bonnie Hershberger,
member-at-large

Abby Kean,
Great Lakes
Conference

Jonah Langenderfer,
member-at-large

Jacob Lougheed,
member-at-large

Brian Mbuu,
assistant chair,
member-at-large

Georgia Myers,
member-at-large

Kevin Noll,
member-at-large

Jose F. Rodriguez,
member-at-large

Naomi Smith,
Susquehanna
Conference

Denise Young,
Midwest Conference

Learn more about our leadership teams:
bicus.org/about/leadership-structure
**Alan Robinson, national director, serves as ex officio member.*

FINANCIALS

Income	2025*	% of total	2024*	% of total
Congregations	$ 3,719,374	*43%*	$ 3,666,263	*46%*
Undesignated	2,727,288		2,793,802	
Designated	992,086		872,461	
Individuals/Organizations	3,203,833	*37%*	2,295,233	*29%*
Undesignated	272,353		148,545	
Designated	2,931,480		2,146,688	
Investment Gains/(Loss)	1,613,345	*18%*	1,485,686	*19%*
Undesignated	389,128		393,527	
Designated	1,224,217		1,092,159	
Bequests	102,705	*1%*	319,031	*4%*
Undesignated	20,388		47,027	
Designated	82,317		272,004	
Registrations & Other	86,045	*1%*	161,408	*2%*
Total Income	**$ 8,725,302**		**$ 7,927,621**	

Spend

Global Ministry *missionary support, church planting, international ministry training and scholarships*	$ 2,637,739	*36%*	$ 2,572,985	*37%*
Regional Ministry *church planting, leadership development, conference leadership*	1,551,574	*21%*	1,500,988	*22%*
Global Projects *relief, aid, evangelism, and education partnerships with international churches*	1,526,340	*21%*	1,336,124	*19%*
Shared Services *finance, communications, human resources, development*	903,383	*12%*	871,202	*13%*
National Ministry *denominational leadership, ministerial credentialing*	478,053	*7%*	575,802	*8%*
Project 250	242,975	*3%*	195,590	*3%*
Related Agencies	45,378	*1%*	61,643	*1%*
DB Pension Costs	(72,628)	*-1%*	(189,583)	*-3%*
Total Spend	**$ 7,312,814**		**$ 6,924,751**	
Change in Net Assets	$ 1,412,488		$ 1,002,870	
Net assets, January 1	**$ 21,535,099**		**$ 20,532,229**	
Net assets, December 31	**$ 22,947,587**		**$ 21,535,099**	
Undesignated	5,252,616		5,232,320	
Designated	17,694,971		16,302,779	

**All numbers are as of Dec. 31. Numbers for 2025 are preliminary. Audited 2025 financial statements will be published online summer 2026. The 2024 numbers are audited and final.*

Brethren in Christ U.S.

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