
September 2026

HomeMission Report

OUR TEAM. YOUR HOME. GOD'S MISSION.™

Volume 10, Issue 8

SPOTLIGHT CHURCH: Cross Plains Church of Christ, Tennessee



From the Cross Plains Church of Christ in Cross Plains, TN:

We are thankful for the Lord's blessing through **HomeMission**. I (Isaac Prince) have been working with this mission since 2018, back home in Chester, PA, working with our sister congregation in Media, PA, with my dear brother Russell Digorgio.

Since I moved to Tennessee eight years ago, I brought the mission here to our congregation. I introduced different materials from **HomeMission** for different purposes in our community. I started by using the book / *Died Last Night* by John Orr in our young teens class, which was impactful for them. Several were baptized into Christ as a result. Recently, we received more material for our leadership, new converts, and evangelism classes. We're looking forward to a productive year with these new materials for our toolbox as a congregation. May the Lord's work be done. We are praying and ask the body of Christ as a whole to pray for this work as well.

—Isaac Prince, Cross Plains, Tennessee

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HomeMission is a Biblically-based church growth ministry that seeks to assist struggling congregations of the Lord's church through an evangelistic method of equipping with onsite training, guidance, tools, and resources - thus enabling them to revive and thrive as a spiritually healthy body of Christ in their community.

Director's Report



John & Susie Orr

Dear Loved Ones in the Lord,

As Director of **HomeMission**, my work focuses on strengthening congregations across the country. Each week, I follow up with churches, learn their needs, encourage preachers and leaders, equip them with evangelism tools, and help build a culture of outreach. I also raise funds for **HomeMission** and the West Freeway School of Evangelism, teach in the school, assist small congregations, and present **HomeMission** to larger churches on weekends.

This month I began tracking the congregations I work with, and my son Jonathan will be helping with that effort. Jim Lucas, our operations Director, coordinates workshops and supports our missionary evangelists nationwide. His sacrifice and work ethic are so valuable to HomeMission and to many churches in America. My wife Susie continues to travel with me and

maintains our Facebook page. We have 58 people involved with HomeMission in some way. We thank them all for their tireless efforts. We could use more help, especially volunteer evangelists. Your prayers, encouragement, and support make this work possible. You help "lift up" struggling congregations, fortify larger congregations, and "lift up" Jesus our Savior, so he can "draw all men unto himself" (John 12:32).

May the Lord bless and keep you.

Love, John & Susie Orr

The Advancement Corner

Blooming from the Brink: A Gardening Lesson on Revitalizing Struggling Churches

A couple of months ago, I confessed my failed, thoroughly humbling attempt at raising a vegetable garden. I have really pretty watermelon vines, but unfortunately there are no watermelons. Between the stubborn weeds, erratic watering, and the pests that treated my plot like a buffet, it felt like a losing battle.

The Parable of the Sower Revisited

Reflecting on that messy patch of dirt, I turned to a familiar text: The Parable of the Sower. We often look at those seeds-the ones tossed on the path, choked by thorns, or scorched by the sun-as a measure of human heart conditions. But looking out at my yard two months later. I realized something else about planting, waiting, and nurturing. Instead of veggies, I had decided to try my hand at planting a modest bed of flower seeds. For weeks there was nothing, just damp soil and quiet doubt. But beneath the surface, roots were tangling, reaching deep into the dark. Then, just a couple of weeks ago, I stepped outside to find them in full, vibrant bloom.

From Dormant Soil to Flourishing Life

That transformation from a quiet, lifeless patch of earth to a burst of color reminded me so much of the heartbeat of **HomeMission**. Many of the churches we walk alongside feel a lot like my garden bed before the bloom. They are struggling. Some are down to a handful of faithful members, facing dwindling resources, heavy fatigue, and the very temptation to close their doors for good. To the casual observer, the soil looks dry, and the future looks dormant.

The Seed of Hope

Like a seed planted in dark soil, a struggling church often holds a quiet, resilient seed of faith that refuses to die entirely.

The Nourishment of Community

Flowers don't grow in isolation; they need water, weeding, and tending. **HomeMission** steps in to supply practical encouragement, leadership guidance, and vital resources.



The Unexpected Bloom

When a congregation is given the right support at the right time, the turnaround can be breathtaking. What looked like a dying institution suddenly finds new life, reaching out to its local community with fresh vitality and grace.

Tending What God Has Planted

Revitalization isn't about quick fixes; it's about patient, faithful tending. When a church is on the verge of closing its doors, it doesn't need judgment; it needs gardeners who are willing to roll up their sleeves, clear away the choking weeds of discouragement, and water the soil with persistent prayer and partnership.

Thank you for being the hands and feet that help these precious communities weather their seasons of drought. Because of the faithful support of many, we aren't just keeping their doors open; we are watching gardens bloom where grace was once just a whisper. Please consider your support.

How has your own congregation experienced a season of unexpected growth after a difficult dry spell?

Be blessed,

Don Lallathin

Director of Advancement



Don and Phylis Lallathin

Please keep **HomeMission** in mind when estate planning! Your donations will leave a legacy that will last many lifetimes. We also encourage you to check with your employer about matching donations to 501c3 organizations. If they participate in matching funds, you can make tax-deductible donations to **HomeMission** that will be increased through the generosity of your employer. Contact me to learn more about how to support **HomeMission** in this way!

Memorials

None reported at time of printing.



Operations Director Report

Fellow brethren in the faith,

Frequently in life and more recently in my time of ministry with **HomeMission**, I have prayed for wisdom to discern the path forward that God desires for me. I seek His Will and guidance, often praying that He opens doors that are in accordance with His plan for me. I trust the doors that remain closed are not in harmony with His Will or His timing. It is wonderful and humbling when He opens a door I didn't even see. **HomeMission** has been blessed in this way countless times since it began almost ten years ago. A recent example of this occurred at the Connect Conference in Nashville, TN, this past July. A "random" (nothing is random with God) conversation with a gentleman quickly escalated into a deeper discussion about our work and the efforts he was involved with in a rural East Tennessee county. This conversation led to Howard and Kathy Burnette hosting me at their home for a weekend after I attended Polishing the Pulpit in Sevierville, TN. That weekend, they introduced me to several brethren from multiple smaller congregations in the Cumberland County region that were actively collaborating to encourage one another, to share the gospel in their county, and to help each other grow: A joint effort with the county fair booth, community door-knocking, and more. There are around a dozen or so churches collaborating in this ongoing effort. I am excited for the opportunity ahead to share **HomeMission** tools and methods that can help in this endeavor. God is good!

Some of my upcoming events include: LAUNCH Workshops at Walterboro COC (SC) Oct 4-7; Central COC (Savannah, GA) Oct 11-14; Mount Pleasant COC (Bowling Green, KY) Nov 15-18. I will be joining Mike King for a MI visit Oct 21-Nov 4 with several planned events. Nov 9-12 will find me back in Texas, teaching a week at the West Freeway School of Evangelism. It truly is a blessing to be engaged in Kingdom work. May God continue to bless us all as we strive to do His will.

Yours in Christ,

Jim Lucas



Jim and Lisa Lucas

WFSOE

West Freeway School of Evangelism



VISIT US ONLINE!

wfsoe.school

Celebrating Five Years of Faith: West Freeway School of Evangelism Kicks Off the Fall Semester!

A brand-new season of growth, learning, and soul-winning has officially begun! On Monday, August 24, 2026, the West Freeway School of Evangelism proudly launched its Fall semester, marking a major milestone as we officially enter Year 5 of this vital ministry. We are thrilled to welcome students dedicated to spreading the Gospel. On day 1, 15 students joined us online and 2 joined us in the classroom. Whether connecting via Zoom from abroad or sitting in the classroom in Fort Worth, every single student represents a passionate heart ready to be equipped for the harvest field.

We kicked off our first day with an incredible week of instruction led by Jim Mitchell, the pulpit minister of the Cherokee Hills congregation in Oklahoma City. He brought powerful insights to set the tone for the months ahead. From now until mid-December, our students will learn from a rotating lineup of faithful instructors each week, all focused on a singular, urgent goal: giving Christians the practical tools they need to reach the lost effectively.

In addition to our daytime program, we are especially excited about our first Monday night class with John Orr, the director of **HomeMission**. This class utilizes specialized workbooks designed to build actionable skill sets. Students will dive deep into foundational concepts like "Evangelistic Digging Tools" and mapping out their personal "Circle of Influence" to share their faith with those around them.

As you continue to faithfully serve and worship at your home congregation, we ask for your vital partnership in this mission. Please be in constant prayer for the souls that will be reached through this training, and lift up our school, instructors, and students daily.

The fields are white for harvest, and it is not too late for you to join this incredible journey. If you want to deepen your knowledge and gain confidence in sharing the Gospel, you can choose maximum flexibility with our full-time or part-time tracks. Take the next step and enroll online today!

www.westfreewayschoolofevangelism.org/enrollment/

Working together, Year 5 will be our most impactful year yet; to God be the glory!

HomeMission Statistics Through September 2026

1. Churches reported 701 baptisms through July 2026. 1228 were reported in 2025.
2. We worked with 153 churches in 41 states in some way. We have worked with churches in all 50 states in some way in the past 10 years.
3. Since January, we have supplied \$107,915.67 worth of materials, tools, and Bibles at no cost to congregations. This is only possible because of churches of Christ and individuals around the country who support this effort. In this way, we have helped dozens of churches this year throughout the United States that need specialized materials or need to reorder materials they have run out of. Some have had workshops, some aren't ready for one, and some already have active programs in place and just want our materials to fill needs. If you want to look at a list of our materials and/or workshops, please contact us at info@homemission.org
4. Ten larger congregations have committed to working with ten smaller ones through **HomeMission**. Most of these help with Vacation Bible School, door knocking, or supplies. Two are helping with building construction. Several more have interest in assisting next year.
5. Seven congregations are either expanding their buildings or building new ones due to growth. These are all churches that **HomeMission** has assisted in some way.
6. Elders' Net (a quarterly publication for elders by elders) is being sent to 738 elders in 31 states representing 224 congregations around the country. Ask your elders if they are receiving this quarterly newsletter.
7. The fifth year of the West Freeway school of evangelism has now begun. Currently, we have 17 students attending the Fall session, which began in August and runs through May 2027. There are also 38 students who attend the Monday night class (7-9 p.m. CST). The first 6 weeks will be on "How to study the Bible" and "Circle of Influence." Please contact Jim Tyler if interested at 817-797-6325 or go to westfreewayschoolofevangelism.org.

All praise and glory go to Jesus, our Savior and King.

HomeMission- Did You Know...?

Each month in this column we explain some of the terms and tools used by HomeMission. The intent is to give you, our readers, a better understanding of how we assist congregations. Reach out to us if you have questions or would like to know more!

Over half of the churches of Christ in America do not have elders. Yet Titus 1:5 instructs evangelists to "set in order the things that are lacking and appoint elders in every city." Elders are appointed by the word of God and affirmed by the congregation—but first, qualified men must desire the work (1 Timothy 3:1). We urge every congregation without elders to work toward it, pray weekly for it, and encourage courageous, qualified men to trust the Lord and His word.

To help inspire leadership in every part of the church and home, we've created a 12-lesson leadership training workbook that covers topics such as:

Women leading women

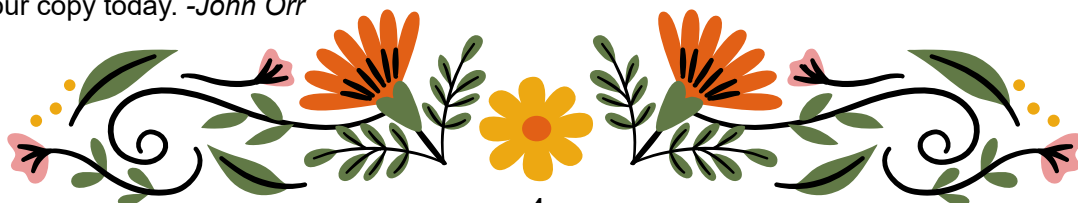
Husbands guiding their homes

Youth influencing their schools

Deacons growing as spiritual leaders

And more...

This workbook is free because failing to develop strong leaders comes at a great cost to the Lord's church. Everyone leads—either well or poorly—in whatever role they play in God's kingdom. If your congregation wants to begin cultivating faithful leaders, request your copy today. -John Orr



Evangelist Activity Reports: September

RODNEY CARTER

Ave T Church of Christ/ Temple, TX/ I spoke with Robert Hendricks (one of the Habanero Coordinators) and Joe Burns. Robert and the other coordinators are gradually implementing the congregation's Outreach Ministry according to the intent of the Habanero Ministry, while adapting it to the congregation's needs. Their website is also being revised. They have recently placed Tap Cards on the back of each pew for visitors and members, which allows access to information on the congregation, a visitor card, the digital bulletin, an opportunity to give an offering, and a calendar of events. If your congregation would like to know more about the Tap Card, please reach out to Joe at jmethuselah@icloud.com.

Tanglewood Church of Christ/ Odessa, TX/Tanglewood recently held their monthly clothing giveaway (8-1-2026). This recent event resulted in five first-time visitors on August 2. The elders are continuing to follow up with those visitors.

Southside Church of Christ/ Killeen, TX/ The elders have scheduled an initial LAUNCH for November 15-18, 2026. Jim Lucas and I will also conduct a Pre-LAUNCH Leadership Conference on November 8th with the elders, the pulpit minister, and youth minister. I met with the members who expressed an interest in **HomeMission** involvement, and although there were only eight present for that meeting, I was assured that the congregation, collectively, has a desire to grow spiritually.

MIKE KING

I coordinated with the Ventura Church of Christ in Ventura, California, to host the Sharing Our Faith Seminar. The seminar is scheduled for September 12th.

JIM LUCAS

Aug 14-20: PTP Sevierville with Austin Woodfin; Aug 21-23: Cumberland County – I attended the county fair booth and participated in door-knocking in Crab Orchard, TN, for area-wide singing; I presented **HomeMission** and preached at Rockwood COC; Daysville COC (afternoon); visited with Mayland COC Monday morning; Aug 24 meeting with Monteagle COC (TN) elders and their new preacher.

Church follow-up support activity in August: I engaged with 24 churches in 8 states.

JOHN ORR

I worked with the School of Evangelism and taught a Monday night class on "How to Study the Bible."

I followed up with the Delmarva church of Christ (Salisbury, Maryland), Memphis, Lebanon Junction, Kentucky (VBS and materials), and Cox Blvd (Alabama, door knocking and follow-up for the Jasper campaign).

I shared materials and did follow-up with: Morrilton, Arkansas, Cross Plains, Tennessee, Forney, Texas, Liberty Hill, Jasper, Alabama, Cloquet, Minnesota (working on finding a preacher), Deerbrook, Humble, Impact Houston, Johnsville, Westside in Ft. Dodge, Iowa, and Green Mountain church of Christ in Castleton, Vermont.

I talked with Killen church of Christ about churches to work with for VBS.

I presented **HomeMission** to Lake Houston church of Christ, Boerne church of Christ, Bushland Road church of Christ (Amarillo), and Canyon Lake church of Christ (all in TX).

JONATHAN ORR

This month I have been, in addition to my day-to-day **HomeMission** duties, contacting churches about different materials that could be of help to them. I also visited the Hillcrest Church of Christ in Abilene, TX, and dropped off materials on August 30th. On August 2nd, I preached at the Callisburg Church of Christ on 1 Thessalonians 5:14. I will begin visiting supporting congregations beginning next month.

RANDY REAGAN

August 23, 2026/Janesville church of Christ/Janesville, Wisconsin/I preached August 23 at the Sunday morning worship and also taught the Bible class. The congregation had prepared a wonderful potluck dinner for after services. I also taught the Bible class the following Wednesday evening. All lessons were focused on encouraging us through Biblical examples to look at those who are lost the way Christ would see them: NOT for their faults, but rather to show them how they can have a better life serving the Lord. I met with one of the longtime leaders and members of the congregation and discussed how they can better train the men and women in their service to God. We spent time in prayer.

Evangelist Activity Reports: September (Cont.)

August 30, 2026/Marshfield church of Christ/Marshfield, Wisconsin/ I preached August 30 at the Sunday morning worship and also taught the Sunday morning Bible class. We focused in the Bible class on Jonah and his reluctance to preach to Nineveh because he did not want them to be saved! Then we studied in worship about God's grace, which has been extended to ALL men! WE must tell others HOW to access God's grace. Saturday evening we had a potluck fellowship in the park. We sang hymns and then had a short devotional time to discuss very simple ways we can ALL become better evangelists to the lost. It was such a wonderful visit with the congregation as well as several of the men who have taken a leadership role.

While having lunch with the preacher and his wife in Marshfield after morning services, we asked our waitress if we could include her in our prayer for our meal, for anything going on in her life. She seemed so surprised and immediately thanked us and told us she was battling rheumatoid arthritis, as well as recovering from tongue cancer, which had potentially come back. We told her it was our privilege to pray for her, and she indicated that she was looking for a church to worship with. She said she was Pentecostal but had to work on Sundays at the cafe. She asked if Marshfield had a Wednesday evening service, and Bro. Quintion said, "Absolutely," and invited her to come and join them. She said she would. God just opens doors all the time. Thank you, Lord.

We are hoping to visit the Westgate church of Christ in Beaumont, Texas, in September, Lord willing.

AUSTIN WOODFIN

8.2.26 / Latrobe Street Church of Christ / Parkersburg, WV / I was able to visit with them on Sunday, August 2nd, and share some items for their upcoming community cookout. The Habanero ministry seems to be working effectively; their only challenge has been "running out of things to do" because the members are excited to get to work and do so quickly. Their community outreach lunch was on August 15th; they fed about 70 people and were able to engage with members of the community. They are hosting a community Gospel singing on September 19th as well. They have a mind to work and are actively working towards accomplishing the "first four goals" that were set during the LAUNCH.

8.9.26 / Plattsburgh Church of Christ / Plattsburgh, NY / I had a very nice visit with Plattsburgh, where I taught class and preached during AM worship. I had a great time of fellowship with all who stayed, and then we had a lengthy meeting discussing their efforts in the Habanero ministry and some of their "first four goals." I have a follow-up call scheduled with the Habanero coordinators for September 2nd, and I will be returning to visit October 9-11th to help them host a community picnic.

8.12.26 / South Main Church of Christ / New Lexington, OH / I had a meeting with the elders to discuss their efforts in their Habanero ministry and other opportunities. Due to flooding in the area, they received two semi-trucks of supplies from the Churches of Christ Disaster Relief Effort. I helped them unload the first truck on August 13th. They have been active in daily distribution of supplies for the last 2+ weeks and have been very involved in the community through this effort, utilizing social media in a very positive way. I visited with them again on August 30th and met with the elders to discuss follow-up opportunities. I want to note that their efforts in this have been very professional and organized.

8.14-19.26 / Polishing the Pulpit / Sevierville, TN / I was able to attend Polishing the Pulpit with Jim Lucas again this year. We both engaged in a lot of fruitful discussions with Christians across the country, many of whom are from my area of the country as well. PTP also allowed me to make a better connection with a church in WV that I will be visiting on September 2nd to present **HomeMission**. I am thankful to be able to attend events like these, and I hope to attend more in the years to come.

8.21.26 / Strasburg Church of Christ / Strasburg, VA / I have remained in contact with Strasburg over the last several months, trying to assist them in their evangelistic efforts moving forward. On August 30th, they had a guest speaker from a larger local congregation who is helping me encourage them on a more frequent basis. All went well according to the speaker and congregation, and they are working to schedule another return visit in the near future. This is a great opportunity for this small congregation to receive some help from a larger congregation. I hope to schedule a follow-up visit with them sometime in the Fall.

Throughout August, I contacted and/or visited 17 churches in 7 states. 13 of these churches are currently working with **HomeMission** or are actively seeking to learn more. My travel throughout August has taken me through 19 states across the East Coast. There is much work to be done throughout the Northeast and across the country. I am continually finding more congregations seeking to better fulfill the Great Commission in their communities. August was a very busy month, but I am certainly thankful to be able to do this every day. To God be the glory!

Elders' Net Information



Elders' Net: Connecting Elders with Elders

Elders' Net is a **quarterly newsletter, for elders, by elders**, created to share insights, experiences, and encouragement from across our broader brotherhood. Each issue highlights the voices, wisdom, and perspectives of Elders who continue to serve and inspire. Hm is blessed to have David Fittz serve as Editor of Elders' Net.

We warmly invite any Elder who is interested in **submitting an article** for inclusion in Elders' Net to do so—your reflections and stories are welcome.

Looking ahead, we also hope to include a **Q&A section** in future editions. If you have a question you'd like to put forward, please send it along.

Elders' Net is associated with and offered as a resource through **HomeMission**. To sign up to receive Elders' Net, submit an article, or send a question, contact David Fittz at eldersnet@homemission.org

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OUR TEAM YOUR HOME GOD'S MISSION



From the Field



Marshfield COC's new sign (Marshfield, WI).



Randy Reagan speaking at Marshfield's devotional in the park.



The new Tap Cards at Ave T COC (Temple, TX). Rodney Carter works with this congregation.



Sometimes our evangelists do more than teach – Jim helped with roof repairs at the Tanglewood church of Christ (Odessa, TX).

From the Field (Cont.)



HomeMission booth at PTP Sevierville, TN (Austin Woodfin and Jim Lucas manned the booth).



Cumberland County Fair (TN). Area churches of Christ jointly work the booth!



Some of the Cumberland County members from 6 congregations getting ready to door-knock (Jim behind the camera).



(Aug 23) Jim ready to preach at Post Oak COC (Rockwood, TN). Cumberland County weekend activity.



Austin assisted South Main COC (New Lexington, OH) with unloading the semi from COCDRE. Many area congregations helped with their efforts.



The Latrobe St COC (Parkersburg, WV) held a community cookout recently. Austin Woodfin works with this congregation.



John Orr speaking at the Canyon Lake COC (Canyon Lake, TX).

