



FRIENDS OF GIDEONS

Newsletter | Spring 2026

“The thief comes only to steal and kill and destroy. I came that they may have life and have it abundantly.”

John 10:10

FRIENDS OF GIDEONS
NEWSLETTER
SPRING 2026

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**The Gideons
International**
IN SOUTH AFRICA
THE GOSPEL IS OUR MISSION

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ISB 2026

Invitation

If you are a new Friend and would like to make a financial contribution, please contact us on **friends@gideonssa.org** or visit our website **www.gideons.co.za** or phone us on **012 460 7241**.

WELCOME

Welcome to the Spring edition of
the *Friends of Gideons* Newsletter

We praise the Lord for the open doors He gives us every day. In this edition, read more wonderful testimonies from the International Scripture Blitz (ISB) that took place in May this year, as well as other wonderful encounters that could only have come from the Lord.

We also thank the Lord for the 123 671 Testaments distributed across 389 schools in Nongoma, Port Edward, Port St Johns and Lusikisiki during this year's National Bible Blitz week—more about this in the next edition.

Blessings until December,

“Devote yourselves to prayer, being watchful and thankful. And pray for us, too, that God may open a door for our message...”

Colossians 4:2-3 ESV

Some facts about *FRIENDS OF GIDEONS*

Who are the Friends of Gideons?

Men and women who have joined the ministry to support its activities and who prefer not to become members or do not qualify.

How many Friends are involved in the ministry?

As of 1 March 2025 there are more than **10 400** *Friends of Gideons*.

Which activities do Friends get involved in?

- o Prayer,
- o Financial contributions to purchase Scriptures.
- o Individual placement of Testaments.

How do you become a Friend?

Go to our website www.gideons.co.za and click on **GET INVOLVED** and then select **BECOME A FRIEND**.

Can a business or a church become a Friend?

Yes. Go to our website www.gideons.co.za and click on **GET INVOLVED** and then on **ADOPT A SCHOOL**.



THE MOMENT A HEART OPENED

Cobus van der Berg
Krugersdorp Branch

It was Sunday morning at 11:00 when we entered Yusuf Dadoo Hospital for a Bible placement. The corridors were quiet, the kind of stillness that makes you aware of every footstep, every heartbeat, and every prayer whispered under your breath.

I stepped into a ward where seven patients lay resting. Moving from bed to bed, I placed a Bible gently on the bedside table and shared a few words of encouragement. Some smiled, some nodded, and some simply held the Scriptures close, as though they had been waiting for that very moment.

Then I came to one bed. I greeted the man lying there and asked gently, “Do you know who Jesus is?” He nodded. “Yes, I’ve heard about Him.”

My next question came naturally, almost as if the Holy Spirit Himself was leading the conversation: “Do you have Jesus in your heart?” He looked at me and said, without hesitation, “No... I don’t.”

In that instant, the moment seemed to stand still, one of those sacred pauses when it feels as though heaven itself is leaning in.

“Would you like to receive Jesus as your Saviour?” I asked. His answer came instantly, firmly, almost urgently: “Yes. I want to accept Jesus as my Saviour.” Right there in that hospital bed, he prayed with me to receive Christ, slowly, sincerely, and word by word. And when he said, “Amen,” the atmosphere in the room changed. It felt as though light had entered a place that had been waiting for it.

As I encouraged him to find a Bible-believing church once he returned home, the patient in the next bed called out to me. He had been listening to every word.

“Please pray for me too,” he said. “I already know Jesus as my Saviour... but I need prayer.”

So, I prayed for him too, two men lying side by side: one receiving salvation for the

first time, and the other being strengthened in the faith he already professed.

As I walked out of that ward, I felt it deeply in my spirit, this is why I became a Gideon. Not merely to distribute Bibles. Not merely to visit hospitals.

But to carry out the sacred assignment God has entrusted to us, to tell people about Jesus Christ, His saving love, and the gift of eternal life that is freely available to all who believe.

Fellow Gideons and Gideons’ Wives, may we never lose sight of why we serve. Every Bible placed is a seed. Every visit is an opportunity. Every conversation can become a divine appointment. We may not always see the immediate results, but God is faithful to use His Word and our obedience to touch lives in ways we may never fully know this side of eternity. Let us therefore continue with boldness and compassion, remembering always: **The gospel is our mission, and souls are our purpose.**



Faith in Transit

There are moments in life that quietly remind us that God is always at work, often in the most ordinary places. For me, that place was a Gautrain platform on what seemed like a routine business trip to the airport.

Once we were seated on the train, David looked at me and asked, “Do you have a son on the way? I can see the letters E, J, and H.” I smiled and replied, “Yes, his name is Elijah.” When I asked how he knew, his simple response was, “Jesus told me.”

Our conversation naturally turned to God’s calling. David explained that when Jesus called him to this ministry, he had very little financially, yet he chose to be obedient. He spoke of how the Lord had faithfully provided every step of the way, through unexpected opportunities, generous people, and divine appointments. One story particularly stood out. Unsure how he would ever afford to take up a position at a school where he felt called to serve,

God opened the door through someone whose life had been impacted by his ministry. That connection led to employment, accommodation, and meals, all because he chose to trust God rather than his own resources.

I said to David, “I know Jesus; He is my Lord and Saviour.” I then mentioned that I had been longing to somehow serve Jesus not only in my spiritual life but in my professional life too. I wanted to somehow get into ministry, but I had no idea where to start. While seated, David stretched over and put his hand on my shoulder, bowed his head, and began to pray over my career and that doors would open where I could serve Jesus even more.

As we spoke, another passenger who had overheard our conversation approached David and asked if he would pray for him. Right there on the train, amidst commuters going about their day, David prayed with him. It was a beautiful reminder that the Gospel is not confined to church buildings but is meant to be lived wherever God places us.

What followed were miracles I could never have imagined...

In April, I received a call from The Gideons in South Africa offering me an interview for a position that suited my expertise. By God’s grace, I was successful and now serve this wonderful ministry at the National Service Centre and as a member of the Hennops Branch.

Our son, Elijah, was born on the 22nd of July this year. After the four days in hospital recovering from her C-section, my wife, Shannon, said to me, “My heart, it feels different”. She explained that she did not feel pain anymore and her high heart rates had stabilised.

Exactly what David had said and prayed for had come to fruition.

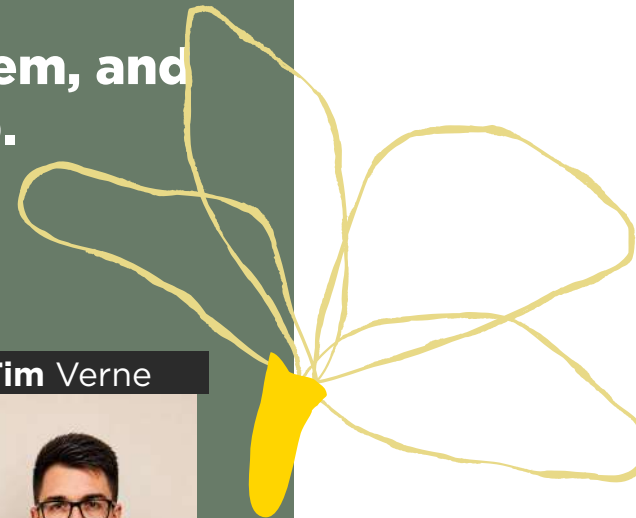
My wife was healed, and we have been blessed with a healthy, happy baby boy, and I now serve in ministry for our Lord Jesus Christ as a Gideon. One encounter – three miracles.

That day reminded me to ask Jesus for help and to trust that He will answer every prayer according to His will.

Sometimes God's greatest miracles begin with the smallest act of obedience. And when we answer His call, we often discover that He has already gone before us, preparing every step.

“My sheep hear my voice, and I know them, and they follow me” (John 10:27 ESV).

Tim Verne





INTERNATIONAL SCRIPTURE BLITZ 2 - 9 May 2026

Total amount of
Bibles placed:

546 501

as well as 290 PWTs

230

Clinics

421

Police Stations

946

Secondary/High Schools

9 Empty hands filled at Vulindela High School
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Cubendren Anamallay

Empty hands filled at Vulindela High School

God has opened a magnificent door for the Gospel During the ISB. We recently had the profound privilege of conducting a large-scale Scripture placement at Vulindela High School, and the atmosphere was nothing short of electric.

As we stepped onto the school grounds, we witnessed 1,750 joyous souls eagerly waiting to receive the Holy Word. What could have easily been a chaotic distribution turned into a beautiful, mostly orderly manifestation of God's grace. It was deeply moving to watch empty hands being held out and immediately filled with the ultimate treasure: the living Word of God.

The Holy Spirit's reach extended even beyond the school gates. In an amazing turn of events, several learners who were actively skipping school that day still crossed paths with our team and received their Testaments. Truly, no one can outrun the grace of God! We praise the Lord for these 1,750 open doors, and we pray that the seeds sown in Vulindela High School will take deep root, transforming families, teachers, and the entire community.

Will Grubs - ISB 2026

"So shall my word be that goes out from my mouth; it shall not return to me empty, but it shall accomplish that which I purpose, and shall succeed in the thing for which I sent it" (Isaiah 55:11 ESV).



The circle of grace

FROM GUYANA TO SOUTH AFRICA

“Cast your bread upon the waters, for you will find it after many days”

Ecclesiastes 11:1 ESV

Everything came full circle for me on Wednesday during the South African International Scripture Blitz. My mind immediately drifted back to 2014, when I went on my very first blitz to Georgetown, Guyana, in South America. At an English-speaking school canteen there, I shared Christ with two Hindu ladies. They ultimately rejected the gospel message, and for twelve years, I often wondered about them, carrying a quiet burden for their souls.

Fast forward to Wednesday of our South African ISB. We started our day at Alfred Matshine School, where the team experienced a powerful assembly distribution, placing 519 PWTs into the hands of eager learners. David and Linda were capturing the moment on media, taking

incredible photos of the distribution and the children.

As we prepared to leave for our next destination, Leon and Johan huddled together to count the remaining Bibles and map out the logistics. While waiting by our vehicle, I noticed three ladies nearby setting up food stalls for the students' upcoming morning break. The scenery instantly mirrored my memory from Guyana. Driven by the Holy Spirit, I walked over and handed each of them a Testament.

I looked at the lady standing on the end and asked her a direct question: “Do you know for sure that you are going to heaven?”

The other two ladies stopped what they were doing and listened intently. She looked at me and

admitted she did not know for sure. When I asked if she wanted to have that absolute certainty, she immediately replied, “Yes.”

I had all three ladies turn to the Plan of Salvation printed in the back of their new Gideons Bibles. I explained the truth claims of Jesus Christ and walked them through the significance of the sinner's prayer. They followed along with deep sincerity and asked me to lead them. Right there by their food stalls, all three ladies confessed Jesus Christ as their Lord and Saviour.

After we said “Amen,” I told them that if they truly meant those words in their hearts, their names were now written in the Book of Life, and they could write their names in the back of their Bibles. One by one, they

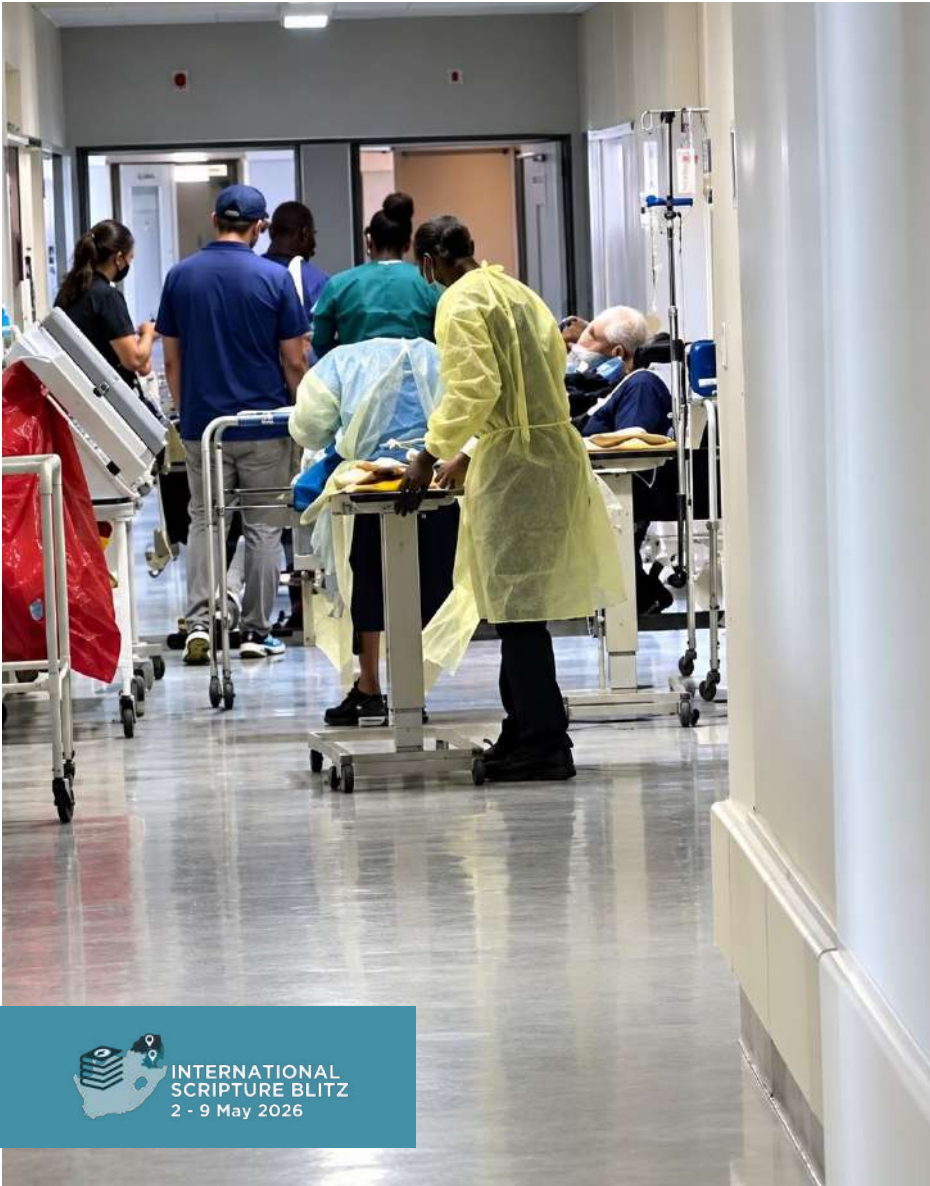
borrowed my pen, signing and dating their decisions. Linda caught sight of this holy moment and captured a beautiful photograph of me standing alongside these three smiling women holding up their signed Testaments.

Twelve years ago in Guyana, I left a school canteen heavy-hearted over a planting that didn't seem to harvest. On Wednesday in South Africa, the Lord completed the circle. Those three canteen ladies walked away with full assurance that they are going to heaven, and our team took off for the next school, praising God for His perfect timing.

Bill Filmore
ISB 2026

“Devote yourselves to prayer, being watchful and thankful. And pray for us, too, that **God may open a door for our message...**”

Colossians 4:2-3



INTERNATIONAL
SCRIPTURE BLITZ
2 - 9 May 2026



UNANNOUNCED

but divinely expected at seshego hospital

During the recent International Scripture blitz (ISB), we witnessed a powerful reminder that God goes before us to open doors long before we even arrive.

One morning, our team arrived at Seshego Hospital completely unannounced. As we walked in, we were met by the hospital administrator, Edgar. Before we could even introduce ourselves, he welcomed us with a joyful, “Hallelujah, praise the Lord! We were expecting you!”

Edgar immediately escorted us to the CEO’s office. The CEO welcomed us warmly and she informed us that a hospital staff meeting was currently underway. This divine timing allowed us to distribute 359 Testaments directly to the staff members present and she gave us access to all the clinics that we had on our list.

Following this, the administrator personally guided our team through every single ward in the hospital. We were given total freedom to place 407 Testaments on the bedside tables and pray for the patients at their bedsides.

We praise the Lord for His perfect orchestration and for opening doors that human planning could never match, the entire, comprehensive distribution took just 40 minutes. All praise and honour to our LORD.

Antonio Navarro (Brazil Gideon) ISB 2026



STEPPING OUT OF THE COMFORT ZONE

How God multiplied a “Ferrari”

When my Branch Leader asked if I would be available to serve in this year’s International Scripture Blitz (ISB) in Limpopo instead of Mpumalanga, my immediate reaction was hesitation.

I was pulled completely out of my comfort zone because I didn’t have the support of some of the younger branch members. On top of that, I was asked to drive a vehicle for the blitz. Being on daily medication, long-distance driving and early morning wake-ups was far from ideal, and the only vehicle I had to offer was my tiny Hyundai i10. But, choosing to trust in God rather than my own limitations, I said yes and answered the call to GO.

The enemy tested our resolve early. On the way to Limpopo for the start of the blitz, we suffered a dramatic tyre blowout. Yet, God’s hand of protection was clearly over us. We safely changed the tyre, tied up the damaged bumper, and kept moving forward in faith.

At the warehouse, our little car was affectionately nicknamed “The little Ferrari”. It may have been small, but powered by the Holy Spirit, that tiny hatchback and I delivered a staggering 5,000 Testaments to God’s people across Limpopo during the blitz. I remembered what Luke 9:16 says – “Then He took the five loaves and the two fishes, and looking up to heaven, He blessed them, and brake, and gave to the disciples to set before the multitude.”

Through this experience, I learned a profound truth: when we are obedient to His call and willingly offer whatever resources we have, God multiplies them beyond our wildest imagination. I challenge every reader today to step out of your comfort zone, step out in faith, and watch how mightily God can use you.

God does not call the equipped; He equips the available. Don’t let your limitations hold you back from being part of the next harvest. Whether you have a small car, a few open days, or prayer to offer, God can use it to change thousands of lives. So, step out and contact your Branch Leadership to register for the next local or National Scripture Blitz and watch God multiply what you have in your hands.

Cubendren Anamallay, Randburg – ISB 2026



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JESUS LOVES ME

THIS I KNOW



During June 2003, I was hospitalised in Kenridge Hospital. During my quiet time, I prayed and asked the Lord to use me and to help me testify for Him.

Sharing the room with me was a lady named Roma, who was 87 years old. She complained the whole time and could not understand where she was or why she was there. Apparently, she had suffered a stroke.

Later that morning, I went and stood beside her, stroked her hair, and held her hand. She stopped complaining, and I asked her whether she knew Jesus, to which she asked who He was. I could see that she was very confused. The next moment, I began singing to her, “Jesus loves me, this I know, for the Bible tells me so.” I believe the Holy Spirit led me, because she smiled and began singing along.

Roma remembered singing the song when she was young. I then asked her whether she would like to allow Jesus to come and live in her heart, and whether we could ask Him to forgive all her sins. We then prayed together. I also asked her to thank Him, because she now belonged to Him, and if she ever felt afraid or uncertain, she could call upon Him, because He loves His children endlessly—and she was now one of them.

I could see the peace and happiness in her eyes, and she smiled as she said, “Thank you, Jesus — I love you.” I heard her say this several times during the day, as well as the following day.

**Rita O'Reilly
Randburg Branch**



A HOSPITAL BIBLE HALTS A TROUBLED GIRL'S PLANS

Kari's story of transformation started when she was 13 years old. Experiencing the typical 13-year-old girl traits, she was moody, emotional, insecure, and wanted to be liked more than anything. Her life was about to be turned completely upside down.

Perfectly Normal to Tumultuous

"My parents went from having an almost perfect marriage to falling apart. My dad went from being seemingly very happy and normal to going through major depression and having suicidal thoughts," she remembers. He made multiple threats to shoot himself and fell in love with someone much younger than Kari's mom.

Their home went from perfectly normal to tumultuous and unstable.

Her parents were headed for divorce. Kari says, "I hated them both, but they ignored me because they had their own issues. I felt alone and ashamed."

To escape it all, Kari started hanging out with much older kids, going to parties, drinking whenever she could, and occasionally smoking. This was followed by dating several guys who were not God-fearing.

"I became so depressed. I would go into my room at night and fantasise about my death and funeral. I would listen to depressing music and write dark poems about death. I thought things would never get better, and my only alternative was suicide."

She felt like she couldn't talk to anyone about what was happening – it was so embarrassing, and nobody would understand.

She remembers thinking, "I didn't want to believe in a loving God anymore because in my sheltered and shallow teen mind, certainly He would never allow something like this to happen – let alone to someone like me, a good, church-going girl."

An Unexplainable Sensation

Kari had it all figured out. She planned her funeral and typed up her obituary. Fortunately, she had a good friend whose parents loved her like she was their own child and a teacher who was very concerned about her.

"I guess they noticed signs of my attempted suicide and told my mom," she recalls.

A few weeks before Easter of her eighth-grade year, Kari got off the school bus to find her grandma and mom waiting for her.

They drove her to a psychiatric unit in Minnesota, about an hour away from her house.

She says these were the worst days of her life. She had to go to group therapy several times a day, as well as individual therapy. She was subjected to some intense mental and emotional testing. Soon, she discovered that if she lied to the hospital staff, she would receive more privileges.

“I was transferred to a regular hospital room and got the great news that I was going to be released. I was going home. I could continue with my plan to end my life,” she remembers.

The night before her release, she was alone in her room, finalising her suicide plan in her special notebook. She sat there feeling very sorry for herself.

And then an overwhelming, almost inexplicable sensation came over her, leading her to open the bedside-table drawer and read the Bible that had been placed there by The Gideons.

She opened it to Psalm 22:1 (ESV) and read:

“My God, my God, why have you forsaken me? Why are you so far from saving me, from the words of my groaning?”

That was precisely how she felt. Kari kept reading until she got to **Psalm 27:1 (ESV), “The Lord is my light and my salvation...”** And then **Psalm 27:10 (ESV), “For my father and my mother have forsaken me, but the Lord will take me in.”**

“You have no idea what that verse did for my soul. There in that hospital room in Minnesota, I gave my life to Jesus Christ, the only One who will ever completely feel my pain and know exactly what I’m going through. The only One who will always love me unconditionally and never leave me.”

The Difference Between Death and Life Life since that day hasn’t been perfect. Yet she knows God has been faithful and will never abandon her.

Today is much different for Kari. “The Lord gave me a wonderful, godly husband. We are both very active in serving our local church together. We have two sons and a daughter-in-law who love the Lord and are great gifts from God. I have a granddaughter who just turned nine months old.”

For Kari, having a personal relationship with Christ has been the difference between life and death. She says, “Without Christ, I was literally on a path of death, and with Christ, I’m alive. Without Christ, I was lost and hopeless. And with Christ, I’m found and full of hope.”

Each time she tells her story, she is reminded of the pain she experienced. But she is also reminded of the Bible in her hospital room that God used to speak to her heart.

“Without that Bible, I would not be alive today,” she exclaims!

Kari
Minnesota - USA



The Gideons
International

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