

The Mission

May 2026



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Children's Ministries International

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MAY 2026 – The Mission

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The Difference Clean Water Makes



This little girl could die!

Here in the United States, we run a glass of water under the tap and drink without a second thought. Even if we might occasionally think about the treatment of our drinking water, we don't associate it with sickness and death. We haven't had to give any consideration to waterbourn disease in the U.S. in our lifetimes unless we're out backpacking on the trail somewhere. For the better part of the past 100 years waterbourn disease has been practically nonexistent in America. We are an exception to the rule, however.

In the developing world, waterbourn disease is a killer – and its primary victims are children. Gastrointestinal illnesses such as dysentery, typhoid and cholera used to be big child killers here in the west as well. In addition, kidney infections, Hepatitis A and polio can also be spread through bad water.

In the early 1900s, possibly 15% of American children were struck down by waterbourn disease and in localized areas as many as 30% were lost

to outbreaks of typhoid, for example. Sadly, these are the numbers we see in the poor rural villages of Pakistan today.

In fact, access to clean water is the greatest single predictor of childhood health in general. For this reason, Clean water is one of our highest priorities. Without it, we can never get ahead of the medical costs and the harsh toll on the people we love and serve.

Since CMI has begun providing water at Toba Tek Singh village, childhood disease has dropped to near zero and child mortality has dropped to zero. In a village where it was common to lose 8-12 children a year, there have been no new cases of waterbourn illness and no child deaths since 2024, with the exception of those who were already sick when clean water became available.

In addition to solving a terrible problem, keeping our clean water canisters clean and filled provides good jobs as we are yet unable to afford a powered system.

Please share this story – America we have no idea how good we have it!



Help us free children from slavery



At the core of CMI's mission is meaningful life for the people we serve. It is estimated that there are nearly 2.5 million people held in slavery in Pakistan today. Children born to parents in slavery are slaves from their birth. Many are put to work making bricks by the time they are five years old. For some, their family has been in slavery as long as anyone can remember.

Slavery makes education and religious upbringing very difficult, if not impossible. Slaves subsist on the bare minimums – minimal nutrition, minimal healthcare – minimal access to clean water. And worse, they aren't in control of their own bodies and can be abused at whim by masters. Most of the children CMI redeems from slavery are illiterate, malnourished, unvaccinated, frequently living with disease and many are survivors of abuse.

CMI's mission is to provide a new life filled with dignity and opportunity for the children we redeem. This mission costs money. While redemption varies in cost from case to case, once free, our program spends nearly \$35.00 per month caring for these children. Invite CMI to speak so you can learn more.

Tax Deductibility of Donations from IRAs

An IRA charitable contribution, technically known as a Qualified Charitable Distribution (QCD), is a way to send money directly from your IRA to a qualifying charity, such as CMI.

While it's often called a "deduction," it actually works better than one: the money never touches your bank account, so it isn't counted as taxable income in the first place.

To qualify for the tax benefits of a QCD, you must follow several strict IRS rules:

1. There is an age requirement – you must be at least 70½ years old at the time of the distribution. Even though the age for Required Minimum Distributions (RMDs) has increased to 73, you can still start making QCDs at 70½.
2. The funds must move directly from your IRA custodian to the charity. If the check is made out to you and you then write a check to the charity, it counts as a taxable withdrawal.
3. Traditional IRAs, Inherited IRAs, and "inactive" SEP or SIMPLE IRAs (accounts no longer receiving employer contributions) are eligible, however 401(k)s and 403(b)s are not eligible for QCDs.
4. Most 501(c)(3) public charities qualify, however private foundations do not. And you cannot receive any benefit in exchange for the gift, like a dinner or item. If you do, the entire distribution may become taxable.
5. There is an annual limit: For 2026, the limit is \$111,000 per person or \$222,000 for a married couple if both have their own IRAs.

A QCD is often more powerful than a standard donation because it reduces your Adjusted Gross Income (AGI). This can have a domino effect on your other finances:

1. Most people no longer itemize their taxes because the standard deduction is so high – in 2026, it is \$16,100 for singles and \$32,200 for married couples. If you take the standard deduction, a normal charitable gift usually gives you zero tax benefit. A QCD, however, gives you the benefit regardless.
2. If you are 73 or older, you are forced to take RMDs, which can push you into a higher tax bracket. A QCD counts toward your RMD but isn't taxed, effectively "erasing" that portion of your mandatory withdrawal.
3. Because a QCD lowers your AGI, it may help you stay below the thresholds where your Social Security benefits become taxable.

4. Medicare Part B and D premiums are based on your income from two years prior. By using a QCD to keep your AGI lower, you might avoid the "High Income" surcharges known as IRMAA.

Consult your advisor and see if a QCD might be a good option for you.

Agape House – The CMI Hostel – Aryan. Isaaq & Rumiz

CMI is in dire need of a larger building for a school and hostel. We are pushed to the limits of what we can handle. Our facility acts as a temporary shelter for some and an orphanage for others as well as a school program. Our three young clients pictured to the left are an excellent example of why such a program is necessary. Over the summer of 2025, the boys' parents became sick with tuberculosis. Their father died in September and mother is recovering with medicine provided by CMI. But, in the meantime, where do the children go?

Currently, our 1800 square-foot building, just a large house really, is home to 9 students plus staff and provides educational services to approximately 30. Help us grow – help circulate our literature, make a donation, help us do a show.



Freedom for Shahzad and Nazia



Shahzad and Nazia and their two young daughters, Kainat and Massah, had been living in slavery at a brick kiln for the past seven years until their redemption in April 2026. Their story through slavery is a common one for the Christian family living in Pakistan.

Shahzad and Nazia had been free, they have even received above average education for Christians living in the Muslim world. But – good work is scarce and labor is abundant. Many families in their circumstance struggle to earn \$50.00 per month. Enough – as long as nothing goes wrong.

Everything changed when Kainat was born. A beautiful little girl, but sick with a variety of congenital issues. Without money, the new family faced a terrible choice – watch their daughter die, or sell themselves into slavery in exchange for the money needed to treat Kainat.

In many cases, when it is a parent who is sick and facing this decision, they will chose death in order not to hand slavery down to their children.

Continued below

How to connect with Children's Ministries International (CMI)

CMI website: <https://www.childrensmi.org>
Presentations: <https://www.childrensmi.org/presentations>
Newsletter signup: <https://www.childrensmi.org/newsletters>
CMI email: aheart4childreneverywhere@gmail.com
Personal email: vaughn.c.starr@gmail.com
Phone/text: 610-823-6009
CMI address: 4822 7TH AVE TEMPLE, PA 19560
Tax ID number: 99-3778341



Continued from above

Look for an upcoming article in the July edition of our newsletter – when parents choose death. This is, of course, a situation CMI endeavors to help. Like the article above about the three boys currently living in our hostel program – in that case, CMI was able to intervene at least somewhat and help with necessary medical expenses to prevent these boys from becoming orphans.

In any event, Shahzad and Nazia are now free and will work as vegetable growers hoping to earn enough money to buy a rickshaw for additional income.

The CMI Backstory – From Business to Mission



I am Vaughn Starr, founder of Children's Ministries International. I grew up here in Pennsylvania Dutch Country, splitting my childhood between Elizabethtown and Boyertown, where I graduated from High School. During my school years, I had the opportunity to study abroad and spent a school-year in Denmark. This experience was transformative and changed the trajectory of my life.

Once the internet made global connection possible, my wife, Lisa, and I began our own English immersion and student exchange Program, which ran from our home in the hills above Ephrata. The program reached hundreds of children and youth from 18 countries over its 15-year run until Covid shut it down.

During those years, I learned just how difficult life can be for those growing up in underdeveloped economies and yet how grateful they were for any opportunity they were provided. So, our program fronted the costs for students from Pakistan to come to America for English immersion experiences here. While in

Our program, the visitors worked and earned money to reimburse the cost of the program and to return home with \$1,000.00 – enough money for four years of college in Pakistan.

In the years since Covid ended our business, my wife and I have changed our focus. Rather than rebuild our business, we embarked on a different course – a mission to those in the most need – the poorest children on earth. The mission itself is pretty straightforward – share the stories of the children here in the west to raise money to redeem them out of slavery, provide education, clean water, healthcare, nutrition and dignity. In short, we are trying to provide opportunity where there was none before.

But here is my vision for CMI. I would like to find American families willing to sponsor youth to come to America for a short-term program here. I would like to find others who will go along and meet the beautiful people of Pakistan and one day stand in my shoes and grow and continue this vital work.

In the meantime, I am always looking for opportunities to share CMI and the stories of the children we are saving. I speak at schools, clubs, churches – wherever I am invited. CMI has come alongside organizations, such as our local Boy Scout troop, to help them raise money as well – We provide the keynote speech. Please reach out and help us help them.

Kids – Interested in Pen Pals?

CMI is hoping to connect Pakistani children with their American counterparts as Pen Pals. This is how it would work – American kids, with adult supervision, can introduce themselves and write a bit about their lives, hobbies, schoolwork, extra-curricular activities, etc. They can share pictures, too. These will then be emailed to our classes in Pakistan. Our Pakistani students do not have access to computers, so they will reply by hand and also attach pictures. Great care will be taken to guard identifying information of students – no addresses, phone numbers, email addresses, etc. will be transmitted.

School teachers – if this opportunity interests you, please reach out for more information. I am willing to come to your classroom and present our students if this can be arranged. I will provide necessary clearances.

A Shout Out to Jeff Bush and WellSpring Financial

Thank you for listening to our story and for the wonderful contribution – You cannot imagine how much it has done for those on the ground.



www.wellspring-financial.com

Jeff Bush, Steve Jablonski, and Shannon LaRosse are investment advisor representatives of, and securities and advisory services are offered through, USA Financial Securities, Member FINRA/SIPC. A Registered Investment Advisor located at 6020 E. Fulton St., Ada, MI 49301. WellSpring Financial Services is not affiliated with USA Financial Securities.

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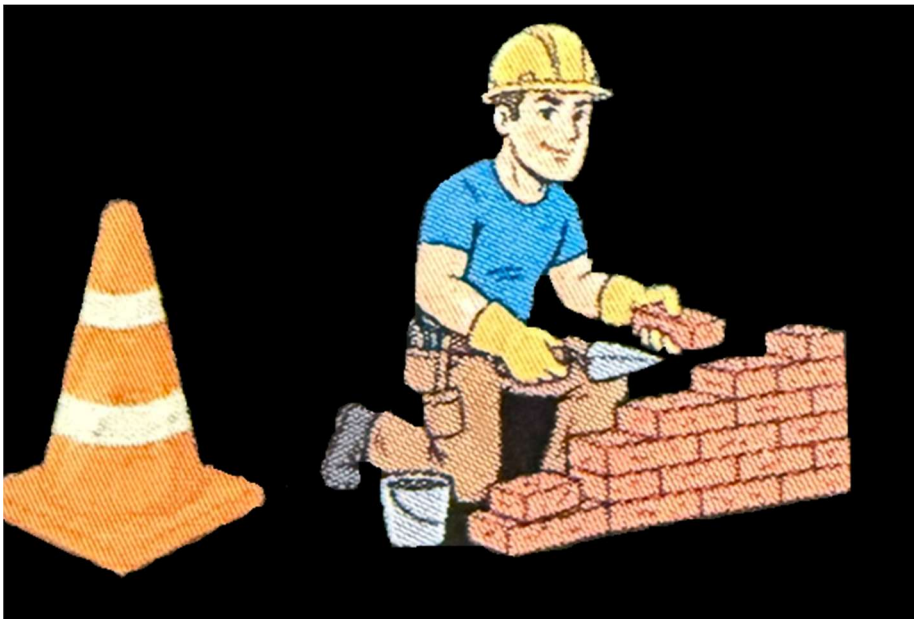
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Do you enjoy Christian adventure books?

Brian O'Connell is one of my peers from BIOLA University. He is a Christian apologist, educator, and storyteller who is passionate about helping students and families grow confident in their faith. After becoming a follower of Christ while serving in the U.S. Army, his search for answers led him into the field of apologetics.

The Quest for the Flor de la Mar is Brian's first book – let's help him succeed in this new chapter in his life. ***The Quest for the Flor de la Mar*** is available at Amazon: <https://a.co/d/025A85fK>



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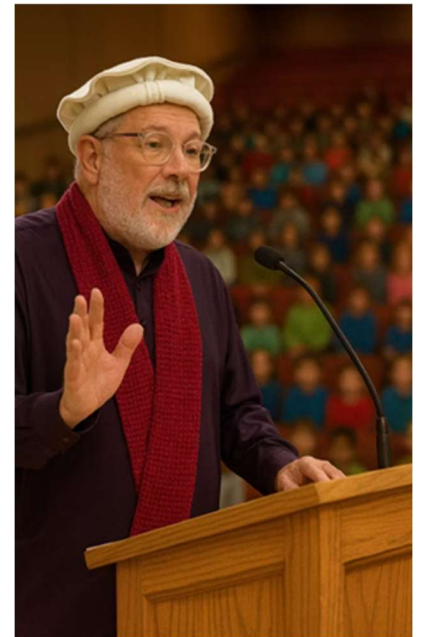
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Consider a CMI Presentation

Childrens Ministries International President, Vaughn Starr, enjoys sharing this mission and its fantastic work in Pakistan. Vaughn shares with many different groups and in a variety of circumstances. Among these have been school assemblies at both public and Christian schools, Churches, Rotary Clubs, Boy Scout events and other venues. Presentations are frequently used as fundraisers for other organizations or to support a specific project. In some cases, presentations include excellent Pakistani food. Fundraising? Consider how a dinner and a keynote speech might help.

Our presentations involve sharing the culture of Pakistan and the stories of the children and families we have assisted. The presentation is informative and interesting – some stories are funny and others are very touching. All who have participated in one of our presentations have been moved – motivated to appreciate and to get involved in their own communities.



Zion's Spies Evangelical and Reformed Church

318 Spies Church Road Reading, PA 19606

610-779-9787

www.zionspieser.com

zionspieser@gmail.com

Sunday Services

9:00 AM Sunday School

10:30 AM Worship Service

Livestream on Facebook

Thursday Evening Answers Group 7:00 PM

Upcoming Events

May 31, 2026 Trinity Sunday - Holy Communion

June 7, 2026 Summer outdoor services begin
Pet Blessing Service

June 27, 2026 8:00 AM-12:00 PM FreeBay Event
Everything is free - Bring your own bag

June 28, 2026 Church Picnic In the grove
Following Worship Service - Bring a covered dish

Upcoming Events

June 27, 2026 Freebay at Zion's Spies Church

TBD – Fall Troop 155 Good Shepherd Reformed Church, Muhlenberg Fundraiser and Banquet

TBD – Fall Troop 161 Holy Guardian Angels, Muhlenberg presentation to the troop

Supporting Villages

CMI is currently operating in 4 villages and has offered assistance to several others based upon our ability to raise needed resources to commit. The most difficult part of running such a mission is to say “no, we cannot help.” While the need remains as extreme as it is, there will likely never come a time when we won’t have to say no – our hope is to grow so that we can say yes more often. Even if yes is just clean water, or primary education – yes is still a difference between life and death for many on the ground. Please consider what you can do to help – small, ongoing donations help a lot. Subscribe to our newsletter and follow us!



Support for our children



Ideally, CMI spends about \$35.00 per month per child. This is, at least, the goal – this is what it would take to ensure clean drinking water, adequate nutrition, vaccines and basic medical treatment and education for a child. We run chronically short and the children receiving services often receive less than the optimum. CMI has considered many ideas as far as raising money. One of those, which comes up in frequent suggestions, is to ask folks to sponsor a child.

CMI has not gone this route since all children in our care receive the best we can offer – no one will be left behind without a sponsor. That said, over the next few months, we will begin sharing more about the children on our website and in our newsletters. While many of our children are learning basic English, you would be welcome to communicate as pen pals, sponsor a birthday party or meal that would serve the school the child attends. This seems to be a more equitable way to serve all.



East Gate
Presbyterian Church, P.C.A.

CMI would like to give a shout-out to East Gate Presbyterian Church in Longneck, Delaware for hosting our presentation for the second year in a row and for the generous support of their congregation.

East Gate is a welcoming congregation. They run beachfront services in the summertime. If you live nearby or find yourself in the area on vacation, check them out.

East Gate Presbyterian Church 34806 Church Ln, Millsboro, DE 19966

<https://eastgatepres.org>



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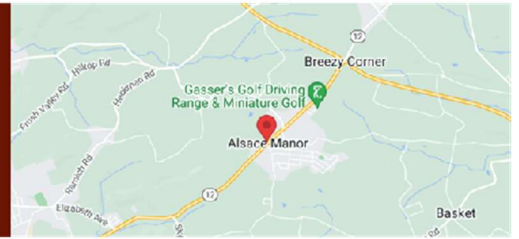
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Tuesday – Thurs, Sun 11:00am - 9:00pm

Fri Sat - 11:00am - 10:00pm



Charity vs Government

While this title is not intended to sound controversial, these days that seems difficult to avoid. In the budget cuts of 2025, many foreign aid programs supported by the U.S. government were cut. It is important for the public to understand, often, government aid goes to foreign governments to accomplish “governmenty” stuff, even in poor countries where the man on the street believes we are helping. But this is vastly different from actually reaching the poor on the ground. For example, The U.S. sent more than \$74 billion of aid to sub-saharan africa in 2024, but how many people did this move from mud huts to adequate houseing? Likely none.

By contrast, privately run charity involves people on the ground who personally know and truly love those they are serving. This means money reaches those in need and goes a lot further since it is provided by those in the know, rather than as a one-size-fits all solution. CMI’s budget is tiny and totally reliant upon the will of the people. We are supported by volunteers and donors. Despite our relatively tiny size, we are making a huge impact on the ground. We bring at least one additional family each month out of slavery – 60 people in 2025. We are providing vaccines, medicine, fresh drinking water, nutritional supplementation and education to more than 400 people. We are doing fantastic work on a budget less than 1/100,000 of the government’s 2024 budget. If CMI had that kind of money for just one year, there would be no more children living in slavery in Pakistan.

So, please – consider supporting charitable organizations, like CMI. Help us do such amazing work that no one misses the government. Our records are wide open, the people we serve are real people, all are invited to travel and meet.



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Do you need someone to speak – consider a CMI presentation?



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