



EEM Unveils 499 Bible Illustrations

Available Under Creative Commons and Inspired by EEM's Motto: 'The Bible.
We Want Everyone To Get It'

HURST, Texas, April 3, 2023 – EEM (Eastern European Mission), a ministry that has been providing free Bibles in former Communist bloc countries and surrounding nations since 1961, will now be the conduit, thanks to Publishing Director Scott Hayes, for getting 499 illustrations for the New Testament – nearly two for every chapter – to children and adults everywhere, to help them better understand the Scriptures.



“This project has been an exercise in using the creativity that is a part of being made in God’s image,” Hayes said. “It is our hope that the artwork, which is now available under Creative Commons license (CC by NC), will be further developed and used in ways we have not imagined – all for the glory of God.”

The inspiration to create Bible illustrations arose from the desire to help people of all ages and backgrounds understand the powerful message of the Bible. With EEM’S motto "The Bible. We want everyone to get it" in mind, Hayes and Phelps applied their God given creative talents to bring the stories and teachings of the Bible to life through vivid and engaging visual representations.

Our hope is to encourage people to explore and understand the timeless wisdom and spiritual guidance contained within the pages of the Bible,” Hayes added. “Whether depicting the calming of the storm, the life of Jesus, or the struggles and triumphs of biblical heroes, the artist's illustrations offer a fresh perspective and a powerful reminder of the relevance of these stories in our modern lives.”

Hayes believes these illustrations will encourage readers to envision the message within the text, and therefore better understand it. They will also serve as a memory hook to assist in the message moving from the head to the heart as readers meditate on the words. By making the images available free for non-commercial use, the artwork can be used for multiple purposes – in teaching, in Sunday School materials, in small group Bible studies, events such as Vacation Bible Schools or Backyard Bible Clubs, in after school Christian programs, etc.

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The project has been a couple years in the making, with Hayes finding time during the early COVID-19 lockdowns to document ideas for the illustrations. As a longtime Bible teacher, he usually had a visual illustration in mind as he communicated about various New Testament passages, so he was able to list these out in a chart with recommendations for the illustrator. Once drawing commenced, it took about a year to complete every illustration.

The images are simple black-and-white line art, which allows them to be used for many purposes, as well as invites readers to color them in. They will be available via download from the EEM website and can be used in just about any way that helps to spread the Gospel, except for being used in products that would be sold for profit. They can be shared online via other websites, and with the reach of the Internet, have the potential to be used all over the world.

“It’s just about sharing resources, which is what EEM is all about,” Hayes said. “There should be no competition, no charge and no one getting any credit when it comes to sharing God’s Word, and that is the heart behind ‘Envisioning Truth 499.’”

More information is available at <https://www.eem.org/envisioning-truth-499/>, where the images are also available for download.

About Eastern European Mission

Eastern European Mission (EEM) was established in 1961 to provide Bibles and Bible-based materials throughout the former communist bloc countries in Eastern Europe. Today, EEM publishes and prints Bibles and New Testaments as well as Teen Bibles, Children’s Bibles and coloring books, distributing them through a vast network of partner churches and organizations which last year reached 36 countries in 26 different languages.

The mission of Eastern European Mission (EEM) began in 1961 when a small band of missionaries bravely answered God's call to take his Word to people under the rule of the Soviet Union. Smuggling Bibles and underground printing were the only ways to share God's Word until the wall fell in 1989. Today, EEM supplies native-language Bibles and New Testaments plus Teen Bibles, Children's Bibles and coloring books throughout the region. EEM publishes, prints and distributes through a vast network of churches and organizations to individuals, families, public schools, youth camps, prisons and anywhere else Bibles and Bible-based materials are needed in over 30 countries and 20 different languages – free to all.

EEM's tagline encapsulates its vision: "The Bible, We Want Everyone to Get It!" EEM's mission is to share God's Word with the people of Eastern Europe and beyond and educate and inspire God's servants in this work.

In addition to delivering on its promise of providing free Bibles and Bible-based materials in native languages, even to the most unreachable places in Eastern Europe and beyond, EEM publishes and prints these materials locally to help support the region's economies. Before materials are sent to print, EEM's highly qualified publishing team works hard to ensure the excellent quality of each book. Every year, the ministry coordinates the production of over 100 printing projects. These Bibles and Bible-based materials are then printed by trustworthy, locally-based printers, allowing for better cost and logistical efficiency.

EEM serves the following countries and languages:

COUNTRIES

Albania	Kosovo
Armenia	Latvia
Austria	Lithuania
Azerbaijan	Moldova
Belarus	Montenegro
Bosnia & Herzegovina	North Macedonia
Bulgaria	Poland
Croatia	Romania
Cyprus	Russia
Czechia	Servia
Estonia	Slovakia
Germany	Slovenia
Greece	Ukraine
Hungary	United Kingdom
Kazakhstan	

LANGUAGES

Albania	Italian
Arabic	Latvian
Armenian	Lithuanian
Bulgarian	Polish
Croatian	Romanian
Czech	Russian
Estonian	Serbian
Farsi	Slovak
German	Slovenia
Greek	Ukrainian
Hungarian	

BOB BURCKLE, PRESIDENT

Bob Burckle was named President of Eastern European Mission in 2015, after having served on the EEM Board for more than 15 years. An engineer by trade, Bob earned both his bachelor's and master's degrees in electrical engineering from the University of Louisville. While working in the industry, he earned his MBA in Marketing and Finance from the University of North Texas. His work in small and large technology companies has allowed him to apply best business practices to the operations at EEM.

Bob has traveled extensively in different countries as part of his responsibilities as a missions chair, deacon and elder at various churches. He also serves as president of Character for

Kids, a non-profit initiative to promote character education among youth and young adults in the global community with special emphasis in Ukraine, Russia and Eastern Europe. He has been married for more than 40 years to his wife, Joan. They have two adult daughters, Lauren and Brittany, and three granddaughters. Bob is humbled to know that he and his colleagues have been chosen and are privileged to spread God's Word throughout Eastern Europe.



DIRK SMITH, VICE PRESIDENT



Vice President Dirk Smith joined Eastern European Mission following his highly successful tenure as a development officer with his alma mater, Harding University. An accomplished manager, he earned experience in business development with an eye for revenue building through positions with firms like Jackson & Coker in Dallas, Texas, and T. Williams Consulting serving clients in Pennsylvania, New

Jersey and New York. He has a bachelor's degree in Mathematics and an MBA with a focus on Organizational Development and Ethics.

At EEM, Dirk oversees fundraising and marketing efforts as well as assists with U.S. operations. He is an experienced presenter and storyteller and loves sharing the stories of what God is doing through the ministry of EEM.

Dirk was married to his beautiful spirit filled wife, Wendy, for 34 years. Wendy battled ALS for 4 years and went to her perfect rest on January 9, 2023. Dirk resides in the greater Nashville area and is Dad to three adult children, Taryn, Tyler and Trevor.

- Would you give me a brief history of the EEM ministry?
- How has your ministry changed from its start in 1961?
- I've heard that EEM is in the "Parable of the Sower" business. Can you explain that?
- Is it true that you are distributing Bibles into public schools? How did that get started? In what countries is that happening?
- With your distribution taking place in primarily the former communist bloc nations, why do you offer Bibles in Farsi and Arabic?
- Do you print here in the U.S. and ship your books to Europe?
- How has the COVID pandemic affected your ministry?
- Has the global supply chain crisis affected your work? If so, how?
- How has the war in Ukraine affected your work?
- Would you share your thoughts and perspectives on the war in Ukraine?
- Would you tell me about your "Ukraine Aid" initiative I see on your website?
- I'm sure you have many impactful stories you could share. Is there one that stands out in your mind or that is fresh on your heart you could share?
- What have you seen God doing through the ministry of EEM?
- What is EEM's greatest current need, and how can people help?