

Looking Forward and Looking Back 2026



This ministry was an idea that came to me after I transitioned out of my 20-year position at my local church. My goal was to start a ministry that encourages and equips people to study the Bible independently.

In a nutshell, I believe that my goals for the first year were met and even exceeded in many ways. I am very confident in the work of God in this ministry for the months and years ahead!

I will begin this report by outlining the budgetary needs for the 2026-2027 year. My initial commitment is to continue this ministry through the 2026 calendar year. I believe that the success, ministry opportunities, and joy that I have experienced in this ministry have been sufficient to justify its continuation.

Budget and Expenses

From July 2025 to July 2026, I've received around \$4,500, and I'm estimating my expenses to be about the same. I've received donations from at least eight different people, though I can't confirm the source of a few anonymous gifts.

With a few new expenses and a few that don't need to be repeated, I'm planning for the budget for the next year to be under \$5,000.

Future Budget / First Hand Truth '26-27

Social Media Assistance	\$600
Logo Design	250
Media Ministry Upgrades	400
Canva Subscription (graphic arts)	150
Website Hosting	200
Printing Costs	400
Office Supplies	600
Postage	100
Misc.	500
Retreat Fees (four annual retreats)	\$1,000
Totals	\$4,200

Please consider supporting this ministry!

I'm hoping you'll consider supporting this ministry through prayer, helping out in useful ways, and giving financially. I don't think the costs are too high, and I believe the ministry is a very worthwhile investment in terms of effectiveness per dollar.

How Can You Help?

- **Prayer** / Partnership
- Consider **donating** to the ministry
- **Attend** and growing personally!
- Consider **encouraging leaders who can experience it and pass it on** or **friends who would benefit** from learning to personally study the Bible.

Your **support** in **attending** and **inviting friends**—like church leaders or people you think would benefit from this ministry—is **invaluable** in spreading the word and making it a success!

I'm focused on equipping the church to better know the Lord, study His Word, and be personally discipled by Him. I'm also interested in fostering a deep respect for people, mirroring Jesus' desire for leadership (humility, service, respect, love, and transparency). In other words, "kindness."

Your gifts would be greatly appreciated in any way they can be, whether it's a one-time donation or a monthly gift that fits your lifestyle.

I'm hoping this ministry will grow to become a resource for anyone in Battle Creek who wants to learn how to better study the Bible.

Thank you for considering this and for your partnership in the gospel and the Word.

The Last Six Months or So...

I've had the pleasure of leading around 20 workshops on different Bible Study subjects, with most of them happening at JPG Resources, though a few were at other places too.

I have planned and held these particular workshops over the last six months.

- **How to Study the Bible for Yourself** (the basics)
- **How to Study the Bible for Yourself** (advanced)
- **How to Study the Psalms**
- **How to do a Great Topical Study**
- **How to Use Technology to Deepen Your Bible Study** / using Logos software
- **How to Study the Bible for Personal Growth**
- **How to Study the Bible for Personal Recovery**
- **Old Testament Survey Workshop**
- **New Testament Survey Workshop**
- **Intro to Messiah** / Studying the Messianic Nature of Jesus
- **The Danger of Bible Study** (Spiritual Abuse)

These are the new workshops that are in development...

- **How to Study the Bible for Children**
- **How to Study the Proverbs for Yourself**
- **Studies in Messiah** / The Sonship
- **Studies in Messiah** / The Servant Song

The most highly attended workshops were **Logos Software** at Calvary Baptist in the spring and the more recent workshop on **Spiritual Abuse** at JPG Resources in mid August / both with about 20 in attendance - The event on spiritual abuse was particularly moving.

- **The People** / I have worked with over 100 different individuals in these classes.
- **The Bible Study Café** / I have held about a dozen informal Saturday morning sessions.
- **Scheduled two fall retreats** / one in October at Camp Ao-Wa-Kiya on Spiritual Growth and the second one will be in November at Gull Lake on the Psalms.

From the Info Meeting / Ideas and Things

I also had a meeting in the spring of 2026 to chat about the future of First Hand Truth. I got so much encouragement from everyone who came, and I also got some great ideas to think about.

Here are a few of those ideas:

- **To figure out what I want to achieve with this ministry.** I think First Hand Truth is mostly a local ministry, with some trips to other churches nearby and further away.
- **To use social media better.** I think I need to use social media more effectively to do better ministry and spread the word. This is something I'm focusing on this fall.
- **To make an information video (or videos).** Emily Steel is working on this.
- **To connect better with local pastors.** Some of this is already happening, and I need to set a goal: having lunch with a church leader once a week or every other week.
- **To hold Bible Study Retreats.** I've scheduled two retreats for the fall of 2026, and they're still being developed.
- **Other things.** There were other ideas from the meeting that I want to consider: Publishing materials? Online Zoom classes? Classes just for pastors and leaders? A YouTube channel? It's okay to make money. What about tax status, 5013C? And do I need a board of advisors?



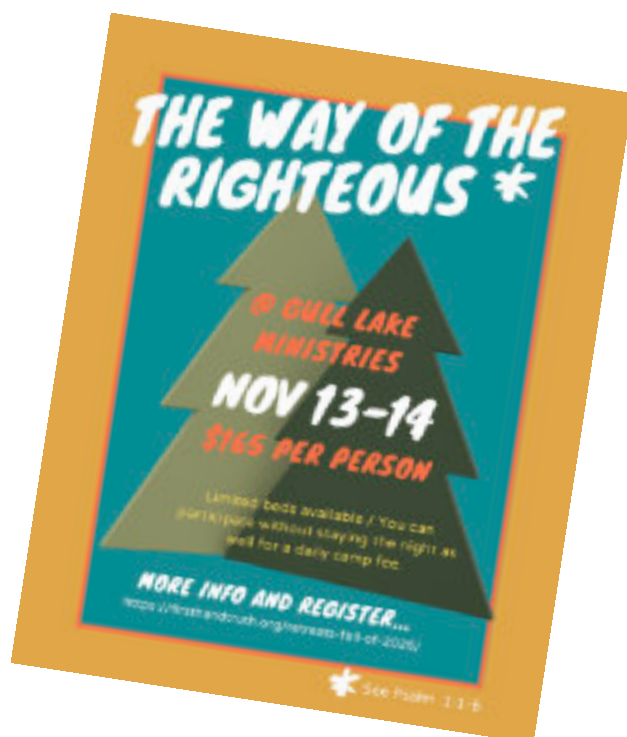
Personal Status

I've really enjoyed the last eight months since I started teaching the seminars. They're interesting, challenging, and engaging as I get to know other people while working to encourage and improve my own study habits and encourage others.

I've decided not to actively encourage taking regular funds for my efforts from the funds received. Out of the nearly \$5,000 that did come in for personal reimbursements, I've designated about \$500 of the last year. If the ministry continued to grow, I wouldn't be opposed to a salary, but that's not my number one goal. I think I'd rather raise money to hire a ministry partner who is younger to disciple into this position for the future of the ministry.

Along the way, I met Colin Sherfield and his ministry called Good Neighbor Network. Colin has started this new ministry to encourage and organize "micro churches" that are more organic, more focused on personal ministry; think of small house churches and the like with an overarching ministry that helps with training, support, and light accountability.

We both began our ministries around the same timeframe, and we see that we are running two different things that are very complimentary. So, we are pursuing how to team up and encourage and support each other's ministries. I'm not sure how that looks, but I'm interested to see where the opportunity leads.



The Future / Fall 2026

Looking ahead, I'm planning to keep up the good work from the spring by hosting another series of workshops locally on Thursday evenings, which I'm calling The Thursday Night Bible Institute. This time, I'm inviting a few folks to team up and teach some of the sessions, which will give me a chance to collaborate and rebuild my ability to work with others.

I'm also thinking of mixing these with our regular Bible Study Café mornings. These could be great opportunities to connect personally and offer "office hours" for anyone interested. People can come to study, join someone for a study session, or get personalized tutoring on study techniques.

This fall, I'm also aiming to boost my social media presence. I want to learn how to use it more effectively to spread the word about the ministry opportunities available.

Additionally, I need to be more deliberate about visiting churches and leaders about this ministry. There's still a bit of uncertainty and anxiety about this part of my ministry, which has improved but still needs prayer, trust, and healing from my side.

Sincerely yours in Christ,

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First Hand Truth

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Thursday Night Bible Institute

2026 / All workshops / 6-8pm / JPG Resources / 62 East Michigan Ave, Battle Creek / use rear entrance to Cafe Rica / stairs or elevator to beautiful second floor offices! **(New: Team teaching guest presenters, presenting with Rick!)**

September

10 / How to Study the Bible for Yourself / the basics / with guest *Nick Gillette*

17 / How to Study the Psalms for Yourself

24 / How to Study the Bible for Spiritual Growth / with guest *Colin Sherfield*

November

5 / Studying the Bible for Personal Recovery / special guest *TBA*

12 / How to Study The Bible For Yourself: Examining Parts of Speech / with guest *Dale Boyer*

19 / ** A Public Reading of Colossians / an event!

October

1 / Old Testament Survey / with guest *Brian MacPhail-Fausey*

8 / How to Study the Proverbs for Yourself

15 / How to Study the Bible for Yourself / advanced techniques

29 / How to Use Technology to Study the Bible / Logos Bible Software / with guest *Jeremiah Rose*

December

3 / Intro to the Study of Messiah / The Anointed One

10 / The Study of Messiah 2 / Son of God, Son of Man / Son of David

Testimonials

Rick,

You shared a quote recently from Michael S. Heiser: "Bible reading is not Bible study." That stuck with me. I try to be in the word (reading it) regularly and that is super important to keep it in the front of my mind. BUT when I take the time to really study it, I get even more out of it.

The How to Study the Bible workshops are a wonderful introduction to several different techniques. The practical hands-on examples that we went through are great to get the feel of how and where to apply those techniques! The various techniques really complimented one-another and equipped me with a tool box of methods to study different parts of scripture.

I have already seen uses for several of those techniques in my own personal study. I found that by diagramming a passage, I was able to understand it so much better. Through diagramming consecutive passages, the logical flow of the whole book became very apparent and the context led to a deeper understanding of the book as a whole compared with reading a chapter at a time.

Thanks for leading these workshops! 10/10 Highly recommend!

Nick / East Leroy

Rick McNally has played a pivotal role in my spiritual development since I started learning from him in Middle School. His "Thursday Night Bible Institute" lessons are a synthesis and distillation of his years of study and experiences. I highly recommend them to all regardless of their stage of faith. His passion for the Lord and the study of His Word are palpable and infectious and I walk away from each encouraged to dig deeper into the Bible. The crux of the success of his workshops lies in their contrasting simplicity and complexity. Laid out in workflows that any can understand, they lead to studies that will allow a lifetime of gleaning wisdom.

I am also a vocal supporter of his Saturday morning Bible Study Cafe. I have benefited from each of the major tenants of the space. I've been encouraged by the presence and discussion of other studiers. We've had excellent conversations on questions that have arisen from our studies. I've been helped both technologically and theologically when my own studies have run into tough obstacles. I've also learned new ideas from the more formal lessons that occur there. The space provides a respite from the buffeting concerns of the past and upcoming week, where one can investigate individually or collectively and be at leisure, or as Josef Pieper put it, "step beyond the working world and win contact with those superhuman, life-giving forces."

Jeremiah / Battle Creek