

## **BIO: MERRILL BOLENDER**

June 2020

In 1948, as a twelve-year-old farm boy in southern Ohio, Merrill clearly heard the Lord saying, "You will be a voice in the wilderness, saying "Prepare the way of the Lord." For many years, this word was a mystery but over the past 71 years the call and vision has become clearer.

During the Cold War, 1985–86, they went with a delegation from across the USA to the Soviet Union. They visited with Jewish families in Leningrad and Moscow that had applied to immigrate to Israel, but were refused and thus referred to as "refusniks." They, and other prayer groups at different times, interceded on Red Square for God to speak to "Pharaoh," "Let My people go!" and, if necessary, visit plagues on the Soviet Union to bring her to her knees so the Jewish exodus could take place. After Chernobyl, drought, failed expansionist invasion in Afghanistan, the Cold War bankrupting the Soviet economy, a major earthquake in Armenia . . . the miracle happened. The Iron Curtain collapsed and the exodus began resulting in well over a million Jews making their exodus to Israel.

1975-1989 -- Served on Staff at Daystar Christian Ministries in various capacities: developed a Christian Bookstore, developed lending library, served as Director of Counseling, worked in the Business Office, was a teacher in Christian Maturity Seminars, and served as Assistant Director.

1980-1981 and 1987-1988 – Worked in Tel Aviv, Israel in various capacities such as, Elder on Pastoral Staff, Manager of Guest Facility, Director of Immanuel House which housed three ministries including a Messianic Congregation, Study Center, and 60 bed guest facility.

1985-1986 – Led six outreach teams to Central America nations including Guatemala, El Salvador, and Belize doing humanitarian work such as clothing distribution in refuge and Indian villages, medical clinics, dental clinics, construction, and evangelical outreach using drama, mime, Bible distribution and nightly outdoor event using the Jesus film with Spanish soundtrack.

2004-2020 – Merrill and Donna served with Ebenezer Operation Exodus, living six months in Odessa, Ukraine, a port on the Black Sea. They sailed on 6 cruises from the Port in Odessa with *Olim* making *Aliyah* to Haifa, Israel. They presently serve as Indiana Reps speaking in churches and groups, raising up intercessory prayer groups and participating in OE USA intercessory prayer by phone and Zoom.

2005-2006 – Both years, Merrill taught, two weeks each year, at Samara Revival Bible Institute in Samara, Russia on the subject: Israel's Role in History; Past Present and Future.

2011-2020 – Authored the book, WHEN THE CROSS BECAME A SWORD: The Origin and Consequences of Replacement Theology. The English version is in its tenth printing. It presently printed in a total of sixteen languages and is being made available on six continents.

2014 -- Merrill's book was printed in Polish resulting for two years 2014-2015, Merrill was an invited speaker at a World Conference, titled FROM THE HOLOCAUST TO LIVING HOPE, in Oswiecim, Poland, a town bordering Auschwitz Concentration Camp.

2015 -- Merrill's book was translated into Portuguese resulting in a two week speaking tour in Sao Paulo, Belo Horizonta and Uberlandia.

Currently, Merrill and Donna reside in a retirement community in Indianapolis, Indiana. They are servants of the Lord. They come from ordinary backgrounds with an undeniable calling on their lives.