

# MISSIONARIES TO THE US MILITARY

Bill &  
Heather  
Lavender



Dear Pastor:

Thank you for your interest in our mission field of the U.S. Military. We the Lavender's, missionaries to the U.S. military serving with Baptist International Missions, Inc., (BIMI). Our sending church is the China Lake Baptist Church in Ridgecrest, California. Our Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ has called us to reach our nation's servicemembers and their families with the gospel of Jesus Christ, disciple them in their new faith, and integrate them into the fellowship of the local church.

## Bill's Testimony

I was born in San Diego, California. I grew up in several places in California due to my father's job relocations as a Federal Civil Service employee with the Department of the Navy.

My salvation by Jesus Christ occurred in 1973 after praying and asking Jesus to come into my heart as a five-year old boy. My parents were active members at the El Centro Baptist Tabernacle in El Centro, California where I first heard the gospel and responded to the conviction of the Holy Spirit of my need for salvation.

Later in life, while serving in the U.S. Army, I attended the Temple Baptist Church in Lacey, Washington, where I was baptized and called by Christ into full-time ministry.

## Heather's Testimony

I was born in Tucson, Arizona. I grew up in Evergreen, Colorado. My family was active in the Home School Conferences. As a child, I had made a false profession of faith in Christ. In 2012, after hearing the salvation testimony of a pastor's wife, Evelyn Sexton, during our church's Marriage Conference, the Holy Spirit convicted me of my need of salvation. My pastor's wife, Tisha Dickinson, led me to Christ, and I asked Jesus to come into my heart and be my Savior. Subsequently, I was baptized at the Hillcrest Baptist Church in El Paso, Texas.

## Bill's Call to the Ministry

Christ called me to full-time ministry in 1987 while serving in the United States Army at Fort Lewis, Washington. I had been attending the Temple Baptist Church in Lacey, Washington.

While reading the Gospel of Luke one Saturday afternoon, I began reading chapter nine. Christ began convicting my heart. When I got to verse fifty-nine and sixty, God spoke to my mind and heart through these verses and they became a directive from on high. Luke 9:59-60 reads as follows; "And he said unto another, *Follow me* [emphasis mine]. But he said, Lord, suffer me first to go and bury my father. Jesus said unto him, Let the dead bury their dead: but *go thou and preach the kingdom of God*' [emphasis mine]. It was as though God, Himself, was pointing directly at me saying "go and preach" right there in my barracks room. I consulted my pastor and he agreed that Christ was calling me to the ministry.

## Bill's Ministry Experience

**Church Planter/Senior Pastor** Sept. 2019- Present  
Liberty Baptist Church; El Paso, Texas

**Associate Pastor** Jan. 1997-Nov. 1999  
Hunter Park Baptist Church; Jacksonville, Florida

**Discipleship Small Group Leader** Apr. 2014-Apr. 2017  
Thomas Road Baptist Church, Lynchburg, Virginia

**Ministry Intern: Adult Ministries** Jan. 2016-May 2016  
Thomas Road Baptist Church; Lynchburg, Virginia

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