



INSTITUTO DE ESTUDIOS BÍBLICOS INTERNACIONALES

EN LINEA • ON LINE

DECEMBER NEWSLETTER 2023

Welcome to our December 2023 Newsletter, here are some of our latest developments. Good things keep happening and God keeps showing us the way as we move forward.

THE CHURCH PLANT The new congregation is doing well. As you may know, we started about 5 weeks ago with 24 members and last Sunday we had 33 in attendance. The members have started passing out flyers throughout the surrounding neighborhoods on Saturdays and Marvin is continually holding Bible studies throughout the week.

We have been blessed with a great meeting place and the owners have agreed to allow us put up banners and “sidewalk signs” on Sunday’s to help increase our visibility.

Marvin approached me about 2 months ago about helping to plant a church. If you recall, I held a seminar on the Organization of the Church in Honduras back in July, Marvin was talking to some of his friends in Honduras lamenting the fact that he needed help. They told him to talk to that “Gringo” from Costa Rica and gave him my phone number. God really knows how to connect people.

This has become the 8th active congregation in the San Jose Metroplex with a population of about 2.5 million.

Since I helped Marvin get things going, he gave me the “honor” of preaching the first sermon. Apparently, they really liked my sermon, they called me three times that afternoon telling that, and then asked if I would be interested in preaching half time.

So, Marvin and I are still sharing the preaching responsibilities half and half. On December 24th, we have a guest speaker, Marco, a preacher from Miami and on December 31st, we have another guest preacher coming, who is an Elder from a different congregation in Miami.

CUBAN LEADERSHIP CLASS Rolando is one of our main preachers in Cuba. He preaches at Palmas Soriano. He has started a weekly leadership class to help prepare members of the 3 surrounding churches for spiritual growth. There are about 15 members of the class.



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The purpose and focus is to prepare teachers, future preachers, Elders and Deacons with adequate knowledge and wisdom of the Bible to be effective leaders in the Word so when the time arrives, these positions will be filled with qualified members of the church.

LADIES BIBLE CLASS The ladies in the 3 churches have formed a monthly ladies Bible class that last for about 2-3 hours. They meet for teaching, praying, singing and worship. In addition to that, they collectively plan out the next month's agenda of evangelism and other works for the Lord. They make a game plan, they set objectives and goals and then they execute their plan to serve the Lord the month following each meeting. If you remember, in last month's newsletter, I shared info and pics about the members evangelizing throughout their neighborhoods.

PRAYER AND FASTING At the end of November, the congregation at Palmas Soriani started a Pray and Fasting campaign. They prayed and petitioned God for guidance, wisdom, church growth and to help them mature to the point where they can have an effective and scriptural church organization and leadership, including Elders and Deacons in the upcoming year.

They met every day, twice a day from Thursday to Saturday. 7 am to 9 am each morning and 7pm to 9 pm in the evening, praying, fasting, reading the Word and petitioning God. In my studies of the Bible, there is nothing more powerful than diligent prayer, study and petition to the Lord.

QUITO SCHOOL OF BIBLICAL STUDIES, ECUADOR EBI continues to expand and look for ways to spread the Word of God. I am pleased to announce that starting next year, we will be working together with the Quito School of Biblical Studies to provide online classes for their program and students. We are just getting started, but these classes will be accredited through their institution and students can receive college credit for completed courses.

I will give more info on this subject as it develops.

YOUTH GROUPS Each of the three churches in Cuba have started a youth group within their congregations with the organizational help of our preachers and the ladies of the churches.

This is having a HUGE impact within each of the congregations. The children are loving it! They are getting so encouraged within the church and are not just having



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a lot of fun (which they are) but they are being given much needed spiritual food and guidance from the leaders of the congregations.

They play games, study, worship and Luis takes thumb drives loaded with Christian Cartoons for them to watch, which to them is amazing because things like this just aren't available there.

Also, we are seeing some young men that are naturally stepping up and are showing great potential to be future preachers, teachers and leaders within the church. Without these groups, those opportunities would have been lost forever.

One more touching story and then I will move on. There is a young lady in one of the youth groups. I am not going to go into detail, but some very bad things happened to her. She lost all hope and her will to live. Fortunately, she was pulled into a youth group and it is amazing the transformation that has happened in this young girl's life. These groups not only benefit the youth of each church, it can honestly be said that it saved both the physical life and spiritual life of this young lady.

JARAHUECA – MISSION WITHIN THE MISSION To follow up with our Cuban's mission work within their own country. The work has began. Yamirelis found a ride from Palmas Soriano to Jarajueca a couple of Saturdays ago and she took material, information and went further into detail about the EBI program.

Here are her own words telling about the trip (translated of course)

My visit to Jarajueca was a great blessing. It is a congregation that has been established for some years but lacked organization in teams to make the sowing effective and the harvest abundant. Through the EBI project, fundamental advice and strategies were shared with the brothers to strengthen the work team in this congregation. The brothers were very encouraged.

NEW BROTHERS AND SISTERS IN CHRIST!

It wouldn't be a good newsletter if I didn't tell you about our new brothers and sisters. Our students baptized 4 more people in November. I believe that brings this year's total up to 103 baptisms (that we are aware of) this year as of the end of last month (November).

CUBA SCHOOL OF PREACHING An actual on-the-ground school of preaching is starting to become a reality. Our goal was to try and have it going by the end of



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next years. All of the pieces seem to be falling into place much faster and easier than we had anticipated. We found a perfect property that has many of the amenities we were going to have to build/equip already in place, and at a very affordable price. We are going to try and put our down payment on the property when Luis returns in January – more news to come as things develop!!!

WHERE WE WANT TO GO

Right now, we are supporting 7 full-time preachers in Cuba. We think we have a commitment for 3 more, to complete our team goal of 10 starting in 2024. We also want to assist Rolando, Yamirelis and others in creating a formal preacher training program in Cuba. Please look inside your own heart, pray that this can become a reality and pray that God guides us every step of the way. Also, please consider being a part of this project. I can guarantee you that many souls will be saved.

Also, because of your continued support, souls are being added monthly. Thank you so much for giving and praying.

If you want to join in, below is how you can help.

How You Can Help Estudios Bíblicos Internacionales & Cuba Predica/Preach Cuba

First: Remember, we are a privately funded program. Here is how you can help:

The First Street Church of Christ has graciously agreed to handle our donations in the U.S.

TO GIVE, simply go to www.givelify.com , search First Street Church of Christ, enter

the amount and then choose either “EBI - Estudios Bíblicos Internacionales” or “Cuban Preacher Program” or you can mail a check to:

First Street Church of Christ, 201 W 1st Street, Lampasas, TX 76550 – be sure and put “EBI - Estudios Bíblicos Internacionales” or “Cuban Preacher Program” in the memo.

Secondly: You can help with Prayers, Prayers, Prayers!!!

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Please keep this program in your prayers and pray that God can effectively use our students, teachers and everyone involved to carry the Good News throughout Latin America and the world.

May God bless each and every one of you for your support of this program,
Rocky Castleberry

OUR NEW BROTHERS AND SISTERS IN CHRIST – NOVEMBER 2023



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