



December, 2019

The **Shields** Family

Church Planters in Aruba

Dear Praying Friends,

As we look back over this last year we are more convinced every day that it is of "...the LORD'S mercies that we are not consumed, because his compassions fail not. They are new every morning..." Truly His faithfulness is great!

It has been an extremely busy few months; sometimes it feels as if we just go from one thing into the next with not much of an opportunity to switch gears.

We enjoyed the fellowship with the visitors we've had. Since our last letter we've had three families visit; the Foxes and the Carrs from the States, and the Longorias from Mexico. Not only was the time we had to visit special, but their participation in our church was also a great blessing.

We have not had further issues with the owner of our house. Although the problems have not been completely resolved, we've decided it's best just to wait out the contract until April and decide upon a new situation then.

We moved the church in the middle of October, and the building has been extremely tight, but we've managed. There are definitely advantages though, and we thank the Lord for providing this change. Please continue to pray for wisdom as to certain possibilities. The main idea is to move the church in to a "floating tabernacle" made of wood in the back yard and for our family to move in to the house the church is in... in this way we can use one rented place for both things and save a lot of money. At this point the "scary" part is the finances needed to build the "tabernacle" in the back yard. We are planning on using a lot of pallet wood and plywood and trying to give it more of a rustic / cabin look, but between the plywood and tin for the roof we are still talking about a large amount that we do not have at this time. Another aspect to this is the petition we have made to the government for a piece of land – please help us pray for answers from them on this petition.

In the end of November, we had our **third missions conference**. Missionary Jaime Longoria to Panama came from Mexico and preached for us. We are praying that the Lord will continue to use the seed that was planted to make all of us more aware of the souls around us and of the world-wide need of the gospel. We are thankful for the growth and consistency as we start our second year of faith promise here at Berea.

We have asked you to pray for several people in the past and we have been blessed to see several of them come to Christ, and join the church...

- 18 yr-old **Katy** accepted Christ in September, but still please pray for Bruce and Daisy, her siblings, as they are not allowed to come to church.
- Every month we give out a 'charity' basket to a family in need. A few months ago, we gave it to a family that lives in a container. Since then the 14-year-old girl and three of her nieces and nephews have been faithful. We'd appreciate prayers for **Sharine, Dilan, Yusep, and Sarai**.
- **Edison**, a 38 yr-old man received a tract from us about a year ago; he started seeking the Lord 4 months ago and on his first Sunday at church he invited Christ into his life! He is now quickly growing and has become very involved.
- **Damaris** is a middle-aged lady who accepted Christ into her life while on vacations in Colombia. As soon as she came home to Aruba she looked up the church and has become very faithful to services with a desire to grow.

Follow us on Facebook at [Iglesia Bautista Berea de Aruba](#) for pictures and more info!

Traveling for us has been a lot less frequent now that we are in Aruba, but **Matt was blessed to be able to travel to several places these past few months on preaching trips.** The first trip was in the beginning of October. He was taking one of our church youth, Zyon, to Mexico for a three-month mission's trip. While there he preached an Evangelistic conference and two people professed Christ among other decisions. In Mexico, Zyon is doing well, and we can see that he has grown and matured over these months and seems set in the idea of serving the Lord. Matt and Zyon's dad will go bring him home in the middle of January. **Please pray for Jean Pierre**, Zyon's dad, as he is not saved and he will be exposed to much Gospel on this trip; may the Lord work in his heart. Also, **please pray for us and Zyon since he is our first individual here to consider full time service and ministry.** Our two options for preparing him are sending him out to another institute or teaching him here; this second option is our preference but it requires so much time and focus which is already in high demand. *It is times like this that we yearn for another family with which to work as a team! There is so much to do and so little time and so few helpers!*

Next, he went to Iglesia Bautista Ebenezer with Pastor Ezequiel Ramirez in Georgetown, South Carolina to preach at their first missions conference, also in October.

This most recent trip was to Lakeland, Florida for a few days to be at Iglesia Bautista Maranatha with Pastor Pepe Ramirez to participate in the preaching and teaching there for a Pastors/Mission Conference.



On the family side, all is as well as you could expect of a family of 10. We are struggling with several health issues for which we would covet your prayers. The family visas are still on the far horizon and until they become a reality the family still cannot travel. Matt and several of the older children are working side jobs and we constantly struggle to balance, ministry, school, family, and work in a proper way! Of course, we know that many of you know exactly what we mean as you struggle in your own balance with very busy lives also. Thank you for your prayers for each of us... really, we could not "stick to it" as they say if people like each of you were not there to hold us up in prayer and support! **THANK YOU FOR BEING FAITHFUL!**

Christmas this year has been a blessed time with several ministry opportunities. Last Tuesday, about 45 of us went out and sang and ministered at 17 different homes, some of them being new contacts that we are now following up on. Then we had our English Christmas service on the 21st, our Spanish Christmas service on the 22nd, and on the 23rd 14 of us went to the hospital where we sang, prayed and handed out goodies and Gospel of Peace 2020 calendars. Many contacts have been made and much witness has been given – may the Lord give the growth as He sees fit!

As we close this update let me tell you of two more people that you have touched by being a part of this ministry! First was **Isabella** (*a 16 yr-old who has been coming to church with her cousin, brother and sister for about 3 months now*) who professed Christ last week. Also, last night (the 26th) we had a prayer meeting at church and among those who attended we had **Alfredo**, one of our neighbors at the new church building, show up also. After our hour of prayer, we started talking, and he seemed very sincere and serious about his search for Christ. After a while he asked Christ in to his life right there with us all present. What a joy to see a man come to Christ before many people he did not know and on a night that we least expected it to happen! **Praise the Lord!** Please pray for these two and the other new converts as we help them grow in the Scriptures!

May the Lord give you each a blessed new year, and as we start 2020 may it be together in the service of our LORD and KING! Yours in Christ,

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