

The Shields Family

Serving on the Beautiful Island of Aruba

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On the family side, these last few months have been busy and full of growth also. In August Enoch turned 8, and Mercy 6. In November Yosef turned 3, and Enoch 10. In a couple of weeks Matt will turn 38. Naomi is already in the 6th month of pregnancy and just recently we found out that the new baby is a GIRL! We now have 4 boys and 4 girls! Obviously, we are very happy and ask for continued prayers for Naomi's and the baby's health as the last months are always tiring. The kids are advancing in school and growing more every day in service to the Lord. Caleb started working in a grocery store in the mornings, and Matt has also started working part-time to help the financial situation of our home. We are grateful to the Lord for supplying these 'tent-making' opportunities, and for His constant provision. It is not a long term job, and it is very flexible as to the schedule, but we had to do something to alleviate the financial situation.

Dear Spiritual Family,

December, 2018

On behalf of my family, we hope that each one of you is doing well these days and that the blessings of our God are real in your lives, homes, and ministries. Here in Aruba we are happy about the doors of ministry that the Lord has opened these last couple of months and we also want to thank you for being part of this ministry. We can't mention in this letter everything that has been accomplished, but allow me to give you an idea of what God has done for us recently.

In the last two months, we have had two baptismal services, and a few weeks ago we had five adults join Berea's membership. We have a few more that are wanting to join as well. We praise the Lord that He is bringing to Berea those that He would have become a part of our church. Just as every church, we have seen ups and downs in attendance; new people come and stay while others decide for one reason or another to stop coming. We continue to pray for every one of these contacts and do what is possible to encourage them, but we understand that they are in God's hands, and He will perfect His work in them. On that note, **we ask prayer for the following people that are discouraged and have not been attending regularly: José, Camilo, Víctor, Héctor, Génesis, Zaida, Héctor, Orlando, Jessica, y Ryan (among others that we could name.)** Also, there are several new contacts with whom we've been working: **Ramon, Giovanni, Lily, Fausto, Paul, Niurka, Nelson, John, y Norela.**

One of the special points that I would like to emphasize in this letter is our 2nd Missions conference that we had last month with the theme of "Mission Possible." By God's grace, Brother Ryan Goodall, his wife Claudia, and their infant son Levi were here visiting with us from Mexico. The Lord worked through Bro. Ryan in the preaching and teaching. There were many good decisions, and the congregation is more motivated than ever for missions work in the world. We now have 5 missionaries that we support, (2 in México, and one each in Ecuador, Hungary, and the Solomon Islands) and we decided to start using the Faith Promise system to support our missionaries. This past Sunday we registered the promises of everyone, and we are super excited with the results! If we are faithful to the Lord with our promises of faith, we will be able to do much more in God's work in the future and by His grace we can be a small, but real part of evangelism to the lost in the world!

In the month of October, I, Matt, had the opportunity to travel to the States for 3 weeks to preach in several churches. I was involved in services and conferences in 7 different churches, (*some supporting churches, and other new ones*) and the trip was a blessing to my life just as I hope to have been a blessing to the people that I had the privilege of being with. The truth is, I miss traveling like I did in Mexico, and I especially miss the fellowship with other preachers and churches. Occasionally I feel isolated here in Aruba! I'd had plans to be in Mexico this December with the Ángeles family of SLP for the "15 Años" celebration of Keila y Joanna but sadly I will have to miss out on the fellowship and the celebration. We wish a happy and very special day to the twins and the Ángeles family on their special day! We are making plans for me to be in Mexico for May, 2019, without the family, sadly. I am excited to visit my "home land" once again and see many friends and family!

Please pray for us in this month of December as we have many special services and activities programmed with the church and our desire is to see the Lord touch lives through the programs, caroling, and plays, but mostly through the preaching on the theme of the Son of God coming to earth to save sinful man.

'Thank you' to each of you, our family of faith, for your care, messages, and for your prayers. The truth is, this time of year we begin to miss 'home'! We miss family, the Christmas food, and maybe even the cold... well a little bit! When you think of us, please don't forget to pray for us and even to drop us a line once in a while. The time is passing us by so quickly and there is still so much to do! I encourage you to get involved in the work of the Lord, it is the only thing that has eternal value!

Psalms 116:15 says "Precious in the sight of the Lord is the death of His saints." And in these last few weeks we have reason to meditate on these words as we received the news that one of our supporting churches passed on to the with the Lord in the past month. Pastor David Acevedo of Primera Iglesia Bautista in Brooklyn, NY was a faithful servant of the Lord in his local church for many years and I consider it an honor to have known him and been a small part of the outreach of his ministry. Please pray for the Acevedo family and for Primera Iglesia Bautista as they continue on in the absence of this great servant of God.

Your representatives in Aruba and Latin America,
Matthew Shields and Family

Now unto him that is able to keep you from falling,
and to present you faultless before the presence of his glory with exceeding joy,
To the only wise God our Saviour,
be glory and majesty, dominion and power, both now and ever. Amen.

Jude 24, 25

