

I will greatly praise the LORD with my mouth; yea, I will praise him among the multitude.

Psalms 109:30



Greetings in the name of our wonderful Saviour Jesus Christ,

Berea Baptist Church of Aruba had its first service the last Sunday of May 2015 with a small group of believers willing and decided to start a new Independent Baptist Church in Aruba. **This last month we were blessed to celebrate our 4th Anniversary** with the theme of Ebenezer - the Lord has helped us to this day! Our church has been organized and constituted since March 2018, and for our special Sunday of celebration this past month we had 110 people present with another 40 or so church people absent for one reason or another. We praise the Lord for what He has done in these 4 years, and we acknowledge that we could not have come this far without the Lord's help and guidance, and without the backing and support of our sending and supporting churches back in the USA!

As we come to another milestone in our ministry, we as a missionary family would like to give out a shout of appreciation to our sending church in Wayland Missouri. Thank you First Baptist Church family and Pastors Deatrick and Fox for all you have done for us and this church-planting ministry over the years; we are proud to call Wayland home and to be an extension of your ministry! Also, a special thanks to the church staff who help with the handling of our finances year after year; we appreciate you all very much!

As Naomi reported to you in our last letter, I (Matt) was blessed to travel to Mexico for about 20 days in the month of May. It was a special treat to visit family and friends that I had not seen in years, and I was especially privileged to preach in 10 different churches in 3 different states. As far as I know there were **two people who professed Christ** as their Saviour and many different decisions along the lines of service and surrender. Our family misses Mexico very much... a part of our life and heart will always be there, but we are in peace with the knowledge that we are in the center of the Lord's will here in

Aruba.

Here at Berea Baptist we are amazed and humbled by how the Lord continues to bring in new visitors at least once a week. The abundance of contacts and opportunities that have opened up are a blessing and a challenge as we try to follow up on each lead. Of the more recent, **please pray for Maria, Antonia, Socorro, Rene, Jesus, Wanderly, Alberto, Joseline, Joliet, Silvia, Olga, Janixio, Gabriela, and Nelson, among others!** Please pray for these names as many of them have not made a clear profession of salvation that we know of, and **especially pray for Jaime as he has been coming for 4 months now and seems so close to making a decision!** Also, we have seen several families and adults come back to regular church attendance in the last few months - families that we thought we had "lost." Praise the Lord for how He works in hearts and for the knowledge that it is not "our work" or "our people," it is HIS work and HIS people, and HE will bring it about in HIS perfect way and time (Phil. 1:6).

On the family front, there are many blessings to report also. It seems like every one of our children are growing quicker than we would like to admit! Belen is now 14 weeks old and already rolled over!!! Each of our kids work alongside us in the ministry and seem to do it with a true heart of service to the Lord and others. Caleb, Tirsa, and Selah are some of our regular teachers in children's classes, Caleb preached his first sermon last month, Enoch and Judah are two of our regular song leaders, and several of them play instruments in each service also. The kids are mostly finished with the school year but still have a few weeks to finish up. As missionaries our home schedule is rough and tight, there is rarely a day without a church related activity, so school takes a hit many a time! Health wise the children are well, and Naomi and I have had our bouts with colds, and a few other issues. Prayer for my Crohn's condition would be appreciated as it seems to be flaring up again. Caleb is still working 5 hours a day in a grocery store, and I am working 5 - 6 hours each morning in construction. The girls are selling cookies and brownies in the street once in a while, and sea-glass jewelry at a hotel once a week. We are all pitching in as a family, and it is a blessing to see the Lord piece each month's finances together step by step! Paul said in **Acts 20:34** *"Yea, ye yourselves know, that these hands have ministered unto my necessities, and to them that were with me."* And although I never thought we would be working a side-job on the mission field, I must say that it is a blessing to know that we as a family can do our part to keep the work here in Aruba going strong!

Thank you to each of you as individuals and as churches for praying for us and for each dollar of support and message or email sent our way! We treasure each supporting church and ministry that stands beside us in the church-planting ministry that the Lord has called us to. We would like to welcome Lighthouse Baptist Church in North Tonawanda, NY to our support team! Thank you, Lighthouse Baptist, for your decision to stand with us in support. It is an honor to stand with you in ministry.

Before I sign off let me ask you to pray for several decisions and projects that we have ahead of us...

1. Permits - my fourth permit is in the immigration office, and the hope is that as soon as it comes out I can apply for a family visa and finally legalize the children so that we can be settled on that end and so that we can travel as a family to the USA next year to visit our churches.

2. Summer activities - we have many extra activities throughout the summer, but one of the largest is our VBS the first week of August. We have a good team of church people ready to help here at Berea, but we so desire to see the Lord touch lives as He has each year in the past.

3. Visits to Aruba - as always we are excited to receive visitors and in the next few months, we have several planned visits from the USA. Please pray that each visit might be a blessing for all involved.

4. Aruban Intern to Mexico - In October we have a young man (Zyon Geerman - 16) who is going to Mexico to work with my brother, Missionary Andrew Shields in Chiapas Mexico, for 3 months. Zyon has never left the Caribbean so it will be an amazing experience for him! I and his parents will be taking him to MX in October then going to pick him up in January. Aside from praying for the success of his internship and the Lord's leading in his heart please help us pray for the finances involved... it is around \$3,500 just in plane tickets!

5. Church Property - in Aruba there are several ways to get property, although none are easy nor cheap! We as a church are making a petition to the government for a piece of property here in the next few months. This petition could sit on a shelf for years, or we could get a response in weeks... we truly desire the Lord's will in this.

6. San Nicolas - on the South side of the Island we have been offered a small building at a good rent price, and tomorrow (Saturday, 13th) we will be looking at the building. If it is the right place, we will be renting the it in order to start an English mission site. This of course would be a step up in responsibilities, expenses, schedules, and outreach. Please pray with us about this, and if anyone wants to give to this project, one immediate need we will have is chairs... it is about 10 dollars a chair if anyone wants to help with this need.

Again, thank you for your love and support of Missions and specifically of this ministry. We look forward to the day that we can see many of you, and until then please know that we are praying for you and think of you often.

Until all have heard,
Matt for the 10 Shields in Aruba
II Corinthians 3:18