



The Shields Family

Church Planters in Aruba

Dear Fellow Servants of the Most High,

I hope each of you are enjoying a wonderful Christ-filled Christmas as you receive our update. Seems like each year you can see Christ less and less in Christmas celebrations all around. Our desire is to point to Jesus every day of the year, but especially at this time in which we remember His birth, we seek to bring Christ to the forefront of every activity, decoration, and service. May the Lord bring you many opportunities this season to point to Him and shine His light into a dark world!

In this end of the year report, we want to let you know how the different ministries have gone and what we have on our near horizon. In these last few months, we were blessed to have the Hershberger Family with us until early November, Pastor Titus Palmer and Brother Larry from PA in October, Pastor Aaron Rodgerson and his family from MO in Nov, and Pastors Stacey Shiflett and James Leeder from MD in Dec. As always there is a lot happening between the two churches, the new mission, and all the other ministries, and then on top of that this is a busy time of the year with many extra ministry outreaches. Here is an attempt to put it all in a list:

- During the first week of December, we had our 5th Missions Conference here at Berea, and the Lord really blessed us through the Preaching of Pastor Shiflett and Pastor Leeder. Several of our older teens are seriously looking at full-time service to the Lord!
- All through October and November we worked hard to get the building in San Nicolas ready (this is the new mission on the south side of the island). Over \$30,000 has already been received and invested in the building renovation! It has been an incredible thing to watch as the Lord provides finances for each step of the way. There is still much to do... rooms to tile, false ceilings to install, walls to fix, pillars to repair, sound system to buy, and then we start on the office and church kitchen. We have mostly finished the prophets chamber and soon will need to furnish it with the basics too. Several have asked about the remodeling and if you want a specific project to get involved in, reach out to me and you could choose to get behind any of these projects. A special thank you to all the churches and work teams who have made possible the renovations up to this point, whether it was funds, tools, or a work crew, thank you for allowing the Lord to use you as a blessing to this ministry and missionary! As to the spiritual side of the ministry at the new mission (which we have named New Hope Baptist) we have been having services for 6 weeks now with visitors almost every time. Please pray with us for the Lord to touch hearts in San Nicolas!

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- Doors have remained open for our by-weekly ministry to the Illegal holding facility on the island. Every other Saturday we have about 3 hours to preach to the men in this facility. We have seen from 16 to 40 men in this place and have had quite a few make decisions for Christ over these last few months. The down side is that once they are sent home, we lose contact with most of them. On Saturday the 24th we have an open door to provide these men a Christmas meal and a gift bag to each man, and of course we get to preach to them and hope to see some more come to Christ! Also pray for the guards, many of them are anti-Christian and have actually been against us doing this, but recently they all come to together on our way out and ask us to pray over them before we leave. I love seeing the Lord work in lives and break down barriers!
- Last week there was a Christmas Tree Lighting Fair on the south side of Aruba and we were allowed to set up two booths in which we gave out Bible verse plaques to be painted for free, and of course we handed out hundreds of tracts and talked to many people. We already had one lady visit the church from a tract she received that night! An extra perk was that the Prime Minister of Aruba came by our table as her grandson painted a plaque and several of us were able to speak with her and remind her that we often pray for her and the parliament members.
- During these Christmas weeks we have been Christmas caroling and having activities with the church teens and the children's Bible Club. Two weeks ago, a young man that we have know for 3 years asked Jesus to save him after club and his family has been coming to church faithfully since then. This past Friday we were able to do something new and different. We were allowed a platform at a public park area for two hours. We sang Christmas songs, read the Christmas story, and gave out tracts and free Christmas goodies. It was another good step in making a presence in the community and the Gospel was given in several ways. We have more Christmas services and meals in the next 10 days, so again, please pray for the Lord to touch hearts!
- In our daily 2-hour radio broadcast we have continued to see the Lord work. Every week we hear from someone on the phone or internet, and quite often I am approached by people on the street who say they recognize my voice because they hear our Bible program.
- In my opinion one of the most important steps in the ministry is the discipleship of new believers. At this time, we have several individual classes and then a larger class on Mondays for anyone who wants to come. One of our newer ladies is in this class with her brother and she was just baptized this past Sunday. After her baptism her comment was that now there was only 7 more siblings to be reached for the Lord! Praise the Lord for reaching families one person at a time!
- The Tuesday night English class is doing well also, there is a faithful group of students every week and several of the students have actually shown up to a church service. We are thankful for the Sisters from New York who have faithfully held this ministry together with some of our local Sisters.

As to the family, all is well. Each child is growing and taking steps day by day. Two of our children have made decisions as to their salvation and Mercy was just baptized last week. We are still horribly behind in school, but considering this past calendar year it is really no surprise. Caleb seems to be doing well in PCC as he is wrapping up his first semester and heading to Missouri for his Christmas break to swap out clothes and tie up some loose ends from the summer. Tirsia is now working at a Chinese grocery store 4 hours every morning and is in her last year of high-school; please pray for her as she is trying to prepare for going to the USA full-time next August. All of the older kids play an instrument, help with special music, lead music, teach classes, and the girls lead the children's club on Saturday mornings. Over the last 3 months we were blessed to have one of our nieces with us from Mexico; Kelia (19) jumped right in and helped in any way she could. It was sad to see her head back home this past week, she will be missed. Naomi and I are also well, we are probably busier than we "should" be and we are starting to feel the "forties" in different ways, however we are blessed to be serving together and pouring ourselves in to a cause that is eternal and Christ-honoring! Thank you for your prayers for us and to each of our supporters for your faithfulness and generosity in upholding your part in this ministry and endeavor in Aruba. Please know that you are appreciated and prayed for often!

Yours for the Cause of Christ,

Matt Shields and Family

Eph. 3:20, 21



Our first time to go door knocking around the new mission in San Nicolas! The Lord is opening doors!

Christmas Caroling for some of our shut-ins. Such a sweet time of fellowship!

Christmas Fair – many people passed through our booth, painted a Bible verse plaque, and received a tract and a smile!



We praise the Lord that several more churches have chosen to partner with us in ministry in this past year! Some of the last few to take us on as one of their missionaries are:

Victory Baptist Church in SC with Pastor Frank Camp

Round Praire Baptist Church in IA with Pastor Kevin Dice

Riverview Baptist Church in WA with Pastor John Paisley

Shining Light Baptist Church in GA with Pastor Tim Mason

Thanks to each of our new supporting churches for choosing to stand with us in ministry! We love you and pray for you often!

Continue in prayer, and watch in the same with thanksgiving; Withal praying also for us, that God would open unto us a door of utterance, to speak the mystery of Christ

Col. 4:2,3