

The TGCBI
Herald



**A Branch of
Sunset International
Bible Institute**

Editor
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THIS ISSUE
Back from Israel!
Church Planting
Continues
Pedro and Silvia
del Pozo
Charity Blast!



Sea of Galilee, near Capernaum

*“I will not forget you!
See, I have engraved
you on the palms of my
hands. Your walls are
ever before me.”
God, speaking of
Jerusalem*

Back from Israel!

From June 18-29, 16 people from the TGCBI and Houston-area churches bonded in our first trip to Israel.

Six students, wives, and/or administrators from the school went, and also people from the Watters Road, Champions, Kingwood, Woodland Oaks, and Lawndale congregations. In addition, we were joined there by a minister of the Independent Christian Churches and his son, who is a missionary in Turkish Cyprus.

In spite of the normal anxiety about going to an area that is a perceived “hot spot”, we had a completely safe trip. No one kidnapped, arrested, threatened, fell off cliffs, got injured or lost or even sick!

Seriously, the logistics and itinerary of the trip went very smoothly—great hotels, food, and transportation; a wonderful guide with a sincere faith, encyclopedic knowledge, and 30 years experience; and safe travel.

By my count, we saw at least 56 different sites. Everyone had their favorites, and of course spots like the Garden of

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Gethsemane and the Sea of Galilee were among them.



Group on Mount of Olives, overlooking the east wall of Jerusalem

We shared devotionals every night, led by different men from the group. We got to know each other very well, and I learned to count to 16 very well, and quickly!

We saw sites from Dan and Beersheba.



Dan high places



Old Beersheba

And we saw sites from the New Testament, like the Garden of Gethsemane, and Caiaphas' house.



Garden of Gethsemane



Statue of Peter's denial, House of Caiaphas, with Old City and Garden of Gethsemane in far background

We saw the Jordan River and the Jezreel Valley.



Jordan River



Jezreel Valley

We walked a lot—probably 3-5 miles a day. And it was HOT—I heard later that a heat wave had conveniently arrived a day or so after we got there, and accompanied us the whole time. We didn't see a cloud for 12 days, but we did see temperatures as high as 113 in some spots. We even wandered in the desert for about 40 minutes one day, near the Jericho Road. I told the group later it was so we could be like the Israelites in their wanderings.

However, I told them that they were not like the Israelites in one important aspect—they didn't complain, murmur, or grumble. It was a wonderful group that enjoyed and supported each other. We were blessed to have shared this experience together.

Our goal at the school, apart from sharing all this together, was to help our students have the experience of seeing and doing this trip early in their ministries, so that they can benefit from it for the next several decades in their teaching and preaching.

Already several have expressed interest in going back, and/or getting others to go on the next trip. We have tentatively scheduled that trip for June of 2009. If you'd like for us to put your name on the list of those interested in going, please let me know, at the emails listed on the first page of this bulletin. And start saving today!

Church Planting Progresses

The work of planting and nurturing churches continues as our students move ahead in their studies. They have now taken courses on church planting, leadership, small groups, and

church growth. Other courses will follow.

Dimas Velasquez continues to work in the Impact congregation, where he is an elder. There are currently two cell groups functioning, with more planned. Dimas is also beginning to offer classes and sessions in basic counseling for couples and families in need.

Renzo Mayorga has plugged in well at Clear Lake. Although his first emphasis is on his studies, Renzo has made many friends and contacts at the Clear Lake church and in the Clear Lake area. He helps teach the youth class and has participated in several church events. He also has formed a soccer team, largely of non-Christians who are interested in playing. He hopes to take advantage of those contacts in order to begin to invite them to the church and study the Bible.



Clear Lake soccer team

Giovanni Mendoza continues to work in the Alvin area. He helps lead a Sunday morning Bible class, a Wednesday night ESL class, and also is trying to organize a soccer team at Alvin. In addition, he will help invite people to a series of family seminars that Ignacio will give each month in the area.

The church in Alvin has embraced this work and been very helpful in trying to establish

a bridge between English and Spanish-speaking members or possible members. The Southeast church is also considering ways they can be involved in the work, as they help support Giovanni.

Julio and Fior Beitia are now working in the Baytown area, with members of the Missouri Street and Lakewood congregations. At a school supplies distribution last August, the church there had over 1200 possible contacts. In addition, the benevolence ministry in the area has also produced contacts, and Julio and Fior are following up on all these. And of course, the small group with leaders of these congregations continues each weekend.

Please pray for each of these student evangelists and their wives as they move ahead in the important work. At times, the work can proceed slowly, without apparent or immediate results. At times, new methods have to be tried. At times, problems arise with some of the contacts or groups. All of these are normal growing pains, and it's normal to be discouraged or frustrated at times.

But we believe that since God has opened doors of opportunity for us in these places, he will continue to guide and sustain all of us. Please pray that we will be faithful in the work, in prayer, in planning, and in action.

Online Program Foundation Laid

A key part of the foundation for our online DVD Bible study program is now in place. At the end of May, Pedro and Silvia del Pozo graduated from the Quito School of Biblical Studies, and returned to their home in Buenos Aires, Argentina to begin to work with the online project.



Pedro and Silvia del Pozo

Pedro was baptized in 1992, and since that time has participated in the Caballito congregation in Buenos Aires in worship, small groups, church activities, and men's activities. He has excellent computer skills, a quick grasp of technology, and the ability to articulate and communicate his beliefs well.

His wife, Silvia, originally from Uruguay, has been a Christian since 1983, and has also been actively and tirelessly involved in ladies' and church activities both in Uruguay and Argentina, such as the music and choral ministry. She also has computer and graphic design skills.

In 2004, Pedro and Silvia took a step of faith to move to Quito, Ecuador to prepare themselves with the three-year ministry training program at the school. Part of what they did there, in addition to local church work and school work, was to help in the online correspondence courses which the Quito school offers. They did well, and saw the potential the Internet has to multiply contacts and train people at a distance.

When I spoke with them about helping with a DVD Bible study program online, it seemed that several threads came together—technology, ministry preparation, and evangelism and Bible study. Now they will begin

to help prepare our video courses, and those of others, to be put online in a simple, usable format for all of Latin America.. We are trying to coordinate this effort with the Sunset International Bible Institute, who through Rudy Wray and Jorge Pineda want to do the same thing as we do. Within a short time, we hope to have more than 15 courses available for church leaders and members who might live in remote areas of countries with no access to training. Now with this program they can be trained, encouraged, and connected.

We are also trying to raise funds for Pedro and Silvia's salary and work fund. We have about four months salary so far. You may want to give a one-time gift, or perhaps a small monthly amount for the first two years.. If you would like to help, please contact Steve Austin at austin@tgcbi.org.

Charity Blast!

Two questions. First, do you buy anything online? Second, would you like to do so and help the TGCBI at no extra cost? This is possible in three easy steps.

Step 1: Go to www.charityblast.com



Step 2: Select the TGCBI from the dropdown menu of organizations there. Bookmark this page for easier access later.



Step 3: Select the merchant you want to buy from and go! A part of your purchase will be automatically sent to us, at no extra cost or hassle to you!



Thank you for your help.

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