



The

Shields

Family

Church Planters in Aruba

Dear Brethern,

Hoping each of you are well and very thankful for your time spent in reading and praying over our ministerial report. Praise the Lord with us for all He has and is doing here in Aruba!

These last few months have been a roller-coaster of decisions, information, and many blessings! We started out this 2024 with the possibility of making a down payment on a piece of property and by the Lord's grace we saw enough money come in to not only pay the property in full, but also to cover all the taxes and fees, and to our amazement we have even been able to clear it and start the process for water, electric, and sewage! We serve an awesome God and are part of His amazing family! If you are interested in seeing the pictures of the changes on the property you can see the attached pictures or go to our Facebook page and see the pictures and videos as we added them. Again, thank you so much to all the churches and individual who stepped in and has become a part of what the Lord is doing in this piece of property! Several have asked about the next few steps on the project... it will take a few months to get the corners on the land marked by the government officials, to get a temporary construction electric installation, and for the water contract to come through, however, we have started the ball rolling and are going through the proper channels and steps. Please help us pray about the design and building plans. We need to find a good, government sanctioned architect here in Aruba and put our ideas down on paper and then hope they get approved. And then of course there is the aspect of the finances... we plan of building as the money comes in. We do not want to go into debt to build and we do not plan on building fancy. At this point we are seeking to build a sanctuary for around 250 people and a multi-use building for classes, fellowship hall, and bathrooms. Obviously, we will start with the sanctuary first and take it from there. We are excited to think that the property can hold a parsonage, dorms, and maybe even a larger fellowship area that can double as a 2nd sanctuary for the English services (*that way we can have English and Spanish services at the same time*) and other activities. We will have a running account for the construction backed up by receipts as we use it, so if anyone feels led to give our Berea Family a hand in the construction that we are about to start, please feel free to do so. There is still have a long way to go before we are sitting in our new building, but it will be an exciting journey to watch the Lord work!

We started a new children's Bible club in a new area called DeVoyst on the south extreme of the island. We take a team over every Saturday evening and have had an average of about 25 kids each week. They are mostly street kids who have never been to church, so it has been a rough start. Finally last week they sat through a short Bible lesson for the 1st time! Please pray for these kids as we try to touch their lives with the Gospel.

April-June 2024

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In these last few months we have had some of our biggest outreach activities of the year, such as Mother's and Father's Day. We had almost 70 mothers in for the Mother's Day service and over 30 men for the Father's Day one. These events are wonderful in that many people who never go to church or who have quit coming to church visit us for the event and it gives us an opportunity to have renewed contact with them and their families. Seeds are planted, and we pray the Lord will continue to work in hearts.

In June Berea held its 9th Anniversary. We were blessed to have Evangelist Paul Schwanke with us as our speaker and the anniversary was closed with the wonderful surprise of 6 people who trusted Christ! Five of them were people that we have been dealing with within our church group and one was a visiting lady from Bonaire (a neighboring island.) Praise the Lord we have also seen several other adults come to Christ in these last few months and then there have been several groups of believers follow the Lord in believers' baptism. It is always exciting to see brethren stand up on a public beach and profess their faith in Christ before their community!

In April we had our Family Camp with around 60 people. Pastor Alan Gonzalez from Zacatecas, Mexico was the speaker, and the theme was on purity with a focus on pornography. Next week we have our Teen Camp with the theme of "Against the Current"; we look forward to having a good group of teens this year with many decisions and blessings!

The Lord has blessed us above and beyond in this season with added help. On top of the young people that work on staff with us here at Berea, we have been privileged to have Chuy and Xochitl Chavarria from Mexico with us for 7 weeks. Chuy and Xochitl jumped right in and have been a huge blessing and encouragement to our people and us. One of the special privileges for us is that Xochitl is a fruit of our ministry in Zacatecas... it is wonderful to see her married and serving the Lord full-time! Also, the Hershberger family arrived here two weeks ago to be with us for 3 months! Brother Jeremiah and Sister Ambre with their 7 children have been here before, so they know the ministry pretty well and have simply stepped right back in wherever they can help. It has been wonderful to have so much help during these busy days and yet it is sad to realize that it is all temporary help... we pray for the day the Lord will raise up full-time workers for Aruba! So far this year we have had 8 different groups of visitors and there are several more lined up for the rest of 2024, we praise the Lord for the interest in coming to visit our ministry and appreciate the time invested in coming to Aruba. Our prayer is that the Lord will use these visits to stir our people's hearts and to awaken passion for missions in those visiting.

A highlight for our family these last few months was an opportunity to go visit Pasto, Colombia! Missionary Matt Smith and his family invited 10 of us to serve with them for a week. It was a very busy week in which we were able to see all four churches and the Bible Institute on top of admiring the beautiful sights of South Colombia. Our hearts were knit even tighter with the Smiths, and we fell in love with the people and the need in Colombia... truly the "harvest is plenteous"! Please pray for the "Colombia's" of the world; so many places, so much to do, so few willing to go! **Will YOU?**

As to the family, this last May we were blessed to see Tirsa graduate from Ambassador Baptist College with her 1 year Bible degree. She is working in NC and plans on coming home for 5 or 6 months this fall. Caleb just finished his 2nd year at PCC and is currently working as a counselor at the Camp of the Pines for the summer. Selah has finished her Highschool and is prepping for going on to the next level next year in the USA. Enoch, Judah, Mercy, Yosef, and Belen are all well and growing. They are all heavily involved in all three of our churches and are maturing each in their own way and stage. Naomi and I are well also. We love watching our family grow and are excited and yet anxious for all that the future holds. Matt's Dad, Rick, had a quadruple open heart surgery this April and we praise the Lord that he is recuperating bit by bit. Your prayers for Brother Shields are greatly appreciated. The Deitrick's celebrated their 50th wedding anniversary in May and the Shields are celebrating theirs this month of July, we praise the Lord for parents who have been faithful to Him, faithful to each other, and faithful to their families and ministries! We have a wonderful legacy to live up to!

Thank you so much for your faithful praying and giving, you are an encouragement to us and an example that keeps us faithfully serving here. May the Lord give you great returns for your investments in the cause of missions! Don't forget that you can find us on Facebook (MattNaomi Shields) and on our webpage (Shields2Aruba.com).



Before...



After!



Chuy and Xochitl



Baptisms!

