



MENNONITE *Air* MISSIONS

New Members in San Cristobal

Sunday, November 22, 2015 was a day anticipated by the congregation of Emanuel in San Cristobal. On this day the Cristal family received God's blessing to be part of the Emanuel church. The service began at 9:30 a.m. Brother Jeremiah gave a welcome and a prayer. Brother Jerlin led three hymns. After this Brother Harold Kauffman gave a message about receiving members and mentioned the requirements to be received into the church. We should not be like Diotrefes but as Apollos. Everyone in the church has a purpose for the edifying of the church of Christ according to Ephesians 4:11-14. At the end

he sang the chorus "When we all work together."

After the message Brother Rafael Segura spoke on baptism from Matthew 28:19, and the importance of making disciples of Jesus and baptizing them. He talked about the blessing of being cleansed by the blood of Christ. It cleanses our consciences from dead works to serve the living God. He reminded us that baptism itself does not save us but is a pledge of a good conscience toward God.

Victor Ovalle continued the service by announcing those who had finished instruction class and

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The newly received brethren with Victor and Anita Ovalle and Jeremias and Elida Mendez



EDITORIAL

Benj Martin

Lawyer, Priest, and King

We Christians sometimes fail in some aspects of our Christian walk, which leaves us feeling helpless, guilty, and futile. I was recently studying for a message and was impressed at what the Bible says about this. In 1 John 2:1 we find that *"If any man sin, we have an advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous."* Notice two key words: advocate and righteous. An advocate is someone who pleads another's cause; a lawyer. Righteous means acting in a just, upright manner.

Jesus is the One who pleads our cause and always acts in a just and upright manner. Reflecting on this, I remembered Hebrews 7:19-22. *"For the law made nothing perfect, but the bringing in of a better hope did; by the which we draw nigh unto God. And inasmuch as not without an oath he was made priest: (For those priests were made without an oath; but this with an oath by him that said unto him, The Lord swear and will not repent, Thou art a priest for ever after the order of Melchisedec:) By so much was Jesus made a surety of a better testament."*

So who was this Melchisedec and why is Christ's ministry likened to his? In Hebrews 7:2 we find insight into who Melchisedec was. *First being by interpretation King of righteousness, and after that also King of Salem, which is, King of peace.* This speaks of a righteous king of peace, which got me interested in the reference about the Lord swearing and not repenting.

I began reading in Psalm 110:4, *"The LORD hath sworn, and will not repent, Thou art a priest for ever after the order of Melchisedek."*

So we see both a priest and king, something not allowed for the Jewish kings. King Uzziah disobeyed the law by stepping into a priest's role of serving in the temple and got leprosy for his pains.

A priest was the spiritual leader of Israel, dealing with sin and leading in worship. A king is someone who demands loyalty and is sovereign over all. We have looked at passages which point out that Christ was king as well as priest.

Did Jesus ever do work in the temple? Well, the closest thing I could find was the housecleaning in

Matthew 21:12. In verse 23 the rulers asked Him by what authority He did these things. He answered with a question: *"I also will ask you one thing, which if you tell me, I like wise will tell you by what authority I do these things. The baptism of John, whence was it? from heaven, or of men?"*

Jesus insinuated by His question that His baptism was where He received His authority. In Matthew 3:15, Jesus said, *"Suffer it to be so now: for thus it becometh us to fulfil all righteousness."*

We find that Jesus received His authority in the correct manner, especially if we remember that John, who baptized Jesus, was a Levite, the son of a priest. If we then name Jesus our Lawyer, our Priest, and our King, it suddenly comes together. He did it, and does it, the right way. God said, *"This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased."* What better testimony do we need? Let's get on our knees and give our cause—and our failings—to Jesus our Lawyer, Priest, and King.

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were ready to proceed to the next step. Karen Cristal was baptized and Maritza Batz was taken in as a member. Maritza had been part of an evangelical church in Tecpan. Then Timoteo Cristal was received as an active member after having been excommunicated for several years. Finally Romelia, Edwin, William, Mary, Lily, and Susy Cristal were welcomed as active members. The service ended with a prayer by Brother Harold.

It was a great blessing to be part of this activity, and it is by the mercy of God. *"Hitherto hath the LORD helped us."* It was a joyful time for the family and for the church. Approximately 200 people attended.

After the service the brethren from Emanuel welcomed the new members. A delicious lunch of stew,

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rice, potato salad, and tamales was served by the Cristal family.

After lunch, everyone stayed to view photos that

Brother Victor had taken on his trip to Israel.

We wish God's blessing to each of those who supported us in your prayers and with advice and encouragement over this time. We ask an interest in your continued prayers.

Edwin Cristal

A Brief History of the Joya Grande Mission

The story of the Joya Grande work begins in the seventies, during the early years of the Chimaltenango mission. As an evangelistic effort, a prison ministry was begun. A group of believers, along with missionary personnel, would go into the local prison on Sunday afternoons and hold a service for the inmates—some group singing, an evangelistic message, an invitation, and a closing prayer. One man who responded was Pablo Mux, who was awaiting trial for a crime that he had supposedly committed in a drunken state. It is not certain that he was guilty, but he was eventually sentenced to seven years in a penitentiary near Quetzaltenango.

Pablo repented of his sins, put his faith in Christ, and began to grow in the faith. Periodic visits were made to the penitentiary and private instruction classes were begun. He persevered and was eventually baptized there in prison.

After his release, Pablo began to seek church

fellowship for his family. He began to attend services in Chimaltenango. After a time a mission outreach was begun closer to his home area in Puerto Abajo, near Zaragoza. Rogelio Pichiyá, a minister from Chimaltenango, was instrumental in heading up this work. Before long, people from the surrounding area began attending services and a church was born.

In the early eighties a civil war was in progress in Guatemala, and there was much turmoil in Pablo's home area. He decided to move his family from his abode in Paraxaj to the village of Joya Grande. In time, the group divided and a church was planted in Joya Grande as well as in the town of Zaragoza. The church was named *La Nueva Jerusalén*, and at the request of the group it came under the auspices of Mennonite Air Missions. Ezequiel Mux, Pablo's son, was ordained as a minister to this congregation.

However, all was not well. Ezequiel and his

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The chapel in Joya Grande.

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family left the church and joined a Pentecostal church nearby. Because of this, help was needed to provide leadership for the Joya Grande church. Unfortunately, the brotherhood there was not yet strong enough for another brother to be ordained to the ministry. So leadership was provided by missionaries and lay brethren from the capital, who traveled for Sunday and mid-week services. Two missionary families lived in Joya Grande at two different times: Wesley King's family from 1995 to 1997, and Andrew Crider's family in 2008 and 2009. Over the years Jorge Ávila, Elías Molina, and Walter Flores have led out in the work there. Bishop leadership was provided by Duane Eby, Levi Martin, and Mark Gingerich, respectively.

About two years after Ezequiel left the church, he returned and was eventually received again as a member. With renewed zeal and vision, he was a real asset to the congregation. However, his wife and family did not join him. His wife attends Sunday morning services but has not followed his example or supported the church standards.

In recent years two couples from the Chimaltenango area began to attend and eventually became members of the congregation. One couple is Domingo and Berta Estrada. He is one of the Estrada brothers who settled in El Chal for a few years in the seventies, through which *that* work was begun. (But that is another story.) After Domingo and Berta had been members of another denomination for some thirty years, they have come full circle in their journey and once again are fulfilled and established in the truth of God's Word. Sadly though, as happens in many similar cases, they have lost their children to the more popular and worldly churches of the area.

There are presently about four faithful men in the Joya Grande congregation, including Pablo, who is now in his eighties. Although his health is failing, he is still a staunch brother in the church and is looked up to as the patriarch of the group. The other three

brethren take part in the services by moderating, song leading, teaching Sunday school, or taking their turn giving the message.

A few months ago, the need for continued leadership was discussed in a series of member's meetings. By unanimous decision of the membership, it was decided to commission Ezequiel as a church leader. But as he lacked one of the qualifications of a minister because his wife does not share his zeal and vision, it was felt that he could not hold the office of a pastor. But as the need was great for someone to take the leadership and be "in charge," he was commissioned on August 2 as superintendent of the congregation.

Since Mark and Norma Gingerich had decided to return to Canada, it was decided that Brother Victor Ovalle would serve as bishop in Joya Grande. A special service held on October 4 doubled as a farewell for Mark and Norma and a welcoming service for Victor and Anita. Victor was installed as their new bishop with a dedicatory prayer.

Please pray for the ongoing work in Joya Grande, that the light of the glorious Gospel of Christ may shine in that community; and that His servants may continue faithful to the end.

Mark Gingerich

New Worker

Zachary Morgan began his term of service in Guatemala at the end of October. He plans to work beside Galen Miller in the church work of Porvenir, in the southeastern part of Guatemala. They plan to move there from the city shortly.



Zachary Morgan

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