

THE CERNAS NEWSLETTER



August 2021

Dear praying friends,

It is with much praise to our Lord that we write to you this month. Many things have happened since the last time we shared news with you. Our small trip (about three weeks) to the West Coast to visit family, and some supporting churches, was an enormous blessing. We are also thankful for how God continues to guide us as a church, even in the midst of our absence and the global pandemic.

It had been almost 12 years since we had gone to the West Coast. By God's grace, we were able to get together with my parents, sisters and their children. For the first time ever, my parents were able to take a picture with all nine of their grandchildren. I'm thankful that my parents are still with us, and are relatively healthy. We are especially thankful for my sisters Wendy (Connecticut) and Olga (Oregon) who are serving the Lord, and are raising their children in the Lord.

Being on the West Coast, we were able to visit three churches. Two of these churches are particularly special to me because I used to be a member of them. Greater Portland Baptist Church (Portland, OR) is our sending church, and where my mother and Olga are members. Berean Baptist Church (Rohnert Park, CA) is where I was born again (1990), and had the opportunity to serve the Lord for several years. It was such a blessing to catch up with old friends at both of these churches, and to see how God is still graciously carrying them along after all these years. We also had the blessing of visiting Willamette Valley Baptist Church (Oregon), who have faithfully supported us in ministry for over 17 years.

While in the States, we received news that one of the first members of our church here in Santa Ana became ill with Covid. A few days after we came back to El Salvador, the Lord decided to take him to heaven. Gustavo Bonilla rededicated his life to Christ shortly after we met him 13 years ago. He was 65 years old at the time, and had lived outside of God's will for over thirty years. From 1976 to 2008 he lived in the United States. His addiction to alcohol had almost claimed his life in 2005. In 2008 he decided to come back to El Salvador, thinking that he would die shortly after. It was within that month that he came back to El Salvador, and that we moved to Santa Ana, that we met him. Although Gustavo was someone that the world would consider weak and foolish, he became a powerful witness for Christ. Naturally very shy, God gave him the strength to overcome that. In fact, Gustavo became my main evangelism partner, and together we were able to witness to a countless amount of people over the years. He will be greatly missed. However, there are other members that have learned from Gustavo, taking the baton, and are becoming better witnesses for Christ.

Our children greatly enjoyed their time with their cousins. We made the decision to allow Rosa to remain in the States with family for an additional 6 weeks with the idea of preparing her for college in two years. Our hope is that she will slowly become more acclimated to US culture, and start deciding what she would like to do with her future. Please pray for Rosa, as she is learning a lot and thinking about her future. She will return to El Salvador in October. Since we have begun homeschooling, we have switched to the US schedule. This means that the school year starts this week. Pray for us as we begin a new school year with our children. Pray that we will use this opportunity to grow spiritually and intellectually. Once again, thank you for your faithful prayers and support. Yours in Christ,

The Cernas