

SUMMER
NEWSLETTER

Bethel on Mission

PRAY... GIVE....GO...

2024

Guadalajara Student Trip

BY Kevin Sherman

This past Spring Break the student ministry at Bethel sent a team to minister to the people of Guadalajara, Mexico. Our team partnered with IMB missionaries on-site to reach the people of Guadalajara with the gospel of Jesus Christ and plug them into a local church so they could grow in their faith. The major focus of this trip was evangelism, and the students did an amazing job of stepping out and sharing their faith. The people in the city are incredibly open and willing to talk, which led to several deep spiritual conversations and many decisions for Christ. Our students got to experience one of the most beautiful cities in Mexico and shared the gospel every step of the way.

Please pray for the people of Guadalajara, as the team that is still present in the city continues to minister. Throughout the week the students gave out several Gospel of John booklets with a bookmark that had contact information for the IMB missionaries. The missionaries let us know that their phone number was contacted many times by those who had professed faith in Christ and those who still had questions. Our students were faithful to begin a good work that the team in Guadalajara is seeking to faithfully continue. Please pray that the impact made by our team will be one that echoes into eternity



ALL FOR HIS GLORY: WHAT GOD IS DOING AT FAITH EMMANUEL BAPTIST CHURCH

By: Emma Davies

In June of this year, Bethel sent out a team to Toronto, Canada to serve alongside our sister church, Faith Emmanuel Baptist Church. I was blessed to be on this team. While there, we had the opportunity to pray over prospective church plants, visit a single mother and her kids, serve at a food fair, teach multiple sessions rich in theology and doctrine, attend one of their services, and enjoy deep fellowship with the body of believers there. Psalm 133:1 says, “Behold, how good and pleasant it is when brothers dwell in unity!”—and I have never felt this as strongly than while in Canada.

Faith Emmanuel Baptist Church is not a building or a group of people that come together every Sunday. They are a family, a body of believers, living life together, wholly centered on the glory of God. They are focused on discipleship and sending out—they are ambitious for God’s glory and recognize the urgency of the task set before them.

There is a great need for God in Toronto, as in most places, but Faith Emmanuel’s particular burden is more specific, as they are trying to reach the Hispanic population. As people either flee collapsing Latin American countries or leave to seek a better life, many have found their way to the Toronto area. They come typically knowing very little or no English, and thus, even if they wanted to find a church (not to mention a church that actually believes, teaches, and preaches the Bible), their options are severely limited.

Pastor Francisco, the pastor of Faith Emmanuel, is deeply aware of this need, and it adds to the urgency of the church’s task. They are seeking to plant churches all throughout their area. They already have multiple candidates and locations in mind with plans to get those churches established, all as God wills for His glory.

Material things are not a worry—there are needs but they are not worries, because Faith Emmanuel is so centered on God’s glory that they know that if they truly need something, God will provide it. Pastor Francisco told many remarkable stories of God’s faithfulness in his life, all displaying the principle that God is faithful to provide when we are faithful to obey (and mercifully even when we are not).

Faith Emmanuel Baptist Church has already inspired and encouraged me so much. They helped me see the need to be focused on God’s glory and rely wholly on Him as my Sustainer. As someone who is interested in serving the Lord on the mission field, I am so grateful I was able to go on this trip.

We had the opportunity to attend one of Faith Emmanuel’s services, and Pastor Keith led worship alongside their worship team. They sang many songs of praise, switching between English and Spanish as they went. As I remember those truly beautiful moments, I can’t help but think of Revelation 7:9-10, where John writes, “After this I looked, and behold, a great multitude that no one could number, from every nation, from all tribes and peoples and languages, standing before the throne and before the Lamb, clothed in white robes, with palm branches in their hands, and crying out with a loud voice, “Salvation belongs to our God who sits on the throne, and to the Lamb!” If singing to God in two languages in a church in Canada is even a tiny billionth of how beautiful that scene will be in Heaven, I can’t wait.

This partnership with Faith Emmanuel is more than a partnership. It is a coming together of the worldwide body of Christ to fall down and worship at the feet of our glorious Savior, and it is deeply beneficial for Bethel, for Faith Emmanuel, and for the glory of God. Please join us in praying, giving, and going as we continue to serve alongside our sister church.

You can learn more about them at their website, www.faithebchurch.org.



TORONTO TEAM WITH PASTOR FRANCISCO

MISSION SPOTLIGHT SUNDAYS

By: Traci Hendron



Be on the lookout for our new Sunday Spotlight on Missions events. Mission team members will be in the Missions foyer monthly highlighting a recent mission trip or opportunity. In February the featured mission was the planned Spring Break trip to Guadalajara with the youth. On this particular Sunday morning church members visiting the table were able to sample two different featured foods from the country. The hallway was filled with the wonderful smells of cooking birria which is a Mexican stew traditionally made with goat or lamb. The stew that was served was a less common version containing beef, but it was still very flavorful. A flan-like dessert called Jericalla was also available to sample. The table display also contained many facts about the culture and tradition of the region of Mexico the team would be visiting. While this was a fun event, it was also informative. Church members learned about the street evangelism our team would be doing in central Mexico trying to reach the lost, teaching them about the salvation that can only be found in Jesus.

TANZANIA 2024

By: Stuart Johnson

Bethel Baptist Church returned to Tanzania in March of 2024 to continue our partnership with IMB missionaries Kari and Debra in the city of Kigoma. Our main focus this year was continuing our support of the Kibirizi Baptist Church as well as ground work for establishing a new Baptist church in the remote village of Kigalye.

Kigalye is a small village of mostly Muslim believers located about 5 miles north of Kigoma on Lake Tanganyika. There is no road access to Kigalye so our team faced a 2 hour walk over the mountains or a 45-minute boat ride to reach this area (we chose the boat ride). Kari had organized a group from the Kibirizi church to accompany us, which brought our party up to about 20 people. This was a great turnout and showed the commitment and energy of the Kibirizi church to evangelize and pursue church planting. While in Kigalye, we continued our church discipleship/training and went door-to-door to share the Gospel. The Muslim call to prayer was loud in the village that day, which reminded us of the critical need of these people for the Gospel.

We rekindled friendships with two local pastors who are active evangelists, and engaged in bible studies and strategic discussions with them in their homes. These people know their Bible and are a great blessing to the kingdom!

We attended a devotion night with the larger missionary group serving in Kigoma and conducted a team challenge exercise for the missionary kids there. As always, anywhere you go in this world you can find brothers and sister in Christ and instantly be with family.

Our support for the Kibirizi church included attending Sunday services, church discipleship, and our aid in helping to build a new church building to house their growing congregation. I was very encouraged by neighborhood people who stopped by to talk to us as we were visiting there, which resulted in Gospel conversations. One conversation helped lead to a new member to the church who was raised Catholic but has now heard the Evangelical message and desires to follow Jesus through the saving grace of Christ alone. We spent a productive time discussing and buying materials for the new Kibirizi church building under construction. We emphasized the importance of investing both our money and our time in building the church and used similar past efforts at BBC to encourage what they are doing. They were very appreciative of our support and even presented us with 2 chickens when we were saying our goodbyes (these did not come home with us on the airplane).

In short.... A great trip for 2024!!

Pray
Give
Go



MISSION TRIP TO Georgia

By: Bill Heely



In March, a team of five Bethel members, led by Pastor Doug, and including Jane Bates, Lisa Blessing, Sheree Perkins, and Bill Heely, traveled to Tbilisi, Georgia. They met with Randy and Leah Fields, IMB missionaries in Tbilisi.

All over Tbilisi there are signs and memorials testifying to a history of savage and bloody invasions by the Persians, Turks, and Russians, and the steadfast courage of Georgians who refused to acquiesce to invaders. A key point of many Georgians' cultural pride stems from their identity as Orthodox Christians. Unfortunately, very few Georgians have been born again to live by faith in Jesus Christ. Most are nominally Orthodox or profess no religious beliefs at all. The purpose of the Bethel team's mission trip to Georgia was to encourage Randy and Leah, and to investigate ways Bethel might partner with the Fields and the evangelical church there to assist their ministry.

The team visited the Teen Challenge facilities in the western part of Tbilisi. Pastor Doug spoke to them from the Gospel of Luke. Team members heard testimonies of people freed from addictions who shared that to faith in Christ had saved them spiritually, as well as physically. Another day Pastor Doug and Bill presented training on different aspects of spiritual warfare, Bible study, and discipleship, to pastors from different parts of Georgia. Jane, Lisa, and Sheree talked with women from evangelical churches in Georgia about God's love for them.

The Bethel team also visited a group of around 15 Ukrainian orphans, ages 9 to 17, who had lived through extremely dangerous circumstances. The Gospel was explained with the help of a translator. The team also did a prayer walk with an IMB missionary named Marvin Stinefort, through an Azeri neighborhood. The Azeris are a predominantly Muslim people group who mainly live in neighboring Azerbaijan. Marvin conversed in Russian during the walk to Azeri woman who was selling fresh fruit on the street. Relationships can begin with freshly squeezed pomegranate juice and lead to Gospel conversations.

Sunday, the team attended a worship service in Kutaisi, the 3rd largest city in Georgia. Several team members gave their testimonies, and Pastor Doug preached from the Word of God. They also traveled to the town of Khoni where they met in a home with pastors and church leaders to encourage them as they sought ways to minister to internally displaced persons within Georgia who were forced from their homes by the 2008 Russian invasion. The team also worshipped with a congregation in the small town of Ozurgeti. Pastor Doug shared another message from the Word. It was a wonderful time of praise and fellowship. There are many opportunities to share the Gospel in Georgia. The fields are ripe for harvest. Please pray for the evangelists and their families working in Georgia.

THRIVE PENINSULA PARTNERSHIP

By: Christine Miles



Bethel Baptist Church partners with Thrive Peninsula, an organization that assists families experiencing financial hardship by providing food, financial aid, and financial counseling. Thrive moved into a new building in November 2023 and opened The Market at Thrive where clients are able to select their own groceries. In 2024, Bethel has participated in two Food Drives: the Soup and Cracker Food Drive in February and the Breakfast Food Drive in May, donating 700 and 1000 pounds, respectively. Additionally, hundreds of pounds have been provided through regular donations placed on the designated carts in the Slate Foyer.

In addition to food donations, members from Bethel volunteer weekly transporting food donations from local grocery stores, stocking shelves, working in Thrive's garden, and interacting with the clients.

Bethel members can get involved by donating non-perishable food items, plastic and paper grocery bags, and shoes in the designated areas at Bethel or at 12749 Nettles Drive in Newport News. Volunteers are needed in the market, office, garden, financial coaching, English as a Second Language (ESL) classes, and in food transportation. For more information, visit ThrivePenninsula.org.

PENINSULA RESCUE MISSION DINNER



Volunteers from Bethel Baptist Church prepare and serve dinner at the Peninsula Rescue Mission on the first Thursday of every month. Monthly meals vary from pizza, to fried chicken, to shrimp on occasion. Steak was actually on the menu last year in December for a Christmas treat. Dessert is always included, with ice cream sandwiches being one of the most favorite options. Preparing dinner once a month at PRM has been a tradition at Bethel for many years. Anyone interested in helping out should contact Rob Hendron 757-725-9025



GIVING A BED FOR CHRISTMAS

By: Traci Hendron

Church members had the opportunity this Christmas to provide the blessing of a comfortable place to sleep to individuals in need. Peninsula Rescue Mission realized the plight of many homeless women in our community and decided to do something about it by building a new women's shelter in Newport News. The new shelter will initially have 22 beds. A member of BBC recognized the need for these beds to have clean, new linens, so an idea was formed to help. It was estimated that it would cost approximately \$125.00 to outfit one bed with new linens including sheets, a pillowcase, and a comforter. Church members had the opportunity to donate the full amount or to donate "half a bed" for 62.50 during the month of December. The goal was to raise \$2750.00 to cover the cost of all 22 beds. Church members enthusiastically supported this cause and donated over and above, because a total amount of \$3675.62 was raised, all of which was given to the mission! The generosity and love of those who gave will help ensure that vulnerable women will have a warm place to sleep in safety.

Christmas Missions Projects

LOTTIE MOON MAILBOX

By: Traci Hendron

The Lottie Moon Offering is an annual offering collected by Southern Baptists to support international missions. Bethel Baptist Church has its own annual tradition, which is the Lottie Moon Mailbox. It is a cute tradition of setting up a temporary mailbox in the Mission's Foyer for church members to place their Christmas cards addressed to other church members. Every Sunday during December church members can go check the mailbox before or after service to collect any cards bearing their name. This activity serves a dual purpose. Those who use the mailbox can save on the cost of postage for all of those cards and they can take that savings and donate it to the Lottie Moon Offering. This year Bethel again successfully met its goal for the offering which was an amazing \$125,000 for international missions.



BOTTLES FOR BABIES

By: Traci Hendron

January 21, 2024, was Sanctity of Life Sunday, a day of national observance created by presidential proclamation in 1984 by President Ronald Reagan. National Sanctity of Human Life Day is used to bring awareness to the attacks that are daily waged against human life through the abortion industry. One of the best ways that we can protect unborn lives is by bringing into light the darkness of abortion and supporting local pregnancy help organizations who reach women and families with messages of life and hope. Bethel Baptist Church began its annual Baby Bottles 4 Life Campaign on Sanctity of Life Sunday this year. Baby Bottles 4 Life is a fun service project in which the whole family can take part. Regular baby bottles are handed out to church members, and they are asked to fill them with loose change, cash, or checks and return them in a month's time. The money donated goes to fund Care Net's many endeavors to help new and expecting moms in our community. Adults and children alike bring back bottles full of change. The baby bottles make giving a little more fun and personal. Some families take a bottle for each child they have at home. Grandparents will choose the color of their baby bottle to match their grandchild, pink for girl, blue for boy. We even have a giant baby bottle which is always chosen by a special person who brings it back full every year. Bethel Baptist Church raised \$7,200.10 this year through the Baby Bottle Campaign towards the mission of saving babies and serving moms. The funds will ensure that pregnant women across the Peninsula receive proper medical assessments, information to make life-affirming decisions, and the resources they need to raise healthy children.



INAUGURAL MARCH FOR LIFE IN DC

Inaugural March for Life in DC

Bethel Baptist Church made its first trip to Washington DC on a snowy Saturday in January to attend the National March for Life. The National March for Life is an annual event to bring attention to the importance of the sanctity of life. Attendees from many different denominations came together to walk the streets of our capital to try to make a change. Bethel's first trip was a huge success. The church chartered a bus to drive the twenty-five person group the three hours to DC. It was an unusually cold day for January, made even more challenging by a light snow storm. However, nothing could stop this group from going to the event. Church members made use of hand warmers, snow boots, and many layers of clothing to keep warm during the long day spent marching the streets, carrying signs proclaiming the importance of protecting the unborn. The group was able to keep track of each other in the crowd by their signature blue BBC beanies, which were ordered specifically for this trip. Everyone who attended the trip was heartened by the huge crowd that showed up, despite the difficult weather conditions. The overall feeling was that this should become an annual event for the church, at least until the nation's mind has been changed on this important subject and unborn children are safe from abortion.

walking for life

CARE NET PENINSULA WALK 4 LIFE

By: Traci Hendron



Care Net Peninsula hosted its annual Walk 4 Life on Saturday, May 11, 2024, in Newport News Park. The team from Bethel Baptist Church was one of the largest teams in attendance. Over fifty church members wearing matching blue t-shirts met at the park to walk for the unborn. This year's march was the most successful one in the history of Care Net Peninsula. The walk raised over \$240,000 that day in donations. This money is essential, as it funds the many programs that Care Net offers to serve women on the Peninsula. The team from Bethel Baptist Church raised an impressive \$9,805.00 towards the total. Bethel was the second highest fundraising team at the event. This is in addition to the Platinum Sponsorship donation of \$5,000 made by BBC at the beginning of the campaign.

In addition to the team donations and the Platinum sponsorship, Bethel once again hosted a tent at Walk 4 Life. Church members utilized the tent as an opportunity to speak with many people by handing out snacks and water bottles to Walk 4 Life participants. The tent also had a bean bag toss for the kids with toy prizes for the winners. Church members asked participants if they had a church home, and if not, invited them to visit Bethel. This event was a wonderful opportunity to not only support Care Net's efforts but also to reach out to our community. Bethel Baptist Church has continually demonstrated that it is a church that loves others by the generosity, hard work, and dedication of its members.

2024
MARCH
FOR LIFE
IN D.C.



RICHMOND MARCH FOR LIFE

By: Larry Nester



In our hearts, we started planning this trip on the way back from the January 2024 Washington, D.C. March for Life. We had joined thousands on the National Mall so why not repeat last year's trip by BBC members to "stand and be counted" in Richmond on February 21st for our state's March for Life? The seven of us were included in the Catholic Herald's estimate of more than 3,000 attending. This year's theme is "With Every Woman for Every Child". Our Lt. Governor, Ms. Winsome Sears led off the list of guest speakers with an emotional challenge "to do the right thing and protect life in the womb". She introduced our states representatives which were on stage with her. Individuals that shared the same view and voted for those views. Delegate Nick Freitas shared that he will never surrender on the right for life issue because he himself was not planned, but his mother made the right choice. He stressed that "not only convincing others to vote for life is a big battle, but a bigger battle is to fight the culture of our state's voters." Victoria Cobb representing the Virginia Family Foundation addressed the culture and informed the crowd that "extremists want to make Virginia the destination from other states for abortions and also make Virginia the chemical abortion exporter, but we can stop the extremism". The president of Liberty University, Maj. Gen (Ret.) Dondi Costin exclaimed "everyone knows it's a baby, that is why we march!"

March for Life's Felicia Pricenor challenged us to become more active because there is a 2-year battle ahead in the state legislation to stop an amendment that will allow abortions up to the day of birth and remove parental consent decisions.

This report is just a small summary of the speakers' comments, so please use the link included here to see the full hour's coverage of these and other speakers

<https://youtu.be/ak942QrbrTU> or the three minute highlights at

<https://youtu.be/knJYMsScURU>

Each year Bethel Baptist members have stepped up our involvement for pro-life to a higher level. I propose that we begin an effort to contact our local legislators throughout the year and perhaps for the 2025 March arrive in Richmond early so small groups of us can visit assembly members in their offices and make our stand for God's creations known.

VBS AT BREAKER ROCK BEACH

By: Christine O'Shields



We are thrilled to share the incredible experiences and blessings from our recent Vacation Bible School (VBS)! This year's theme, "Breaker Rock Beach," took our children on an unforgettable adventure through the stories and teachings of the Bible. The church was buzzing with energy and joy the week of June 24th through June 28th. Approximately 400 children, ages preschool through 6th grade enjoyed songs, crafty snacks, games and engaging Bible lessons. The children spent the days learning about the love of Jesus and how God's Truth Never Changes.

A dedicated team of volunteers worked tirelessly to create an environment where the Bible came to life. The kids explored stories like Adam and Eve, Daniel, the Rich Young Ruler, John's Writings about Jesus, and Paul Encouraging the Ephesians. Through interactive storytelling and hands-on activities, they discovered the importance of trusting in God's plan and speaking of His truths.

VBS was not just about learning; it was also a time of building friendships and strengthening our church and local community. Parents and volunteers came together to support our children, creating a sense of unity and shared purpose. The joy and laughter that filled our church were a testament to the power of coming together in faith.

During our Vacation Bible School, we were overjoyed to witness five children accept Christ, while over 40 others came forward with questions, seeking guidance to help in their faith decisions. We extend our deepest gratitude to all the volunteers, parents, and church members who made this VBS a success. Your dedication, time, and prayers were instrumental in creating a memorable and impactful experience for our children.

As we reflect on the blessings of this VBS, we are filled with hope and excitement for the future. We pray that the seeds of faith planted during this week will continue to grow in the hearts of our children. Let's continue to support and encourage them as they embark on their own journeys with Jesus.

Thank you for being a part of this wonderful event. We look forward to many more opportunities to come together and celebrate our faith as a church family.

COLUMBIA MISSION TRIP

BY BRENT LUCAS



Jesus tells us in Matthew 28 to “Go and make disciples of all Nations”. Our Bethel Missions team had an opportunity this past January to take the message of Christ to another nation and assist a newly formed church in Bogota, Columbia. Pastor Brian Parker led a group of nine Bethel Baptist Church members who were called by Him to fulfill this part of the Great Commission.

Our stated goal of the mission was to assist a missionary placed in Columbia by the International Mission Board to spread the Gospel and build new churches. The missionary, Matthew, was in the process of helping a newly formed church in the community of Kennedy, which is about ten miles outside of the city of Bogota. Our team met a couple of months before leaving to pray, strategize for our mission, and speak with Matthew by video call about the culture, area, and what the church needed in encouragement and training.

We flew into a large airport that had plenty of stores and restaurants similar to America. We took a shuttle out of the airport and drove to our hotel in the middle of Bogota proper. The city was vibrant and comparable to any major urban area. Beautiful high rises, restaurants, cultural centers, and places of commerce were abundant.

We met with Matthew to discuss our plans. The church we were assisting, called The Lion of Judah, was a splinter church that had only recently been formed. We detailed our plans and prepared gift bags to be distributed to the church members. We prayed and readied ourselves for the Lord's work.

The next morning we loaded up into a couple of vans and headed to the church's neighborhood. We left our nice hotel in a plush urban environment and drove about 10 miles to the community of Kennedy. The neighborhood was densely packed and noticeably much poorer than the main city of Bogota. It was a little discouraging to realize how differently the people lived and worked just a short distance away. The roads, if paved at all, were in disrepair. Most of the homes would not pass an inspection to be livable in the US. There were certain streets where we were advised to be cautious because they had the reputation for drug use.

When we think of a church, a lot of times we will think of a building with a sanctuary, pews and hymnals. The Lion of Judah Church meets in the home of one of the church members, Estella. The Lord had pressed upon her to open her house to the newly formed church, and it was a constant center of the Lord's work. We met the pastor of the church, Jose, and other members. Part of our goal was to equip this new body of believers with tools necessary for a growing healthy church. Each of Bethel's mission team members would lead them in study sessions about different areas of church management and discipleship. Each session was well prepared and well received by the congregation. The second part of our mission was to come alongside the church members as they evangelized to their community. Their surrounding neighborhood had seen an influx of refugees that had migrated up from Venezuela. These refugees were in an even tougher economic and dire situation than the Columbians in the community. Most of them were shunned or frowned upon by the locals. So God had given an extraordinary opportunity to the Lion of Judah church to minister to these refugees. With the help of translators, we split up into groups of about 4 or 5 people. A mixture of our mission team and the church members would then head into the community to talk to people, invite them to the Lion of Judah church, and most importantly, have Gospel conversations. The Lord was at work with that church and community, and it was amazing to be a part of it.



A major part of our time there was centered on a food distribution the church was planning. While the saving grace of Christ is what we all most need, we have to meet physical needs as well. James 2:15-16 reminds us of this fact. While prayer walking throughout the neighborhood we informed everyone that the church had a planned food drive for the following day. Our mission team and church members prepared bags full of rice, oil, and other essentials that we would distribute the next day. It was an exhilarating experience reaching out to the community and working alongside the church to spread the Gospel and be the hands and feet of Christ.

On the day of the food distribution we were all brimming with excitement at what the Lord had planned for us. The street in front of the church was packed with people in need of food, even before the designated distribution time. There were families with children, seniors, and workers all lined up waiting. It was a little bit of organized chaos as the crowd continued to grow. While we have no way of knowing for sure, it seemed as if everyone we encountered had shown up and brought others. Matthew and Estella took the lead in organizing. Their plan was for us to be in groups, much like our prayer walks, with a mixture of church members and our mission team members along with a translator. Before we handed out the food, we spoke with the locals about “why” we were doing this. We presented the Gospel and prayed over our groups. The event was a success as we witnessed to the people of the neighborhood and met them where they were physically.

As exciting as the food distribution was, the highlight of the mission was our planned Sunday morning service. The Lion of Judah church probably had about 15-20 full-time active members. Led by Pastor Jose, they normally met in the living area of Estella's home. But in anticipation of what the Lord had planned, we held the service that Sunday morning in the street in front of the home. We also prepared a makeshift baptismal in the living room of Estella's house, so that believers could have the opportunity to make that public display of their soul's conviction. We set up rows of chairs in the street, set up a small PA system so that all could hear, and waited to see what the Lord had initiated. The turnout was amazing. We had invited everyone on our prayer walks and who attended the prior day's distribution. It was exhilarating to see and feel God at work. The service started like our own services with hymns and praise to our Glorious Savior. Then both Pastor Brian and Pastor Jose shared messages of Christ's love and our need for Christ's redemption with the crowd. We all read from the Bible (which we also distributed to those who attended) and prayed together on that beautiful, special Lord's day. At the conclusion of the service, we packed as many as we could into Estella's home and Pastor Jose baptized believers. It was truly an emotional and spiritually fulfilling experience.

There are many other experiences from this mission trip that could be detailed in this article. Each team member had one-on-one Christ conversations with members of the Lion of Judah church and the surrounding neighborhood. We had chances to hear testimonies from the church members and give ours to them. And that is what was truly amazing about this mission trip. That once you get past the cultural differences, we are all part of one Body in Christ. Pastor Doug has shared with us that we have more in common with believers in Columbia than we do with non-believers in hometowns. We all share a promise from Christ. A brotherhood and sisterhood in an eternal community that is a gift of grace from Him.

Special praises to Pastor Brian, Matthew, and Pastor Jose for the work the Lord is fulfilling through them.

MEET OUR MISSIONS PASTOR

Pastor Brian Parker has now served in the role of Associate Pastor of Discipleship and Missions since February 2023.

Brian's heart is to come alongside the local body of believers to lead, feed, and protect the congregation. His hope is that we would come together to fulfill our calling to engage the lost with the truth of the gospel, bringing life to where there is none, make disciples who make disciples, and glorify God with our lives.

He has worked in several local area churches as well as with the International Mission Board. He has a Bachelors of Science in Biblical Studies, a Masters of Arts in Theological Studies and a Doctorate of Ministries in Ministry Leadership, all from Liberty University.

Brian has experience providing discipleship inside and outside the church and in planning and leading mission trips locally, nationally, and internationally.



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