

CUBA IN MARCH



A highlight on this trip was being able to do a wedding for Jorge and Daynsi. They are among my adopted children in Cuba. We were able to bring rings and a wedding gown and provide what was necessary. We did the wedding beside a river in a park with our staff from the church at our regular BBQ in the Park event. The whole wedding including the meal, rings and gown was less than \$500. This couple could never afford this and what a blessing it was to all. They had been living together for three years and she was three months pregnant so it was definitely time for a wedding.



We had arrived in Cuba at 4:30 am and found a note waiting for me saying that I was not speaking in the evening service but the morning service. So, after one hour of sleep because of the time change, we were off to the church to a lively worship service. I shared the gospel and two people came to know the Lord and most of the church responded to a rededication of their lives to ministry.

Another highlight was the Men's Conference and Women's Conference in a very depressed town of Merti. Elizabeth and I joined Grant and Roberta Kurian there as several denominations hosted these conferences. Elizabeth spoke to about 120 women from Isaiah 40:31 and compared the life of the eagle and a Christian's journey in life. Seven women gave their hearts to the Lord, three asked for prayer for physical challenges and one woman rededicated her life to the Lord. They were able to bless many women with Bibles.



Following the meeting, Roberta and Elizabeth wanted to bless each woman with an article of clothing and other useful items. They knew they did not have enough items for the 120 women. Roberta asked God to multiply the clothing items as the Lord had multiplied the loaves and fish. After each woman was gifted with an item, they still had items left over. Praise God for miracles.

Cuban women were blessed by the kindness of your generosity and God blesses those who bless others.

There are many who donated clothes and other items for Cuba. These were greatly appreciated by all who received them. Many

The final night was spent at a Family Camp that had over 500 people registered. There was a smaller group that gathered under flashlights that first night of camp. Terry gave them a parable that contained the gospel. He used some of the youth to dramatize certain parts. At one point one of the small young lads had to pay the penalty for stealing which was 10 belts across the back. As he bent over Terry asked if there was anyone to take his place and another young lad, a little bigger and older volunteered. The first smaller lad agreed to allow him to take his place. As it looked like Terry was about to swing the belt across this young lad's back a larger young lad that was by his side said "No" let me take his place. What was so beautiful is that the second lad stood up and gave him a hug. Should that not be our response to the Saviour that took our place? There were several that came forward that night to make a commitment to their Creator and Saviour.

URGENT NEED: WE ARE MINISTERING IN 10 DESPERATELY NEEDY COUNTRIES AND OUR RESOURCES ARE DEPLETED. WE NEED YOUR HELP TO FEED CHILDREN AND SUBSIDIZE PASTORS.

BRIAN & SANDRA: CUBA LIFE????

Brian writes... It's been an interesting 3 months. I can't really put all these challenges in order but I can at least list them. In the past three months:

My mother in law developed some sort of depression and tried to kill herself. She has been unable to work for many months.

My father in law got in a car accident and was blamed (though according to him it was obviously the other persons fault for making a wrong turn... suspicions are he paid off the police).. Until the car is fixed, he has no income to feed the family.

My mother in law was with him during the accident while they were on their way to the hospital for her to get surgery

My brother and sister in law contracted some sort of violent string of chicken-pox and looked like they had some sort of plague eating their bodies for a few weeks

We went to immigration to get some visa information... one question lead to another and by the time we left they said if I didn't comply and put myself on their radar I could be kicked out of the country, refused re-entry from future visits, and the house of my in-laws could be confiscated leaving them homeless

One of the main worship leaders has seemed to have gone off the deep end wanting sex with both men and women... she's unresponsive to everything as if she were a zombie

Some friends of ours in Bolondron were asked to leave their home by the person renting it to them... they are now living with their two children in an already full house with another family... if you've seen how small houses are in Bolondron, this would be impressive to you

A close friend in Bolondron had a freak accident while working and had a sharp metal object explode in his eye. He had to get it removed.

While walking our small dog on the street a German Shepherd got loose from its yard and viciously attacked our dog shaking it around in the air as if it were a loose rag. Though the attack didn't kill it, she developed an infection so bad that her body swelled to the point where her skin began splitting open into massive wounds all over her body. After a week of suffering she eventually died. Later when talking with the owner of the German Shepherd, he said it was just playing.

Rumors and deception have been seeping in amongst the team causing division. It's become tense and difficult to know who we can trust.

HAITI & DOMINICAN REPUBLIC:

ALIX & GERTRUDE JEAN-PAUL

World Water Day, March 22, 2016



Forty-two percent of the population in Haiti does not have access to drinking water. Women, girls and young children are very vulnerable to the lack of water. According to United Nations, secure access to water is limited to 35% of the population living in urban areas and 48% for the population on rural areas. Fifty-six percent of the population needs to walk more than 30

minutes to get water. It is worst for people living in extreme poverty and those affected by the migration issue with the Dominican Republic. The United Nations stated also that: the lack of water has consequences on reproductive health and motherhood. Shortage of water and waterborne diseases are among the main causes of death among children under 5 years.

CEO Ministries with the support of our benefactors has been able to make a difference in the lives of 150 household and many of the adjacent communities of Lechard by providing a well for drinking water and growing market gardens.

Political crisis:

Since the departure of President Joseph Martelly at the end of his five year mandate in February 7th, 2016 the country was not able to agree on the choice of a Prime Minister to form the new government. The interim President Jocelerme Privert must complete the election by April 24th otherwise the country will be in political chaos.

God cares for Haiti

Jeremiah 29 has been my inspiration since I began the mission work in Haiti: **For I know the plans I have for you declares the Lord, plan to prosper you and not to harm you, plans to give you hope and a future.**

Having been convinced by faith that our Lord keeps His promises, we are in the process of building Sam I Am Centre for Child Evangelism and Youth Leadership with the support of our benefactors. The building will be used for Vacation Bible Camps and to house some of the displaced people coming from the Dominican Republic. We are completing phase 1 (the foundation) and phase 2 (the walls). We are looking for a few more benefactors to complete phase 3 (the roof) and phase 4 (doors and windows) and phase 5 (inside and washrooms). We are available for coffee if you are interested in knowing more or if you want to be part of His plans.

Mission Team: We hope to bring to Haiti at the end of May 2016 a team to help with the finishing work such as building trusses for the roof, building bunk-beds, doing electrical and plumbing work.

Mission Trip: Alix is planning a trip to Haiti for April 15th to assess the situation and to prepare the local team under Pastor Namphy's leadership for Vacation Bible Camps this summer. He would like to take others with him. Give him a call if you are interested.

Vacation Bible School is the corner stone of our ministry in Haiti. Every year for the last sixteen years many of you have been very generous in providing funds for this ministry. Many of my regular benefactors are no longer with us. We are praying that some new ones will fill the gap. It is a worthwhile ministry. Last year 1100 children took

part in 11 communities. Over 300 had made a decision to follow Christ. Many of them are the follow-up classes. Sam I Am centre will allow us to nurture these new believers to equip them to become witnesses in their school, their neighborhood and their families. This has been an investment in eternity.

The Dominican Republic

They continue to expel thousands and thousands back to Haiti. For many of these returnees, hardships, homelessness and hunger are their lot. However, because of the generosity of a Winnipeg Christian couple, our school is still open. These children are illegal in DR therefore they cannot access the public school. We have 60 students. We pay for the rent. We feed the children two meals a day and sometimes three meals a day. We provide the five staff with a monthly support to keep the school open. We are praying for a few more benefactors to continue to keep the school open. The school is also a mission field. While you are in vacation in DR, you can drop in, spend a day in the school, and interact with staff and students.



But with any challenge comes victory!

While trying to commit suicide, my mother in law's hands were miraculously stopped by some force (as in the gun was yanked the other direction by something unseen as she pulled the trigger.. the bullet hole is still in the wall)

My brother in law and his wife eventually healed from their sickness

My father in law received an opportunity to do some importing which will take care of any financial losses from his car accident plus provide more money beyond that. He will be able to get his business started again.

My mother in law had the surgery and healed well from it. She has been able to return to work.

After being dead for 2 hours (according to my father in law), Sandra refused to accept the death of our dog and prayed over her. The dog started breathing again. At first slowly, and over the span of a week our dog healed to the point where she was her normal healthy self again. Our first dead raising! The whole family is astonished, especially those who don't have a relationship with Jesus.

My father in law, not being a committed believer, saw this before his very eyes. He said "if this dog survives, no one can deny there is a God." He has been convinced and is telling everyone about it ever since.

We received a mattress, got hot water installed in our shower, and our taps were fixed all within the same week... this might not sound like a big deal but you try and sleep on cotton and metal for three months and shower with a bucket and see how much energy you have during the day.

Our friend with the lost eye is coping well and in fact encouraging others that God is good. He even jokes, "With one less eye, I have less to look at to be tempted by."

We received a new team member to CEO that will allow us to put up boundaries within the ministry that will make deception within the team much harder to come about

Every challenge we have gone through gave us an opportunity to rely on God in a new way. Interestingly enough, it seemed all these attacks were against people close to us and not on us directly. We believe it's because greater is He who is in us than he who is in the world, and we refuse any attack from the devil. The only way he can affect us is to affect those we love. Sounds like the terrorist he is. It's been exciting to see God's counter moves to his attacks. We have such a great God. And through all these challenges we have only been made stronger and our faith deepened.



ERNESTO & MARINA PINTO:
CENTRAL AMERICA
Conference Honduras March 2016

Light House Ministry celebrated its first Women's Conference in Honduras on Saturday March 12 in the Ministerio Renuevo Church facilities. Our theme was "Created with a Purpose" (Creadas con Proposito) with a focus on women's self-esteem as this is a big issue in Honduras among the women.

Pastor Roberto opened up the meeting with a prayer and then I began with the passage Psalm 139:13-16 and emphasized that each one of us are precious and unique in God's eyes. Following that, we played an icebreaker game to make every one feel more comfortable.

"Light House Ministry (Single Mom's Ministry) was the organizer of the event, and the COMFE (Comunidad de Fe) church worship team led us in worship.

We had 71 women in attendance, among the group there were 3 woman who travel 5 hours by bus from Comayagua and they went back so encouraged that they requested to have a conference in their church in July.

Pastora Marcia de Pineda from the "Eagles Nest Church" (Nido de Aguilas) focused her message on the book of Ruth chapter 1.



She encouraged the woman to be like Ruth; a woman who was a widowed; suffered and had to eat from the leftovers of the fields and yet God blessed her because of her courage and strength and gave her a husband.

We felt God's presence and at the end we made an altar call for those who needed prayer that may have been struggling with their self-

esteem. We finished our conference with the assurance that we will see good fruits from the Conference and every woman in attendance was grateful to attend. We closed with prayer and refreshments were offered at the end.

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Last week Marina and I had a wonderful time, visiting the church in the village of Lejamaní. In this poor community the Believers are making the difference. ***We are helping to plant this church, Please Pray for the Pastors Joel and Lesbia.*** Please help us with the construction. Thank you for your help. .



WE NEED \$20,000 TO FINISHE THE DORMS IN HAITI AND \$5000 TO FINISH THIS CHURCH PLANT PLUS FUNDS FOR THE "SINGLE MOM'S TRAINING PROGRAM"... PLEASE PRAY AND GIVE.

BRIAN & SANDRA: CUBA

MINISTRY

I think that a lot of these challenges started coming about when Sandra and I made two specific ministry decisions. The first decision we made was that while we are here in Cuba, and anywhere for that matter, that we should have a daily goal of sharing with at least two people about Jesus. My original goal was to talk with and pray for 50 people per month about Jesus (roughly two per day). We started this in November. Since we started, on average we talk with between 80-120 people every month. About 80% of them all experience God in some way whether it be a healing, a tangible sensation of His presence, or a specific word of knowledge that gives them an experience to point to that demonstrates the existence of something supernatural. About 40% of everyone we talk with, at least those we know of, acknowledge that they want to receive the gift of life that Jesus is offering. The percent of this is much higher among the youth we talk with. Between the ages of 10-15, the acceptance rate is about 80-90% of them saying yes they want this gift of life. I don't keep track specifically because I don't want this to be about "numbers." But this is what we generally see.

This doesn't necessarily mean all these people start coming to our church. We let them know where our church is and where they can find us if they have any questions, but recruiting them to our church has not been our purpose. We simply let them know that the church is a school where they can learn how to do what we just showed them and to learn more about who they are and what Jesus has done for them. We give them the example of receiving a Ferrari Car. Say someone drops off this car at their house and hands them the keys. We then ask if they would know how to drive it. They all say no. We then mention that if they truly want to enjoy the car, they must first learn how to operate it. The same is with the Christian life and the gift they just received. Where we go to church is a good place to "learn how to drive." The invitation is open and they can come when the time is right for them.

One example was in Bolondron where we were in front of a group of young adults. One of them had a severely sprained finger that got healed. They were all amazed and said they would receive the gift Jesus was offering them. We then said they're ready to do exactly what we just did. Right then, someone who had pulled up on their bike to watch what was happening, mentioned that he was on his way to see a witchdoctor to get rid of the pain in his stomach.



TOGO, AFRICA: LEWIS & NAOMI

Our mission team had a wonderful trip to Togo and we can't wait to tell you all about it. This week, we are going to let Beth Reed, our Communications and Volunteer Director tell you her perspective on the trip.

"This was not my first time to Africa, but it was my first time to Togo with Sight.org. I was not overwhelmed by the African landscape or culture, because I'm used to it and I love it. What I was overwhelmed by was the medical team that we have. I had met them all online and Lewis had

told me stories about each one of them, but nothing could have prepared me for seeing them all in action. They are simply amazing people. It doesn't matter if they are doing eye surgeries, sweeping the floor, cooking, or fixing a generator, they are consistently beautiful people, inside and out. I want to tell everyone I know about them, about their pasts, where God has brought them, their hearts, their love for the people of Togo, how lovingly they welcomed me, EVERYTHING! I am working on updating the team page with stories so that everyone can get to know each one of them a little better. I have already put up new pictures of each member, so check out the team page.

Other than falling in love with the team, what impacted me the most, was seeing the eye surgeries in person. It is so easy to become overwhelmed by all the great needs around the world. It is easy to feel helpless and not know how to help or want to help everyone all at the same time. When I was in Togo, I felt like I was truly helping. When I saw people go from completely blind to seeing within 24 hours, I knew God was doing something big through me and the team. They weren't just getting their sight back, their whole lives were being changed. I got to experience 46 people's lives be completely changed in three days. I wish I could explain how powerful that was. Anyone who knows me, knows that I hate needles. I faint every single time I get blood drawn. So it's kind of amusing that I work for a nonprofit that does eye surgeries. When I went to Togo, Lewis Swann kept asking me if I wanted to observe a surgery in the ambulance, and I promptly said no every time. He finally convinced me to try. I was so worried that I would faint, and there was no room in that ambulance for me to faint. I had tried to watch videos of surgeries at my desk in Tyler, and every time I tried, I got light headed. Lewis just kept saying that it would be beneficial for me to watch, so I gave in, but not without lots of preparation. I had about five different people pray over me before I went in. I also convinced myself that if I had my camera between me and the patient, I could separate myself from what was actually happening. I got my scrubs on, sterilized my feet, took a deep breath, said one last prayer, and stepped into the ambulance. I took several pictures and then the surgeon asked me to come closer. There were already 5 other people in that tiny ambulance, so I thought that I would just stay as far away as possible. Nope, he wanted me to stand straight over the patient! Then something amazing happened: I was enthralled with the whole thing! The next thing I knew, my camera was down and I couldn't stop staring at the surgery. The surgeon explained every step of the process and I could not believe how they were doing it! He just cut a slit, pulled out the cataract, cleaned it out with water, and replaced it with an artificial lens. Then he just covered it with a patch and the next day it would be healed on its own. It was absolutely amazing and I didn't feel light headed at all! I am so thankful that God gave me the ability to observe His amazing healing power through the surgeon."

***Prayer Focus on Finances:** In the first three months of this year we are \$50,000 short of budget and have depleted our resources except for some "designated funds for building" in which we are waiting for the exchange on the Canadian dollar to change. We need your support at this time especially as we move into the summer months.*

WE ARE A TEAM...

Empowering Ministries to ...

Reach the Lost, Revive the weak, Rescue the fallen, Restore the broken,

Reconcile the offended, Release the Disciple

CHRISTIANS INFLUENCING EDUCATION
Box 283 St. VITAL, MANITOBA R2N3X9

BRIAN & SANDRA: CUBA

MINISTRY cont'd

He asked if we could do it for him instead. I then turned to the crowd and said "if you truly invited Jesus into your life right now, you are ready to do this. Who wants to be the first?" Everyone was silent. I then asked if they were nervous and they all said yes. "If you're nervous, that's good. That just means you're ready. But if you don't do this because of your feelings, this man is not going to get healed." Just then one youth stepped up and volunteered. He hadn't been saved for more than five minutes and he healed the man on the bike. I said "There you go. It's as easy as that, because it's not you its God through you. You're not creating the miracle, you're just bringing the miracle to the man. Keep up the good work and if you have any questions you know where to find us." It was very casual, which is what I like about how all this has been happening. We don't have to be super spiritual or weird. This is just our lifestyle now. The next day we heard a knock on the door and it was this youth again but with a man on crutches. He brought this guy for us to heal. I said "listen, you're with Jesus now. You heal him!" So he laid his hands on this man and we had him try to walk. As soon as he put pressure on his broken foot, we all hear a loud snap and the man shouted in pain. Within a few seconds he was walking without his crutch and pain free. I guess whatever was out of place snapped back into place. The man didn't want Jesus but walked away thankful for the healing anyways, which is a great demonstration of the type of God we have. He loves even the unbeliever and has provided healing for them too. His love is not conditional like we tend to make it.

We have many stories like this and I'm excited to say that whenever someone asks me, "when was the last time you saw God do something new in your life?" I can usually respond to them with "yesterday or this morning." This is a big change from when I used to answer, "well, I saw God do something really great about a year or two ago." What we've been learning here is who we are in Jesus and exactly what that means on the earth. If we really are the hands and feet of Jesus as we sing in church, then we should be seeing the results Jesus had while He was here.

Editorial Note: This is just part of a report I received from Brian James and it is exciting to see his spiritual growth and expanding ministry that God is giving him. Please continue to pray for Brian and Sandra. They also need financial support.

