

Expanding the

The newsletter of Wes and Maria Smith



Prayer Needs and Praises

- The new semester at SEMCA which will begin on Jan 15.
- The development of a board of directors for SEMCA.
- Several of our graduates as they work to plant a church in the sugar cane village of Esperanza.
- Las Palmas needs an English teacher in January and a number of new teachers for next year.
- New construction and property development for Las Palmas and SEMCA.



December, 2018

Reason for the Delay of Newsletter

Last month I sent out a short email to mention that it was necessary to delay our newsletter for a few weeks in order to be able to update you on a few special things which have been happening in the DR. I would like to share those with you now.

Maria and I have returned to the States for a furlough

While I mentioned this in the email, I want to state it again in our newsletter for those who might have missed it. I have been busy scheduling visits to our many supporting churches and friends to share all that God has done in the DR over the last five years. It is our desire to visit all of our churches between now and next Fall. We are available for missions conferences or normal service times. While I have been trying to reach all of our churches, please feel free to contact me by email or phone (910-546-9683). We have a number of meetings in GA, and NC throughout the months of Jan.—March but we still have a number of openings. Hope to see each of you soon.

New Hope Baptist Mission

In September Edmill and Odalis (two of our recent SEMCA graduates) along with Franklin (SEMCA student) took over the work in the sugar cane village of Esperanza (“Hope”). They continued the hours of community visits and help that the interns and I had begun a year ago in preparation for planting a church, and on September 29 they held their first service. During this time they have seen several come to



know the Lord through their weekly visits in the community, and word of their commitment and love for the community is beginning to spread.

The team is facing a number of difficulties due to heavy

amounts of rain and poor conditions in the community. The mud is often so thick that you cannot enter, and homes are easily flooded. The work here is hard and more people are needed to help with the services and weekly visits and discipleship.

Previous intern returns to serve as a missionary

Elisabeth Perdue came to the DR during the summer of 2017 as a part of one of our ministries, called “Missions Encounter.” When Elisabeth returned home after her internship, she spoke with me about returning and serving on the mission field as a part of the DR Vision. Presently, Elisabeth is doing language work to equip her to better communicate



and minister in Spanish while also serving in various ministries with the church, youth, and the Mercy Workshop ministry. How exciting it has been to see God use the Missions Encounter to touch the heart of one of our interns and bring her back to the DR to serve as a missionary.

Las Palmas Project



On December 1 Las Palmas held a Virtual 5K to help raise the needed funds for a desperately needed open-air gymnasium facility. They need about \$65,000 to complete the entire facility but can complete the first phase with just \$30,000.

Maria and I wanted to have a part in this event so we ran our 5K here in the States at the same time that Las Palmas was hosting their 5K in the DR. We were so excited to have a donor who was willing to match dollar-for-dollar the first thousand dollars for Maria and the first thousand dollars for me. Maria had never run in a 5K before and this was my first time in years. We only had about 2 weeks to train, BUT WE DID IT. (Maybe not the best time, but it was a start.). In fact we enjoyed it so much we are now running 1-2 days a week. But the best news is that WE RAISED OVER \$4,300 for this project. Funds are still coming in to the Daystar office so if you would like to participate please send your gift to



Daystar Baptist Missions
PO Box 1193
Barboursville, WV 25504

Also, please mark your gift for “Wes and Maria 5K - Las Palmas”

SEMCA News

There is really too much news here to report in so short a space. I want to briefly mention two things and then I will expand on these in the next newsletter.

First, I met with a great group of pastors in November about being a part of our board of directors. This looks very promising and I am excited to see how others are catching a vision of what we hope to achieve.

Second, Pastor Gary (our team leader) spoke with me about the possibility of the church purchasing a large piece of property behind the church which could be used as the official future home for SEMCA. This property used to be a school and has some GREAT possibilities. Well...the church was able to buy it!!! This property has so many possible uses. I will be sharing more with you about this in the next newsletter.

This is all such exciting news and we are excited to share it. Maria and I would like to wish all of you a very Merry Christmas and a bright and Happy New Year to serve our Savior. Thank you so much for your prayers and support.