



# South Florida News

## Iglesia de Cristo en Pompano Beach

By Carlos and Maribel Preciado

Summer and Fall 2016

Dear Brethren;

It is hard to believe that the year 2016 is almost gone. We stop to thank God our Lord for His mercy and love throughout all these years of full time ministry. For the faith and love you have shown to His work by supporting the work in South Florida.

It is a privilege our family does not take for granted and we are always reminding ourselves that what we do and who we are is because of Him.

The Church in Pompano Beach is now beginning to look more like a teenager rather than a baby anymore. We celebrated our eighth anniversary since our first service back in August of 2008. It has not been easy through all these years being able to manage family, work, and Church family nevertheless the Lord has seen us through. Without him, we could not do anything.



This past summer a group from Memphis came to do a VBS for the Pompano Beach families and kids. While they were here we went door knocking not only in Pompano, but in the North Lauderdale area where the Broadview congregation is.

The VBS was a great success. We made several new contacts and held nightly Bible studies with several of the families that attended with their kids.



We met five new teenagers that came with us every night to the devotionals at the beach with the Memphis crowd. They were very touched by their welcoming and felt the love of Christ. Jose, William, Isidro Fuentes, Fernando and Hector are all from Honduras and have recently come to the United States to reunite with their families.

We have had devotionals with them and they participate in the soccer games every Sunday afternoon with some of the men from Church.

The Broadview Church has a culture night from time to time and they invited us to participate with them. Their desire is to reach the Spanish speaking community near their area and in fact we have begun meetings to see if we can work together in doing so.



Our brethren from the Broadview Church had their culture night and the Pompano as well as the Coral Springs Church were invited.

The night started with a Mexican Folklore Ballet where several of the members were people that we have known for years. One of the members, Ronald was a surprise to Jordan our brother from Coral Springs. Ronald has been to their services and Bible studies, but he had not seen him for a while.

Jordan invited Fanny a young lady from Cuba to the event. Fanny had been going to their services and also Bible studies. Fanny decided that weekend to be baptized. We all praised God and rejoiced with them.

In September I was invited to a missionary retreat hosted by the Great Cities ministry that was held in Antigua Guatemala. While I was there one night I was calling Maribel, when a message from Jose Fuentes, one of the teenagers from Honduras entered and read "Carlos please pray for my brother Mario. He was just in an accident". I replied and said we would pray for him.

About 20 days later, Maribel was having her regular ladies Bible study at the park, when Carolina a sister from Honduras that we had not seen for a while came and asked her to accompany her to her friend's house. On the way she explained that her friend had just lost her child and needed support and prayer. Maribel got to Sandra's house, Carolina's friend and prayed for strength for her and her family in this difficult time.

That following Monday, after Hurricane Mathew passed through the coast of Florida, Sandra and her husband Juan held Mario's wake their four year old.

We went to be with the family and during the message low and behold, Jose Fuentes comes in and gets close to the coffin. At that point I thought he was a friend of the family, but when he stepped aside and started whaling at the side of William and Isidro his cousins I realized that Mario, the little kid that was laying there was his little brother. The one that had been in an accident twenty days back while I was in Guatemala. The one we were praying for.

The Lord had allowed us to meet this kids, way before the accident and develop a relationship so that we could be there to comfort them in their pain. It is the hardest thing to see a mother and a father lose their kid, but also a brother that had just met his little brother months before he was called up. Please pray for the Fuentes family and for us to be able to bring the word of hope to their hurting hearts.

*"All praise to God, the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ. God is our merciful Father and the source of all comfort. He comforts us in all our troubles so that we can comfort others. When they are troubled, we will be able to give them the same comfort God has given us." 2 Corinthians 1:3-4*

## LADIES DAY

Maribel was invited to a ladies day at the Lake **Okechobee Church**. Marie and her daughters went with her as well as other ladies from Pompano. Marie is sister's lety's friend and she has been coming to services and Bible studies for the past two years. After Maribel's lesson she made an invitation and Marie decided to be baptized. Brother Ulbert from West Broward took her confession and baptized her Praise the Lord!



Maribel was invited to yet another ladies day at the **Hollywood Congregation**. The theme was about the second coming of our Lord. Our sister Paty from Naples brought her mother to listen. She and Ivan her husband had been sharing with her the gospel since their conversion about ten years ago. She got up at the end of the lesson and asked to be baptized. We celebrated with them and once again saw our Lord's faithfulness.



**Concord Street Church of Christ** had their ladies day and invited Maribel as their speaker. She spoke about the gifts the Holy Spirit gives us to work for the good of the Church. Johana a lady from Honduras that had been coming to services and classes for the past two years was baptized after the lesson. That brought great joy to everyone. Praise be to God!



The ladies of the Hot Springs Village Church had a retreat outside of Little Rock and Maribel along with Isabella attended. They were blessed to be able to take part of the event and see each other for the first time since Isabella left home. What an incredible blessing is to have family in the Lord!

As I mentioned earlier I was invited to a retreat in **Guatemala**. That was such a blessing to be able to spend time with men that day in and day out are on the mission field. Pray, sing, learn, cry, share and enjoy the fact that we are all in this together. The retreat was from Monday to Friday, but to get a cheaper fare I had to stay till Monday. That week was indescribable, but the Lord prepared for me something I will never forget.

Brother Ismael, whom had an accident three years ago by getting ran over by a car while on his bike, is from Guatemala. He wanted very much for me to visit his family while I was there. I had no idea how I was going to be able to see them, because I had no car, I did not know the area I was about three hours from where his family lived.

Maribel was worried for me and spoke to a sister she met couple years back from Guatemala that serves with her husband as missionaries in Bogota Colombia. She found out that her husband was going to be in the retreat and asked her to ask her husband Byron to search for me. We were 70 men in the retreat in all. The organizers broke us up in groups of four to be able to have intimacy and share about our experiences in the field. Wouldn't you know it that Byron, Sandra's husband; Maribel's friend was in my group. Yes. Our Lord does it again. He told me he was going to go Saturday to Lake Atitlan with two other brothers and he wanted me to go with them. We drove that Saturday to Lake Atitlan and on our way there I received a message from Ismael which was strange since I did not have coverage in Guatemala, asking me to call his brother Mario. I asked Brother Simeon, who was driving us to lend me his phone and called Mario. To my surprise when I asked Brother Simeon where we were and if we were close to Sololá the city where Ismael's family lived he told me we were ten minutes away. Our Lord is good all the time. After Lake Atitlan where we spent the afternoon we called Mario and he asked us to meet up with his father and sister in Sololá's plaza. His father then invited us to their home to dinner and we there we were five missionaries from different places, one from the area sharing the gospel with Ismael's family. Wow! I lived it, but yet it is hard to believe to what great lengths our Lord goes to reach the lost.

Brother Simeon invited me to preach that Sunday in Chimaltenango the congregation he serves in. We spent the night with him and sure enough the next day I was preaching in a place where I never in my life dreamt of being. After the message a girl called Miriam Pinol Martinez asked to be baptized. He is Marvelous!

Monday came and the end of my trip in Guatemala with many more things to tell about God's amazing plan.

I was sitting on the plane on an aisle seat with the plane almost full to capacity. But I saw that the left row all the way in the back was empty. As soon as we were on the air and the fasten seat belt sign came off, I stood up and went back to the empty seat. To my surprise the window seat was already occupied and I took the aisle seat, but at least there wasn't anybody in the middle. When I opened my back pack to look for a pen to fill the customs form, a chocolate I had bought for a friend of Ismael that was from Guatemala as well, popped out. The guy sitting at the window asked "can I buy that chocolate from you?" who knew?

That the Lord would use that for us to have a conversation for three hours. It turned out he was a Christian, but had fallen away. He was on his way to Fort Lauderdale because he had been recently fired and was going to visit his brother. He is a professional soccer player well known in Guatemala and Central America. Milton Leal is his name. We prayed, laughed and cry together as we continued to see the hand of our Lord in every area and aspect of our lives. I told him that those seats we took were not empty after all. The Father, Son and Holy Spirit were there waiting for us to have a sweet conversation about the love God has for all of us.



*"...Every day of my life was recorded in your book.  
Every moment was laid out  
before a single day had passed".*

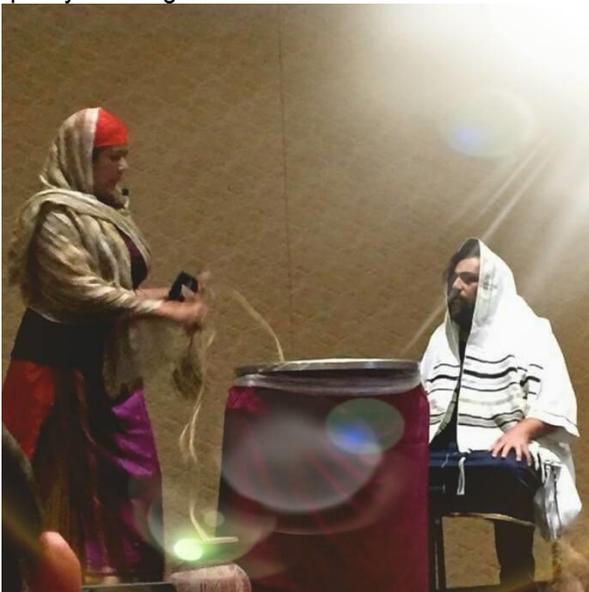
**Psalm 139:16**

The **Equip conference** took place in Orlando this summer as well where we had a time of communion with several congregations in English and Spanish from all over the country. We ran into a familiar face. Sister Jo from Hot Springs Village was there serving the speakers what a joy to see her.



We were blessed with different lessons on different topics with the main focus being evangelism. It was a blessing for the Church to be reminded of the most important thing Jesus commanded us to do and be equipped for it.

As a family we took three days off before the conference and visited Silver Springs where the Lord blessed us with much needed rest and gave us a chance to spend some quality time together.



After the conference Giancarlo and Isabella went to serve with the Palmetto Church of Christ once again to **Tegucigalpa Honduras.**

We thank all of you for your support, encouragement and prayers you have given to them throughout the years.



They have grown to love the Lord and His work because of that and we are always encouraged to see them serving Him. Jarley, their older brother as you know is also serving with a mission team from AIM in Santa Rosa De Copan **Honduras.** The Lord has shown us through them His plans and love for them and the lost. He is amazing and worthy of our Praise!



While in Honduras, Maribel and I went to my cousin's wedding in Puerto Rico where I was asked by them to speak to the family. Our Lord prepared that time for them to hear the hope we have in Him. We also had the opportunity to worship with the Church in Bayamon P.R. where Luis Rodriguez a brother who is 88 years old and worships with us in Pompano was baptized.

What a blessing to have family in the Lord all over the world. The Lord is a master in connecting His people and we see that very clearly.

## YOUTH YOUTH

This August was a special time at the **CFBC** where every year we have a Bible camp for Spanish speakers. Kyleigh Cicos is John and Krysinda's Cicos daughter and she decided to be baptized at camp this year on the last night. Krysenda is the sister the Lord used back in March 2006 to introduce us to Giancarlo and Isabella. She was working at the adoption agency at the time. Her husband John, Kyleigh and her parents are very dear to us. We all rejoiced for Kyleigh's decision to surrender her life to Christ.



That weekend we also rejoiced with our brethren from the Church of the Palm Beaches for the decision Idalmis a teenager that has just arrived from Cuba and had been at camp that week decided to put on Christ on baptism. How great is our Lord!

One Saturday night after celebrating with Jorge and Digna their daughter Genesis third birthday; on our way home Rodrigo Fortanell one of our teen agers decided to be baptized.



We have known him since he was seven years old. All Praises be to the one that can and calls us to Him!

Every year on Labor Day in Orlando the Orange Avenue Church puts on an event for teenagers called **Sonquest**.



This year the theme was illuminate reminding teens that those who have given their lives to Christ must be a light to others around them. It was an amazing time of singing, learning and growing alongside the teens of many states in the South Eastern part.



*“I planted the seed in your hearts, and Apollos watered it, but it was God who made it grow. It’s not important who does the planting, or who does the watering. What’s important is that God makes the seed grow” **1 Corinthians 3:6***

## A PERSONAL NOTE...

Not everything has a happy ring to it. Unfortunately the next weekend after service I got a phone call that I had dreaded for years. My uncle Arturo was a father to me when my parents got a divorce. I was only nine years old and he practically adopted me giving me opportunities that later the Lord let me see it was part of His plan.

My Uncle sent me to study at a tennis academy where his older brother Roberto had sent his three boys. He paid for my schooling all the way through college and after that gave me a Job in Mexico so that I could be close to the family once again. While in Florida in the tennis academy I met Leoncio Dominguez who ended up getting a scholarship to play tennis for Harding University. He converted there from Catholicism and shared the gospel with me.

When I went back to Mexico I was already baptized and my uncle rented me an apartment on his building where later on two Colombian girls moved in the apartment below. Maribel was the woman the Lord had for me. And once again it was my uncle an instrument of that so that we could meet.

Later on after Maribel and I were married, we took a trip with Giancarlo and Isabella whom we had recently adopted to Texas. We were going to visit a former Bible professor and His wife that were like parents to us so they could meet the kids.

While driving through Louisiana, I get the desire in my heart to call La Quinta Inn in San Antonio Texas, where my uncle used to stay when he traveled on business. I asked the receptionist to connect me to his room, and lo and behold she does. With a great surprise I greeted him and told him that I was on my way to Houston. He told me he was leaving the next morning on a flight back to Mexico. I decided to go all night driving to San Antonio so that he could be the very first person to meet my kids. What an amazing gift the Lord gave me.

The phone call I received that Sunday after service was from my brother Orlando. "Carlos he said. Our uncle Arturo has left us"

What an amazing man he was and without knowing it the one role model I would have of love, mercy, and kindness and the instrument the Lord used throughout my life to let me know He was always and will be always with me.

I flew to Mexico that next morning to arrive just before they would take my uncle's body inside the oven to be cremated. Thank you Lord for the life of my uncle Arturo and the example he gave me of love for the family.

I got back to Florida Wednesday morning and started driving on a journey that I dreaded as well. Taking Isabella to the University was a bitter sweet experience as well. Arturo her brother came as we drove almost 24 hours to OCU. On our way there we stopped to sleep at a Church family's home from outside Little Rock where the brethren from HSV are collaborating. We were received by the Zepulveda family whom Giancarlo and I had met eight years back while we attended a conference for preachers in Tulsa.

Now the Lord had brought this family to the same city where Isabella would attend school. What a glorious Father we have.

We are so grateful to be able to see, and experience what the Lord has for those who love and seek him.



Thank you again brothers and sister, for partnering with us to be able to take the message of Christ to all nations.

We love you,

**Carlos, Maribel, Giancarlo and Isabella Preciado**  
**Ephesians 1:6**