



May 2022

Greetings Pastor and Church Family,

I've had time recently to reflect on the last year of our life and ministry and would like to share with you all a few of the blessings that we have seen personally. We are truly humbled by your generosity and your prayers over the last year. On multiple occasions, my wife has asked me, "But why are they so kind to us?" in response to a gift or an unexpected blessing that we have received. I'm still trying to figure that out myself, but in all seriousness, we thank you from the bottom of our hearts.

It's hard to believe, but in June I will have completed one year here in Mexico. It seems like just yesterday that I arrived full of ideas about how my new life here as a missionary would be. For better or for worse, I'm glad that, in reality, I could never have imagined just how different it would be.

As you all know, I have been working with Pastor Adolfo Lima and the *Iglesia Bautista Libertad* (Liberty Baptist Church) in Teotihuacan, Mexico. In the fall of 2019, God made it clear to me that this was the place where He would have me to serve while I waited on His leading as to where to start a church here in Mexico. However, due to COVID-19, I was delayed in starting my deputation. During that time, my now wife and I got engaged. To state it briefly, because I started deputation later than planned, the time came for me to go to Mexico to marry my wife before I had finished my deputation.

Looking back, I can see how God has used this situation to teach me to trust in Him. Not a month has gone by where God hasn't supplied our needs. How often do we claim to be people of faith, knowing that God has the power to provide our needs, yet even in the smallest of circumstances, we doubt that God cares enough to do so. Without a doubt, the biggest and most difficult lesson that I've had to learn this year was living by faith. It's a lesson that I'm still working on mastering every day. If you were to ask me before I came to Mexico what my plans were, I would have shown you a list on my phone of what I was going to do in order of importance. It makes me smile to think how that almost none of those things have happened the way that I imagined they would; but thank God, His plans have always been better than mine!! As much as I wish that I could explain it to you, I don't have the words to express the peace that God has given me . . . in times of loneliness, in times of homesickness, in times of discouragement, in times when we had no money, and in times when we had plenty. Through it all, God has been teaching me how to trust in Him and to be content. *"Not that I speak in respect of want: for I have learned, in whatsoever state I am, therewith to be content."* (Philippians 4:11) To be completely honest, the good times have outweighed the bad by far.

As I reflect on the past year, it has been a busy one. My wife and I teach in the Christian school. She teaches fourth grade, and I teach English and Bible classes in the junior high and high school. On Monday and Friday evenings, I teach classes at the Bible institute. This past semester, I have had the privilege to teach classes on the Life of Christ and New Testament Survey. One of my favorite responsibilities has been to teach a Sunday school class for young men, ages 16-20. I pray that God would allow me to be a godly influence in one of the most important stages of these young men's lives. My wife teaches a group of girls, ages 8-12. These are just a few of the responsibilities that we share here. Below I would like to share with you all a summary of what has transpired in our lives and ministry in the past year. May God continue to bless you and your respective ministries. We greatly appreciate your prayers and support over the last year.



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Prayer Requests

1. Please pray for my wife's visa situation. We have an appointment scheduled for March 2023, but we ask that you pray for a miracle—pray that we can get her appointment expedited. (We are hoping to return for a brief deputation furlough next year, but she cannot travel without that visa.)
2. Please pray that I will be able to get my Mexican residency visa. We have an appointment scheduled but ask that you pray that my visa will be approved. (Without this visa, I would need to leave the country every six months to renew my visa.)
3. Please pray for a few of my most recent converts: Diego, Pedro, Arturo, and Enrique. Pray that God would allow me the opportunity to continue discipling them and that they would be faithful to Christ.

TIMELINE OF EVENTS IN THE DePAOLIS FAMILY OVER THE LAST YEAR

June – July 2021

- Our wedding
- Music Camp 2021 – This past year, we had around 200 teenagers from all over Mexico, who came to learn how to play instruments and how to worship God properly with their music. Five received Christ as their Saviour, and many others surrendered their lives to serve God.



August – September 2021

- By far, the hardest thing that we faced this year was the unexpected passing of my father-in-law this past August due to COVID. Many of you reached out to us during that time; words can't express how grateful we are for the many kind words of encouragement that we received on your part.
- Mexican Independence Day (September 16)



October – November 2021

- 18th anniversary of Iglesia Bautista Libertad (November 18-21) – This past November, our church here celebrated 18 years. What a blessing the church family has been to me during my time here. They have encouraged and embraced me as one of their own since the beginning. I'm humbled by the spirit and joy that they have for the things of Christ. I would be remiss if I didn't thank Pastor Lima as well.



December – January 2022

- Christmas and New Year's

February – March 2022

- Missions Conference – In the month of February, we had our annual Missions Conference. This year was extra special because the young people of the Christian school were the ones who helped to organize the different activities for the conference. I loved seeing their enthusiasm. The young people presented several dramas about missions and missionaries. They provided special music, and on the final day of the conference, each class was responsible to represent different countries and to provide a food from that country. I was encouraged to see their excitement. My prayer is that God would call some of these same young people to be the future missionaries and pastors who will reach Mexico and the world for Christ.
- My wife's birthday (March 26)!!



April – May 2022

- Youth Conference – This was three days with about 150 teenagers from different churches who came together to hear preaching and learn how to draw closer to God. Several trusted Christ as their Saviour, and many more surrendered their lives to serve Christ.
- My birthday (May 4)
- Our first daughter, Olivia Jane, was born on May 17! What more can I say than I thank God that He has entrusted us with a child. Many were praying; and, thankfully, Mom and Baby are doing well. We covet your prayers in this new stage of life that we have entered.

