

## **Monthly Report**

**Joel Holt**

Caparra Terrace church of Christ, Puerto Rico  
Iglesia de Cristo en Caparra Terrace, Puerto Rico  
March/April, 2011

### **ATTENDANCE AVERAGES:**

- SUNDAY AM: 13 (English); 11 (Spanish)
- MIDWEEK: 10 (English)

### **CONGREGATIONAL CLASS TOPICS:**

- Sunday A.M. English – The Gospel of Luke
- Midweek English – Study of the Church
- Sunday A.M. Spanish - Acts

### **SERMON TOPICS:**

- Prayer in Public Worship
- Singing in Public Worship
- Scripture Reading in Public Worship
- Joseph and Mary: Lessons On Resolving Perceived Conflicts
- Lessons from the Wise Men
- Bear Fruit In Keeping with Repentance

### **EVANGELISTIC EFFORTS/CONTACTS:**

- We are still meeting once per month with the brethren in Juncos.
- YT– Y has pleasantly surprised us by rededicating herself to regular studies, and is now studying consistently every week with Anna. They have gone over the plan of salvation, and Y has expressed interest in being re-baptized (she was previously baptized in a Pentecostal church), however, she feels she needs to understand more about it before making that commitment. We feel she needs to understand she is not being baptized into a local church, or denomination, but into the Lord's body, and so Anna is taking her through the conversions in Acts to help clarify those points.
- SC – Studies with her have been off and on for the past several months (and more off than on, really). However, I feel like patience is the key with her. She is struggling to overcome some major obstacles in her personal life, and during her weaker times in dealing with those, she fails to communicate well with us, and misses studies, but then as she realizes the need to be stronger, we are the ones she calls for help, and she specifically requests studies dealing with the issues she is facing. It will likely take a while for her to truly realize that obedience to the Lord and full commitment to Him are the answers for the problems she faces, but each time she picks herself back up she learns that lesson a little bit more. She is currently on an upward swing emotionally, and has requested more studies. We have seen a great deal of progress with her over the months we've known her, and we hope that progress will soon lead her to making a full commitment to Christ.
- P – I am still studying with him each week, and he has been at services consistently since his release from house arrest. He is still hesitant to make the changes needed in his life, but the fact that he is still willing to listen is at least a positive thing.
- N – He has still not committed to personal studies with me, but I am hopeful those will come soon. He originally started attending services with the Spanish-speaking church, but has since begun attending all of the services that both congregations have, in Spanish and in English. Anna and I have spent a good amount of time with him outside of services, and despite not having official 'Bible studies,' he nearly always has a question he wants answered, and we are happy to tell him what God's word says about those things. He has shown a great deal of maturity in his

personal reading of God's word, as well as in accepting what the Bible says about some very difficult questions he has asked.

- Internet studies – In the last couple of weeks I've had occasion to study with a couple of people over the Internet. One is one of our member's (PF) brother, M, who lives on the other side of the island in Mayagüez. He is a devout Catholic, and is very resistant to her efforts to teach him, however, he talks to her every now and then about the gospel. As the result of her most recent efforts, she passed along some of his comments to me, and I responded to the things he said. She emailed him my response, and he has since replied to it. I am working with P in replying to what he sent (although she does an excellent job in answering his emails herself). It is very encouraging to see her dedication in reaching out to her family with the gospel, and I'm obviously happy to be any help I can be in her efforts. The other Internet study is with a friend of a friend in Chattanooga, TN. He is a college student named J, and I noticed that he had posted some things on Facebook expressing doubts about the reliability and authenticity of the New Testament. I responded to a few of the things he said, and this led to a Facebook message correspondence about whether the gospels can be believed. He is a very deep-thinking person, and seems open-minded, and I hope he will be convinced of the truth about Jesus and the Bible.

#### **INDIVIDUAL BIBLE STUDIES:**

- LG and I continue to study every week. He is making very noticeable progress in his Bible knowledge, and has made some decisions in his personal life recently that show that he is maturing as a Christian. We are very encouraged by him.
- RM has recently gotten a new job which should ease his work schedule enough that he can attend more regularly. His previous jobs caused him to work late Saturday nights, and he would generally sleep until late, arriving at services just before they ended. We hope he commits himself to be there now that his schedule permits it. If all goes as he plans, and as I hope, this should open him up for our weekly meetings that we stopped several months ago due to his work situation. As I mentioned before, he is a very valuable asset to the group when he dedicates himself to the Lord and the work there, and we hope he will recommit himself again.
- I still meet with MF every week for lunch. He is growing a lot, and soon he will be coming over to our house so that I can teach him to lead singing. He has also agreed to preach in English one Sunday per month beginning in May. He is eager to help the church in whatever way the group needs, and is a tremendous encouragement to the group.

#### **ADDITIONAL NOTES:**

- Tol and Dana have moved to the Dallas, TX area, and so are no longer directly involved with the work on the island. We are already feeling the loss of their efforts, and they are greatly missed. Tol has been in very poor health since they moved, and has had a couple of operations to remove infections from his pancreas, gall-bladder, and spleen. He is recovering from those, and the doctors are optimistic about his future progress, but he has been, and still is, very sick and his condition has been quite serious over the past several weeks. Keep him in your prayers. His absence has obviously affected our work, as he is no longer sharing the responsibilities we both had while he was here, so it has been an adjustment learning to take on the full responsibilities of preaching for two churches and handling the personal Bible studies we had started while he was here. Several members in both churches have stepped up to help in some of this, committing to preach one Sunday a month, and perhaps teach some classes in the future. Anna has begun teaching a Ladies' Bible class and has been studying with most of the contacts we've had with women recently. All of this has been a great help, but there is still a lot of work to do. If anyone knows of a man who knows Spanish, or who has a Spanish background and could quickly pick up the language, who might be interested in moving here to help in the work, please let me know. There is plenty of work to be done, and there would be immediate work for that person to do!