

The Sheppard's November-December 2017 Newsletter

We trust that this letter will help those of you who support our ministry in prayer to focus more clearly on the needs of Mexico and our ministry here.

Though we have lived almost 35 years in Mexico now, we are still learning something new about the Mexican culture. As some of you may know, between Oct. 31 and Nov. 2, Mexico celebrates the Day of the Dead, when they believe that the spirits of the deceased return to the world of the living for one day of the year to be with their families. Mexicans visit cemeteries, decorate the graves and spend time there, in the presence of their departed friends and family members, greeting the spirits with offerings they bring of their loved one's favorite foods that they enjoyed when they were alive. They also make elaborately decorated altars (called *ofrendas*, or *offerings*) in the schools and in their homes, to welcome the spirits.

The past few years, Halloween has become darker and darker. Puebla hosts a Circus of Horrors, where satanic rituals take place every day for a month, the "Santa Muerte" (Holy Death) cult and other ungodly practices have become so prominent that most evangelical Christians here do not celebrate Halloween. We prefer to emphasize Abundant Life and, if we are involved at all, it is to hand out attractive gospel tracts with candy.



This morning David and I went out for breakfast and noticed new, attractive paper placemats. On them were printed some interesting cultural and ethnic facts that we weren't aware of before. About 2 hours' drive from Puebla (E-SE) there is a city called Tehuacán, where years ago David once held a Logos Bible School. On the third Thursday of October 1784 there was a terrible massacre in this city, so the day before the anniversary of this date, they decorate a site with grass and herbs and start a bonfire. Then they decorate a goat with marigolds (called flowers of death in Mexico), and offer the poor animal to the gods, with the help of a Tetlale (a Shaman).

Recently, David and I attended a prayer and revival conference and the Pastor of the large church hosting the event shared some startling facts. He said that besides being high in corruption, Mexico holds second place in the world for violence (behind Syria). They are also second in Impunity, where, because if you are accused of a crime, you are considered guilty until proven innocent. This means that about 46% of people in prison shouldn't be there. With such a lack of justice, true criminals are not punished etc., so you can imagine the resulting insecurity, violence and corruption.

Over our house it is very common to have police helicopters flying overhead, with loud sirens blasting. Just before leaving for our prayer meeting this week, we were entertained with police cars racing down our street, their sirens screaming full force. We usually have no idea what is going on, but just trust God to take care of us.

At the beginning of this year, I was challenged with a Word that we were commanded to be "strong and of good courage", and to be "strong in the Lord and in power of his might." It turned out that in this year, 2017 we have needed to seek the Lord's strength like never before. God has faithfully brought us through several thefts, both in our home and at church this past year, David's back surgery and other health challenges, earthquakes and hurricanes. There have also been many stresses as we seek to equip others to continue with some of our ministries, so that we can expand into others. We now have 4 class hours of Bible School (instead of 3) on Monday nights, from 5-9pm. Gerry

Nygren and David continue to faithfully teach a course every semester. One pastor, Enrique Gonzales, who is soon to graduate with this B.Th. with us, teaches another course and Rowene is teaching Ephesians. It is a joy to see 18 enthusiastic students soaking up the Living Word and being trained and equipped for the ministry.

LIBROS DEVOCIONALES

Despertando al alma con Dios
Rowene A. Sheppard

Rowene siempre ha sido muy apasionada en vivir en la presencia de Dios. Esta pasión le ha dirigido a escribir cientos de devocionales y canciones. Su deseo ferviente es proveer herramientas que traen a los lectores a una relación con el Señor más profunda e íntima y ayudarles a deleitarse más en Su Palabra.

365 días de vida plena con Dios

Disponible en: Instituto Mexicano Comandante Logos
Tel: (222) 385-2772
ELA, DVM, Arriola Maravilla

¡Adquiere los ya!
En tu Librería Cristiana Favorita

We had thought that perhaps we would be stopping

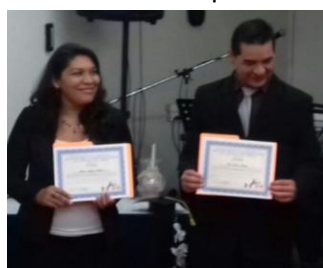


production of our magazine, the Alliance, after 27 years, but God has raised up a group of very capable people who are desiring to keep it going. It is the only Christian magazine that we know of still operating in Mexico. David is spending many hours meeting with this team that God seems to be rising up to keep this ministry going. They just published and distributed the first issue of the 28th year the other day. See it at: www.revistaalianza.com and <https://rhz66.app.goo.gl/OSG20YkwMDAu5j1i1>

We continue to pastor our church, Gracia y Gloria, seeking for wisdom and direction as we continue on in faith, believing that God will have his way and his perfect will done. Since my operation in April we have been “Live Streaming” our services and Bible school classes to Facebook and recently, even our midweek prayer and Bible Study meeting. – God is using such to touch many lives. We are surprised all the time to see how many have tuned in. When the anointing of the Holy Spirit is on a service and someone tunes in even for a few moments, even “one Word or thought” directed by the Holy Spirit can change the destiny of their life for all eternity. That’s our reason to be here—to speak the Word in season and out of season—and let God define the times and seasons in each individual life. We even “Live Streamed” Darling who was our special speaker at our Ladies Christmas Breakfast last Saturday. 30 ladies plus about 10 children attended.



Just a note or two here regarding what God has done. One of the people desiring to see our magazine continue is a young man who came to some of the first Bible school classes in 1995-96. Today Moses is pastoring a small work, has a law degree, has authored two books and has a public speaking ministry in high schools speaking to parents and teens about restoring the Values and Principles from God’s Word needed in our society today that have been lost. Last February I met a gal, Marysol, who had been a Bible school student also in another city where I had traveled to once a month for a Friday night Saturday all day type school.



She asked me if I remembered her. Then she told me some details. She was 16 or 18 at the time (1996-97) and took a course on the Gifts of the Spirit among others. It apparently changed her and her family’s lives. WOW! They started at least one church back then in their city and have since moved to Puebla and started another growing church. She and her husband are also computer people, both in design and programing. She has become the magazine designer and he looks after our web page work etc. Another story I’d love to share is that of a student of one of our long distance ISOM schools in Veracruz State. Brother Garth Knapp happened to come for ministry time in Mexico both this young man’s first year certification (Hiram Campos) and then for his graduation, I think. He graduated in a group of 12 young people in Mizantla Ver. From time to time I get a report from him but just the other day



a short video arrived showing some of the powerful meetings this young man (an evangelistic ministry) is having up and down the coastal area in the state of Veracruz. Praise the Lord! Another student, Juan Antonio, a Pastor for many years too, will join our teaching staff here in Puebla in January. Gerald Nygren and Rowene will continue to teach. Pray for us as we continue training future leaders of the Mexican church every Monday evening from



5:30 to 9 pm. Pray also for healing for our ministry secretary Janet who is going in for breast cancer surgery Jan 2, 2018.



In September we had a graduation ceremony where we had ten ISOM graduates receive Diplomas for their studies and **we also held a graduation ceremony for Doctor Gerald Nygren** (my brother in law) who had received his D.D. from Logos University but never had a ceremony. Great night. Here are a few pics. We “live streamed” that service too! Thank God for those who know how to do the technology stuff!

Our grandson Cyrus (14 ½ months old) and his mother Emma Darling arrived a few days ago and then our son

Michael will be joining them to spend Christmas with us here in Puebla. We are looking forward to a good visit though one knows it won't be long enough as they will be soon leaving to return home to Surrey BC where they live and Michael works. Cyrus is sure a joy to see. Michael will be speaking on Sunday the 17th in our church.

I've tried to give a few examples of what your regular prayers and financial support do here in Mexico. Thank you so much for your prayers and financial support.

There is a constant need for both. Lately we've gone through some heavy duty battles of faith, and your prayers especially are helping us win every time.

Your income tax receiptable year end giving can make a real difference in our ministry and should be sent to our home church: NORTHSIDE CHURCH, 1140 Lansdowne Drive, Coquitlam, BC V3E 2Y9 Tel: 604-942-7711. Designate it to ourselves or the MEXICO PROJECT. (Please do not write our name on the check itself but rather mention it in your short letter. Thanks) If you feel you would like to join in praying for and supporting financially this ministry, that too would be an answer to prayer. We need more of both of those things.

Serving Jesus in Mexico, David and Rowene Sheppard, Puebla, Mexico

FB: David Sheppard; FB: David Pastor; FB: Rowene Sheppard Tel: 604-357-3022

-- from your smart phone: (+52 1) 222-262-1755 (David) & (+52-1) 222-163-6810 (WhatsApp)(Messenger)

***If you notice different e mail addresses, I'm using them all so as to send this rapidly to all today. They all prohibit “mass mailings” but 20 or so a couple of time each gets them out OK. Our main mailing address is still: d.sheppard@mail.com.

