

MINISTRY REPORT: Felicia Cazares: Caracas

As I am currently serving in a small congregation which is located in an area saturated with street vendors, drug addicts, street people and thieves. There are about 86 people officially on the roster, representing Venezuela and several countries in the West Indies and Africa. Life is not easy in Venezuela for anyone. The Pastor must divide his time and energy between working as an English teacher, his pastoral duties, and his family. I support the Pastor in every church related activity. For ease of explanation, I will describe them according to the following categories: 1) Delivery of the Word, 2) Counseling, and 3) Administration.

1. Delivery of the Word: Teaching-Preaching-Evangelism

For the past year and one half I have taught every Tuesday night. I facilitate weekly prayer which consists of expounding a portion of scripture followed by prayer in “prayer point” style. I also teach during seminars, and my topic for the last seminar was “Effective Communication in Evangelism.” A Teacher is who I am, so I teach informally all the time.

I was interviewed by a television station several months ago and that short interview has proved to me an effective aid for evangelism. While I am walking down the street, it is not unusual for me to be stopped by someone who saw the program and wants to know how to get to the church.

2. Counseling

My ministry is healing and reconciliation and at least 30% of my overall time is spent in counseling—listening and helping people find solutions according to the Word.

We are open to the public so at any time, someone may come in for ministry—whether they know the Lord or not at that time. The church has a reputation for being a place where one can go for help. Some of our current members were former drug addicts who came in and we fed them.

The Youth. As in any country, youths are looking for someone to listen to them—pay attention to their needs without judgment them individually. I fill in the communication gap between them and their parents. At times, the parents will even bring their children to talk to me. Several of the youth (in their early 20s) have brought their friends from university or from their jobs for me to minister to them, and several have been led to the Lord.

The Coffee Ministry. One of our members has a knack for meeting English speaking tourist and he invites them to the church for a cup of coffee and I minister to them. Typically they are backpackers, especially from Europe several have receive Christ. Sometimes the only thing we can do is offer them a cup of coffee and a piece of bread, pray for them and send them on their way. I serve a lot of coffee.

3. Administration

I am the only native English speaker in the congregation even though other come from countries where the “official language” may be English.

A. Leader, Office Staff and Maintenance. What does that mean? Good question. What I do under this heading is as follows:

- I edit all outgoing documents and letters.
- Prepare all internal forms used by all departments
- Designed the church bulletin and produce it weekly
- Design and produce all fliers
- Created and maintain membership roster
- Maintain church lending library
- Burn CDs for the choir
- I type all English and Spanish lyrics for choir and put them on acetates for overhead projector.
- Help clean the church.

B. Assistant to Women’s Group Leader

In this capacity, I disseminate information, take meeting minutes, and when she is unavailable, I facilitate the meetings.

I am at the church 7 days a week, attend every service, all leadership meeting, and all choir rehearsals. I frequently am the first one to arrive and the one to lockup at night. In summary, I do whatever is needed at the time. I hope this helps.

As Vanessa asked me to prepare a monthly budget, I have prepared the following. It does not include any clothing allowance or entertainment (what’s that?!)

MONTHLY BUDGET

| EXPENSE | AMOUNT |
|--|--------|
| Lodging | \$900 |
| Food | \$200 |
| Toiletries & OTC Meds (Sunscreen is expensive!) | \$75 |
| Stationary Supplies | \$20 |
| Writing Materials, Personal Printing Costs | |
| Transportation (I usually walk or take the train) | \$15 |
| Communication: | \$50 |
| * Internet Usage | \$20 |

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|-------------------------------------|---------|
| * Long Distance Calls | \$15 |
| * Cell Phone Recharge – local calls | \$15 |
| Personal Care | \$25 |
| Incidentals (includes offering) | \$65 |
| Subtotal | |
| Tithes | \$150 |
| TOTAL | \$1,500 |

Urgent Needs

Right now, I have several things that need serious attention.

- 1. I am in debt to the place where I am living in the sum of \$2,800 and that amount increases by \$30.00 daily. This is my biggest stress.**
- 2. I lost a filling in my tooth a year and a half-ago. It has never been attended to and it is very hot and cold sensitive. By the way, I have had no dental or medical attention for over 3 years.**