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Note:

Make checks payable to Team Expansion, addressed to my forwarding agent. Do not put my name anywhere on the check. Donations are tax-deductible.

"I will build my church, and the gates of Hades will not overcome it."
Matthew 16:18



Together Venezuela

SEPTEMBER/OCTOBER 2011

CÚA, VENEZUELA

SCC Music Directors Form Committee

Dear Brothers and Sisters,

With our spring transition from Venezuela to the USA swiftly approaching, my principal ministry concern has been negotiating the hand-off of leadership of the Siempre Con Cristo music ministry. Since June, I have been meeting regularly with Edwin, Elias, and Noel, the three men who rotate with me as Sunday morning music directors. In talking with them, it became clear to me that none were in a position in life to take on the full load of being the sole music ministry leader. All three work full-time jobs. Noel and Edwin work in Caracas, which means they leave home very early and return home very late five days a week. Edwin and Elias are recently married and Noel is headed in that direction. The three simply do not have enough time to devote to a task that is almost a full-time job.

Therefore, on October 1st, I proposed that they form a three-man leadership committee in order to share the workload and also take advantage of each person's unique gifting. They were in unanimous and enthusiastic approval.

On November 26th, the committee will hold its first meeting during which I will officially hand over leadership of the SCC music min-

istry. I want as much time as possible to serve in a supporting role under these three men who have so faithfully and sacrificially served under me during my years as leader. I am convinced that missionaries err when they ask for the support of developing leaders, capacitate them for leadership, and then hand over leadership to them, only to immediately abandon the young leaders in order to start a new project elsewhere. I look forward to giving four months of support to Edwin, Elias and Noel.

Please pray for the transition of this very important ministry. And please continue to pray for Siempre Con Cristo to become an indigenous church.

With Joy in Christ,

Samuel and Hilda

Below: Elias, Noel, and Edwin plan out the next trimester of the SCC Sunday worship rotation. Banner-photo above: I have been truly blessed to be able to work with these three talented and committed Christian men.



Important Financial Update

Hilda and I are planning on late March for our transition from Venezuela to the USA. In addition to your continued prayer support, we ask that you, our financial partners, would continue to support us for the three months April, May, and June, following our transition. Team Expansion protocol calls for six to nine months of “home service” support for someone like me who has served full-time for over six years. We are asking for three months because we have faith that that is all we will need to get acclimated to our new surroundings.

Unfortunately, Hope Summit Christian Church leadership have informed me that they will only support us financially for January, February, and March and that they will not support us for April, May, or June. This development has added a considerable amount of stress to our lives as we anticipate that our finances will be very tight come spring.

Currently our mission assets are in the negative, but soon Hilda and I will begin the process of selling our mission-owned items including our Ford Explorer, several appliances, and various smaller items. We anticipate that proceeds from these sales will pay off all of the mission’s debts as well as help us to remain solvent through the spring. However, according to my projections, we will come up several hundred dollars short when we close accounts in June.

Please pray about this situation. God has always provided for our needs and we are confident that He will continue to do so. In the meantime, for those individual/family donors who traditionally give a yearly donation, we ask that you make this year’s donation for the equivalent of a half-year. For those who give on a monthly basis, we ask that you continue to make your donations through June.

Jonathan Training

While Hilda and I plan on leaving Venezuela this spring, the remaining Team Expansion missionaries are excited about Vision 2020: the vision to plant 120 churches in and out of Venezuela by the year 2020.

In September, Team Expansion held a church planting conference called Jonathan Training. Inspired by 1 Samuel 14:1-23, Jonathan Training focuses on training men and women of great faith to establish networks of house churches. Over 50 people from several of our churches received the two weeks of intensive training, including three people from Siempre Con Cristo. Eric Barry and Eric Derry from Team Expansion’s International Services were among the teaching staff which also included two visiting pastors from Colombia who have seen great results with house churches.

This marks a paradigm shift for our team in Venezuela which has focused mainly on planting traditional style churches with large congregations meeting in rented or owned buildings. The hope is that planting house churches will make Vision 2020 a reality.

Graduates of Jonathan Training receive their diplomas as the teaching staff sends them off with prayer (note: the picture on the left is censored for security reasons).



Prayer/Praise Points

- ◆ **Praise** for the development of Edwin, Elias, and Noel as worship directors. **Pray** for them as they assume leadership of the SCC music ministry in November.
- ◆ **Praise** for Jonathan Training in Caracas.
- ◆ **Pray** that our financial support would be sufficient until June.

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