



# Leonel Arriaga

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**My Dear Brothers and Sisters in Christ,**

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## THE NEW "ILAMATEPEC" COMMUNITY

*Let me tell you the whole story:* After the eruption of the Santa Ana volcano two years ago, hundreds of families were forced to abandon their homes, leaving behind the few possessions they had (chickens, crops, jobs). They left with only the clothes on their backs. Six months ago, they were finally given a place to live on the side of the main highway on the outskirts of Santa Ana. The Lord sent me to get to know the people of this community and their needs, first with an evangelistic activity during the month of January and then with different contacts we have had with them.

With the startup of a new school year the first week of February, we had the project of providing school materials for the children in greatest need. School started in a two-room building with a dirt floor, no walls, no water, no bathroom, no desks (the list goes on and on). For most of the children, it has been two years since they could go to school. The Family of Faith Church was able to provide the basic needs of these children that don't even have a pencil to take with them to class.

We have provided the community with clothing donations from brothers and sisters of Greenwood, Indiana and basic food supplies from a food basket set up at our church. During March, we had a medical team from our church give consultations and hand out medicines. There was prayerful ministration to each who was seen by the doctors and nurses of our church. It was evident the children suffer from malnutrition and the adults from chronic disease.



**HOUSES IN THE COMMUNITY**



**THE MEDICAL TEAM MINISTERING FROM OUR CHURCH**

During April, God had prepared a miracle. I contacted the brothers and sisters who met for church in one of the homes of the members (*each house is six meters by six meters – the entire house!*) as they did not have a place to meet together. I joined the group of 30 adults and 25 children and we spent the entire night in prayer and praise to God, seeking His face for the provision of a place to meet. God encouraged me to visit the mayor's office with some of the members and see if something could be done for them. I wrote a letter asking that a plot of land be donated to the church. We went a number of times to visit the mayor without success, but we continued to pray. On April 27<sup>th</sup> we received the news - the mayor had approved our request and had given the church the property they needed – a miracle! No government office gives away land to an evangelical church! We were all impacted by the news. The land is on high ground in the middle of the community and is large enough for one building. Work was begun the first of May and, with the help of a group of children from Greenwood, Indiana (who raised an offering to help with the construction), the work was finished. It is a simple building made of wood and sheet metal, centrally located, with a capacity of about 200 people. They now have a pastor and the

ministry is growing. God is great. It is a blessing to be with these brothers and sisters in Christ who, in spite of their poverty, come together every night in whatever weather (it is the rainy season now) and put their hearts to seek the face of God. The purpose is to reach this community for Christ (over 200 families with 700 children!) and that by His mercy, grace and love He will bring each and everyone to repentance. May God receive the glory!



**THE NEW CHURCH BUILDING – A MIRACLE!**

### **EVANGELISTIC ADVANCES**



**SMALL GROUPS**

The Lord has been so good to allow me to start two new small groups. One began after the evangelistic activities that were held in the north part of the city. In this group, there are both new converts and those who have not yet received Christ. Each Friday evening, we are together opening the Bible. It is wonderful to be in the midst of people who have a hunger and thirst for God's Word. Many of them did not even know how to use a Bible. It has been a blessing to see these new believers take their first steps in Christ. Berta and Antonio, a couple from this group who came to know Christ at the beginning of the year, were baptized in June.

The second small group came about from the heart of a sister in Christ. Since losing her husband, she has had a tremendous burden for her 6 children and 17 grandchildren. Many of them meet together with her on Saturday evening to share the great things the Son of God has done for us and the opportunity He has given us to repent before it is too late. This group is very receptive. There are many spiritual strongholds of resistance but we are trusting in the power of Christ to rescue the members of this family.

Brothers and Sisters in Christ, thank you for your support of my life and ministry. I have seen the hand of the Lord manifested through you and the promises of the Lord are faithful and true. You are part of the purpose the Lord has for my life and you have been greatly used. Glory to His name!

### **PRAYER REQUESTS**

- Guidance of the Holy Spirit - to know what is good and acceptable before the Lord, to know where He is leading me and that He would direct me in every way
- My daily provision
- The vision for the New Ilamatepec Community - that we can be a blessing to them
- The 2 new small groups - that each member will come to recognize Jesus as their Lord and Savior

Your servant in Christ,

*Leonel Arriaga*