

Last time I wrote to each of you in the context of a printed newsletter, the church of Christ in East Caracas was barely two years old. God has greatly matured this work as we reach our 3rd anniversary, Sunday, February 5. The most exciting part of the growth has been to watch the **men rise to the challenge** of serving and leading the Lord's church in East Caracas. We have been praying since the establishment of this work that God would bring up solid men to assist the existing **East Caracas Ministry Team**, in which I play a role. As you've gotten to know them in previous reports, I have the blessing of working with Luis and Fabiola Gómez (and their son, Daniel).



God has brought assistance to the East Caracas Ministry Team not only on a local level, but also by a new source of US support: the **South Baton Rouge Church of Christ**, the church in which I grew up. I am very excited about this new opportunity and have already rejoiced in the blessing of feeling their support and prayers. It is through *your* continual prayers and support that these things have been made possible. Keep it up! We're anxious to see what God has planned in 2006.

To give you a **brief summary of 2005**, I must encourage you to visit my website: www.MichelleMissions.com because I know that it would be impossible to share all of the good news here. We've rejoiced in the first wedding within the congregation, an all-night youth activity on the beach, the beginning of Bible study / get-togethers for the married couples, a marathon up the Avila mountain, more consistent and increased attendance at all activities, and of course, several baptisms. One of the special blessings last year was a campaign partnered with the Timberlane Church of Christ in Tallahassee, Florida, based on the theme "Life After Death." It is our prayer that many of you can join us in **campaigns and visits** in the future as these activities are vital to the growth and encouragement of the church. You would be coming to help us, but I guarantee that you will leave a stronger, more encouraged Christian yourself.



In 2005, the **women in East Caracas** started meeting for a monthly group Bible study one Saturday a month. The first study was "tolerated" by a bunch of fidgety ladies not ready for an in-depth study of the Word. By the third month, the women were actively participating and losing track of time! By the end of the year, we had completed an in-depth study of the fruit of the Spirit and several of the women were even ready to *lead* the studies. This year, we are studying transformed women of the Bible: what transformed them (like wisdom, forgiveness...) and how we can be transformed daily (Romans 12:2).

Two other Saturdays a month are dedicated to the youth and the married couples. The men have chosen Sunday afternoons for their Bible studies since that is when their work schedules permit. Please pray for these and other activities to be the right time for visitors to come and get to know the church and God's Word. Our **weekly Bible studies in homes and personal Bible studies** continue. The warmth of meeting in someone's home and sharing a meal or snack is special, but we're growing in number and can no longer have a congregational activity where we all fit. The Hotel Continental in which we meet on Sunday mornings and conduct the Evangelistic English Classes has limited meeting space and does not allow us to serve food, like for a potluck. We are praying fervently that God will lead us to our own meeting place. Please join us in prayer for this need.

As I have mentioned the **Evangelistic English Classes**, I must congratulate the six students who have graduated from the first advanced level in the *World English Institute* (four of the six students pictured). In the advanced level materials, we are studying directly from and about the Bible, which has brought about great discussion and personal Bible studies outside of class. Please pray for this ministry as we continue to see the fruits of our labor. I must tell one story representative of that growth and openness... I prepared a worksheet which had sentences to translate. One sentence was "Christians praise God every Sunday at church and with their lives." One of the students translated it correctly, but didn't understand its meaning. Since Luis, the East Caracas preacher, also attends that class and leads an opening



and closing prayer each week, I passed the question on to him to answer, but before he could respond, one of the other non-Christian students said, "Doesn't it have to do with your actions? If you do good things, you please God, right?" Luis and I just smiled and rejoiced in the opportunity to preach the Word to open/searching hearts.

Aside from the Evangelistic English Classes, the majority of my work is with the local women and children of East Caracas, but occasionally (about once a month), I have the blessing of accepting invitations for **other speaking engagements** throughout Venezuela. There is such a great need throughout the country for solid teachers of the Word who present the truth in a dynamic way, while setting a good example in Christian living. Most of the churches I work with are small and in need of encouragement, like the church in San Felipe where I conducted a Ladies' Day on "What is God's Will in My Life?" I took two of the young sisters from East Caracas with me and everyone left edified, encouraged and inspired to seek and fulfill God's will.



Saturday, February 4, I will be speaking at the largest congregation in Venezuela on the topic of "Depression and Discouragement." I am amazed at the opportunities God gives me to serve Him and to help others

serve. Four of the East Caracas sisters are going with me to Barquisimeto and there's a "waiting list" to accompany me on future ladies' day activities! The **Jeep Grand Cherokee** I was able to purchase at the beginning of November 2005 has been a tremendous help in making more of these visits possible and taking others with me, as well as fulfilling some of the basic needs we have for the transportation of people and the transport of chairs, materials, etc. in East Caracas since we don't have our own meeting place (yet) to store things.

The **church in Bogotá, Colombia**, is growing in number, but there are even less equipped men and women to help in the teaching and equipping of the saints. As the work in North Bogotá continues to struggle with this need, I am able to keep in touch with a couple of ladies by e-mail, encouraging and studying with them that way. Flavia (pictured left) is one of those ladies. I look forward to spending actual time with her, Gina, and the other women of the congregation February 13-20, 2006. These trips continue to be productive for the work in north Bogotá and for me personally, as it is the best/easiest way for me to renew my Venezuelan visa.



I opened this newsletter by mentioning the church's 3rd anniversary. In March, I will have been living in Caracas full-time for **three years**. I am humbled by the ways that God has used and blessed me here and elsewhere and I know that He will continue to direct me in His service for many years to come. Thanks for being a part of that journey. Yet again, there are more things to share than space available in this newsletter. Don't forget to look at the pictures and hear more of the stories on my website: www.MichelleMissions.com If you are not signed up to receive my e-mail updates, please let me know. We want to keep you informed of all God is doing through us and what He can continue to do through you.

Please pray for the following:

- Non-Christian Studies: María de Pilar, Ana Cristina, Yolanda, Antonietta, Beatriz, Irma, Yanira, and Isvelis
- Christian/Discipleship Studies: Mercedes, Marisela, Ana, Rosa, Evelyn, and Fabiola
- Thanking God for His innumerable blessings
- The general growth of the church in East Caracas
- The brothers growing in leadership
- Our own meeting place
- Our goals for 2006
- Your involvement in this work.

*Thanks again for your prayers and support!
We can't do it without you! M.*

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