

# Jeff & Barbi David

December 6, 2011

Dear Friends,

Barbi and I are very grateful for the many blessings we have experienced this last year, 2011. Without a doubt it has been one of the busiest of our ministry in Costa Rica. Since most of you have already read about our many comings and goings, there's no need to repeat in detail all that's taken place, but for the sake of celebrating God's goodness to us, let me note some of the highlights.

- At the end of May, we gathered with family and friends from all over the globe to celebrate the marriage of our daughter, Carol, to Jed Tan.
- In July we went to Singapore to attend the observance of the traditional Chinese wedding, the Tea Ceremony, for Carol and Jed and a huge reception afterward among Jed's extended family and his friends.
- I made two visits to Cuba, one in March to teach the Gospel of Mark at *Seminario los Pinos Nuevos* and at the end of September to teach hermeneutics at *Seminario Las Palmas*.
- In addition to teaching courses in Cuba from January through August, I rewrote a New Testament course on discipleship and taught three online courses for ProMETA and two traditional courses for *Seminario ESEPA*.
- Barbi taught second grade at Sojourn Academy here in San Jose, Costa Rica.
- In October and the first part of November, I was in the States to visit supporters and supporting churches.

As you can see this has been a very full year for us with much travel. We are grateful to the Lord for sustaining us. Although we enjoyed every opportunity that came our way, we are exhausted from the fast pace rhythm of this last year. One special milestone that we reached this year was that we have now completed 20 years of missionary service in Latin America. In 1991 we left the U.S. for language school. Carol was 5 years old and Jesse was 3; both have now graduated from college and are married.

## **Transition**

Since we returned from our last furlough in 2007, I have been working with both *Seminario ESEPA* and *ProMETA*. Both educational institutions are excellent ministries that meet an important need of the Latin American Evangelical Church. Both serve to develop Christian leaders not only in Costa Rica, but all over the world wherever Spanish speaking congregations may be found. The work of teaching at any educational institution is more comprehensive than just being in a classroom with students. Besides preparation for courses and correcting student work, a professor often serves on academic committees or in an administrative position; there is also the need to be involved in student life and to promote the ministry of the organization among churches and other Christian institutions. The last

four years I have had the challenge of continually juggling competing institutional responsibilities that have made a claim on my time and effort. None of what I was asked to do by either institution was unimportant, rather it was reasonable and in many cases very needed. The result was that it was hard to say “no” and I often overcommitted myself. Added to this tension was Cuba, a new door of opportunity and one that I very much want to walk through. For the last year or so I have been struggling with the need to resign from one ministry so that I might be able to give myself more fully to another and still maintain the option of exploring the new opportunities I have in Cuba. Two weeks ago I made the decision to leave *Seminario ESEPA*, where I have labored for the last fifteen years. It was not an easy decision, but I am confident in the Lord that it was the right decision, as it came through a long process of self-examination, prayer and counsel.

### **Leaning Toward the Future**

What does this decision mean for the immediate future? Beginning in January I will teach one course on spiritual formation, and edit two courses to be taught in the second and third semester of 2012 through *ProMETA*. In February, I along with my other colleagues in *ProMETA*, will be taking an online course designed by Dr. Mark Hendrickson to keep us up to speed on what’s happening in the area of university level online course design. I’ll begin teaching fulltime with *ProMETA* in May.

The Lord willing, the first week of April will find me in Havana, Cuba to hold a week-long seminar for twenty pastors/professors who teach in extension program of *Seminario Los Pinos Nuevos*. The purpose of this seminar is professional training and team building. I will send you more information about this in my next newsletter; however, I want to mention that I need to raise the money to cover the expense of this seminar, which is \$5,000.00.

Incredible as it seems, four years have passed since our last furlough. It’s that time again, but instead of returning to the States for an extended stay we have decided that I should travel for short periods to fundraise. As I mentioned above, I was in the States in October and November to visit supporters and supporting churches and I plan on returning in February and March to do the same. As is the case with almost everyone, the economic crisis of ’08 has affected us, especially the falling value of the dollar. We need to raise \$1,000.00 in monthly support and raises monies for ministry projects such as my trips to Cuba. Many of you have supported us for the 20 years we have been in Latin America. As you have done so generously over these many years, I ask once again for you faithful support throughout the year ahead. If it is within your means, please consider giving a year-end gift to carry us forward into the New Year or giving toward our ministry fund. Thank you!

Your Co-Servants in Christ,

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