

## Send Me!

-Julie Danielson

Teams from First Free have been partnering with Kids Alive in the Dominican Republic since 1998. This spring, May 23 - May 31, another team from our church will be heading down to work on the construction of a new home and spend a day ministering in the barrios.

We had a great trip to El Arca (The Ark) in Constanza in 2007—in spite of experiencing a hurricane the week we were there, God was still able to use us. One specific thing we prayed for as a team was to be an encouragement to the missionaries whose sacrifices are great to be there ministering to kids and their caregivers. Over and over again, missionaries told us what a blessing we had been to them.

Our stop in Jarabacoa at El Arca “The Ark” was especially significant. Jeff V., our host seemed stressed when we arrived—like our visit didn’t come at the best time. He was a gra-

rious host, as always, and as he told the group about the progression of the completed campus in Jarabacoa, a joy came over his face. We marveled how people from our church family had been a part of building most if not all of the buildings on the completed campus—Praise God! A highlight was when we got to witness the transformed lives of kids. They have gone from living on the street, being malnourished, not attending school and having no hope for the future to THRIVING!

One particular personal joy was seeing Argelia, “the coffee lady.” When we worked at Jarabacoa she would bring us coffee for a mid afternoon respite. We had painted her home in 2005. At that time I found out we had a common, heart-felt need to worship God. Fast forward to 2007—Argelia sees me walking down the hill towards her and she throws up her arms and says “Julie”—I was praying that God would



bless you today, and here you are!” The really amazing part is that we go there intending to be a blessing and instead, we are blessed.

Seeing these kids worship is humbling. They get that they have been rescued! Living in the U.S., in this land of plenty, it is sadly missed by most that we need to be rescued—we need a Savior.

Ask God what your part should be in this trip. If the Holy Spirit is tugging at your heart, be prepared to go and be blessed beyond your wildest imagination when you say, “Here I am, Lord, send me!”

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# Firstword

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## GOOD NEWS!

Do you like to receive good news? Everybody does. Do you like to give good news? Most people do.

Mark 16:15 (NIV) tells us to “Go into the world and preach the good news to all creation.” God has given us an exciting assignment, to share the Good News.

I know you’re thinking, “The people I work with, my friends -- they’re not interested in the Good News.” You’re dead wrong! They may not be interested in religion, but they are interested in the Good News. The problem is not that your friends and co-workers aren’t interested. The problem is that you have forgotten how good the Good News really is.

Once you’ve been a Christian for a while, you forget how miserable it was to live without hope, to have a life full of guilt and fear and regrets. What happens is that the longer you’re a Christian, the more you tend to take for granted how good the Good News really is.

When we trust our lives to Jesus Christ, he takes care of our past, present, and future. These are three fabulous benefits we can share with others.

### He forgives your past.

No one is perfect. Nobody bats 1,000. Everyone has made mistakes. God comes along and says, “When you trust Jesus Christ with your life, I take everything you’ve ever done and wipe the slate clean. You get to start over with a brand new life.” Isn’t that good news?

### He takes care of the present.

I have heard people say, “There’s something missing in my life.” God’s missing! When you get to know God, you’re going to know who you are, and God’s purpose for your life. You were created to be in relationship with God.

### He gives you a future ...

a home in heaven. The Bible says that heaven is a perfect place—free of sorrow, suffering, and sin. That

means only perfect people get to go there. And that leaves me out and it leaves you out, too.

There’s only one way you can get into heaven: on somebody else’s ticket. Jesus Christ, God’s Son, lived a life of perfection. He died on the cross, paid for our sin, and then went back to heaven. You get into heaven on His ticket—if you trust Him.

*“For the wages of sin is death, but the gift of God is eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord.”*

(Romans 6:23, NIV)

Think about these three things: If you trust Jesus Christ, God’s Son, with your life, you get forgiveness for your past, a purpose for living in your present, and a home in heaven in the future. Isn’t that Good News?

During this month of February, I will be preaching a new series titled, “Delivering the Good News.” And on the weekend of February 7 & 8th we will be focusing on our mission of sharing the Good News with those people around us - whom we walk past daily without much thought.

You see, Satan has fooled us. We think that none of our friends or the people we work with are interested in hearing the Good News. We are wrong. The world is hungry for Good News. They’re looking for it.

~ Pastor Joel

## “Delivering the Good News”

- Feb. 1 – The Turning Point – 1 Thess. 1:1-10
- Feb. 8 – Outreach Sunday: Alejandro Mandes
- Feb. 15 – The Credibility of the Reporter – 1 Thess. 2:1-12
- Feb. 22 – The Lows of Bringing the News – 1 Thess. 2:13 - 3:5
- March 1 – The Highs of Bringing the News – 1 Thess. 3:6-13

We exist to  
**BRING** people  
 into a relationship  
 with Jesus

CONNECT them  
 to God's family

MATURE them  
 in their faith

EQUIP them  
 for ministry

so that God's name  
 is EXALTED

## The CPR of Evangelism

- Ross Olson

CPR sounds like a medical acronym with split-second urgency and physical danger as its implications. Actually, although there is urgency and danger involved, CPR of Evangelism is on a spiritual plane and the metaphor is agricultural. Cultivate, Plant, and Reap.

**Cultivate** indicates that in order for an idea to be communicated to someone, there needs to be preparation. Because sharing the gospel is a spiritual battle for human souls, there are often significant barriers. Many people have a very negative opinion of Christians and Christianity, whether justified or not. Some have been hurt by the church or by Christians and are emotionally adverse to even listening, much less actually hearing.

To cultivate a friendship by showing kindness, spending time and even forgiving past or ongoing slights goes a long way towards opening up the way for real communication. Jesus cultivated the woman at the well by actually asking her to do something for him—draw water for a drink! As believers, we are to show love to all people, including those we define as enemies. If it is genuine, we will continue the love whether they respond to our friendship or not.

**Planting** is where we begin sharing God's truth within our relationships. Ephesians 4:15 says, "Speaking the truth in love, we will in all things grow up..." [underline added]. If we truly care for someone, then we must

care for that person's eternal destiny. To feed, clothe and house the body, even to soothe the broken heart, and to not long for the salvation of the soul is incomplete. So we give (or receive) the cup of cold water, but also when the opportunity arises, talk about living water. If we pray specifically for the Holy Spirit to open our eyes, we will see that in our every-day lives there are opportunities for spiritual segues from casual conversation to topics of eternal significance.

**Reaping** is the goal and as with agriculture, it may take time. Some are especially gifted in this area, yet we all need to know what to do if a person says, in one way or another, "What must I do to be saved?" Think about it. There are emergency rooms and medical specialists but at the same time it would be great if everyone knew the basics of emergency life support. We all should be able to lead a person to the Lord who presents ready for reaping.

But we must be patient. James 5:7b, "See how the farmer waits for the land to yield its valuable crop and how patient he is for the autumn and spring rains." And all the glory goes to God. I Corinthians 3:7 "So neither he who plants nor he who waters is anything, but only God, who makes things grow."



**Help Can't Wait**

## Outreach Week Schedule of Events

Tuesday, Feb. 3, 1:00 pm — Herb Bloomquist of Camp Shamineau speaking at Women's Guild Meeting.

Saturday, Feb. 7, 9:30 am — Pancake Breakfast and Panel discussion with local missionaries. Childcare provided for younger children.

### Panel Participants

New Life Family Services

Therese Douglass, Ministry to post-abortion women, crisis pregnancy, single mothers, adoption

World Relief Somali Ministry

Saturday: Sherry Mohammed, Rajo ("Hope" in Somali language)

Sunday: Mike Neterer, Somali Adult Literacy Training — SALT

Outpost Ministries

Dan Puumala, Director

Sunday, Feb. 8, 9:30 & 11 am services:

Main speaker — Dr. Alejandro (Alex) Mandes,  
 EFCA Hispanic Ministry Director

Missionaries will also be sharing with ABFs:

Life — New life Family Services

Parents of Teens — World Relief

Sojourners — Outpost

Seniors — World Relief

Agape — New life Family Services

Metamorphosis/Makarios — Outpost



Dr. Alejandro (Alex) Mandes

Sunday, Feb. 8, 7 pm — Presentation and Dessert with the Landruds.

You're Invited to  
**"Once in a Blue Moon"**  
 a Student Missions Fundraiser Dinner  
 To be held the evening of March 7th at First Free  
 Come support student missions, and use this as a  
 unique way to reach out to our community!

The next  
**Quarterly Business Meeting**  
 is on  
**February 16 at 7:00 pm**

Council and Commissions  
 are on February 22

MARK YOUR CALENDARS NOW

**CROCODILE DOCK**

VACATION BIBLE CAMP (VBC)  
 JUNE 22-26