

IGLESIA EVANGELICA LUTERANA DE COLOMBIA
CONGREGACION SAN PABLO – BOGOTA

ANNUAL REPORT OF MISION LUZ Y VIDA IN CARACOLI
JANUARY TO DECEMBER 2018

As we all know, Caracolí is a neighborhood in the south of Bogotá, in the area called Ciudad Bolívar. This is an area of the city that is very affected by factors of economic poverty, insecurity, violence of all kinds, and in general lack of opportunities for the integral development of its inhabitants.

The Luz y Vida mission of Caracolí has undergone a process of transformation animated by the shared strength of many people who have wanted to support work in this area of southern Bogotá. During the first semester of 2018, we managed to finish a large part of the goal of building a beautiful temple where there are adequate spaces for the worship of the church, and where there are adequate spaces to continue with the projects that seek to support the inhabitants of the neighborhoods of the sector.

That is why IELCO has developed different works from the social area with the support of international organizations. Among them has been very important and decisive the support of the sister churches The Ascension of Edmonton, Canada, and The Messiah of Marquette, United States. That is why we want to thank you for your infinite love in sharing your prayers and your offerings with which we have been able to advance in the building and improvement of our temple. Thanks to their offerings, we managed to fulfill the dream of having a spacious temple with better conditions to receive people who seek the mercy of God and the opportunity to train themselves to seek better opportunities to improve their lives.

Worship and pastoral accompaniment:

During the year 2018, under the inspiration of the Holy Spirit, we have worked to face the challenges that have arisen. The first challenge was to start working on a new schedule on Sundays. Because Pastor Jairo Suárez took over the pastoral work of the San Pablo congregation, the celebration of worship in Caracolí began on Sundays in the afternoon at 2:30 because in the morning the service is celebrated in San Pablo. This affected the participation dynamics of the people in the worship since for many of the families it is difficult to go in the afternoon because they are engaged in recreational or work activities. Because of this, the level of attendance at the service dropped to an average of 15 to 20 people, whereas when the service was performed in the morning, as in previous years, the average was between 20 and 40 people. The pastor visits the families linked to the church both in their homes and in the hospitals when necessary.

During the course of the year the members of the Congregational Administrative Committee of San Pablo, or other members of the church, participated in the worship in the afternoon or in Sunday school for children, or in the case of the president of San Pablo participating of a baptismal catechesis.



Training courses:

The second challenge was to combine the time the pastor has to attend the coordination of the training projects that are promoted in the mission. This year the following trainings were carried out:

1. Basic electricity. The course was held on Tuesday afternoon in the first semester of the year. This course was carried out thanks to the volunteer of Mr. Juan Osorio who is an expert in this area and counted on the participation of men and women from the neighborhoods of the sector.



2. Embroidery on ribbons. The course was held on Wednesday mornings in the first semester of the year. This course was conducted under the coordination of Mrs. Gloria Bethy Becerra with the participation of women from neighborhoods in the sector.



3. Basic electronics. The course was held on Friday afternoon in the second semester of the year. This course also began with the volunteer work of Mr. Juan Osorio and was carried out with the participation of the same students of electricity in the first semester. Due to the fact that the teacher had to travel to Germany, the course was interrupted in the month of October, so it will be resumed in the first semester of the year 2019.



4. Music. The course was held on Saturdays in the afternoon during the second semester. The music course was held at San Pablo Congregation, where Professor Daniel Pinto was hired to teach guitar, piano and drums. So from the mission of Caracolí three young people were sent to take the classes, but finally there was only one young girl taking the guitar class.



Training for children and young people:

The community of Caracolí, Potosí, Jerusalén and Los Robles, is characterized by the large number of children who are part of the families. For this reason, since its inception, the church has supported the training work on different topics for children and young people. The main objective is to help them and they value themselves and learn to take care of themselves and make themselves respected to avoid falling into the world of gangs or drug addiction. During the year 2018 the Sunday School was continued, which was previously done on Saturdays. This is taking advantage of the fact that now there is space on the second floor so, while the service is being held, the children go up to have their Bible lesson. There are two people who were prepared to be teachers of the children, José Cerón and Rocío Gómez who continue to serve in this ministry.



In the second semester, work was resumed with the girls and adolescents who met twice a month, on Saturday mornings. The coordination of this ministry with the girls is in charge of two young people, Daneisa Alvarez and Samanta Pinzón, who lived the same process and are trained and oriented by the psychologist Ana Mendivelso for each of the meetings on Saturdays. This project seeks to resume the work of the last three years with adolescents under the name Projecting my Future that was supported by the ELCA in Caracolí. In agreement with the Church the Messiah it was agreed to change the name for "Adolescent Women of Caracolí." Participate in average 10 girls between 8 and 12 years old.



Workshops by the scholarship committee:

The permanent accompaniment of the IELCO scholarship committee has been had with workshops both in the Luz y Vida mission and in other places where the scholarship holders are invited. In the same way, Mrs. Alexandra Nossa accompanies the scholarship families to make the required purchases within the framework of the scholarship program.



Visits of the sister churches:

As mentioned above, the Luz y Vida mission is supported by two sister churches that for several years have supported the work in the area through visits, prayers, and financial support that they send of voluntary offerings collected in Edmonton and Marquette. That is why the funds that are counted are barely enough to sustain the activities. During 2018, visits were received from a group of brothers and sisters from The Messiah from Marquette church in the month of June. They usually visit families linked to the church, participate in the worship and then go out to an area near Bogotá to learn about other aspects of the Cundiboyacense culture.

In the month of July, we received the visit of The Ascension Church of Edmonton. On this occasion came the pastor Bárbara Groote who did not know the community. The group visited some families in the community and it was only one afternoon, on Friday, as they were passing through to other areas of Colombia.

Finance:

The year began with a balance that came from 2017 and that was spent basically on moving forward with the details of the construction of the second floor, the purchase of a piece of furniture to store materials, and the purchase of materials for the training of electricity and embroidery in tapes and of the Sunday school, payment of public services and for the payment of the fees of the embroidery teacher in tapes. How great novelty had to buy a new record of water as some bandits broke the one

that was installed. As a result we had to pay a fine for this reason and the payment of the new water register with the costs implied by this unexpected expense.

In the month of June, the offering was received from the church of El Mesías and in a meeting with the accountant of that church, the financial report of the expenses of the offering that they left in 2017 was presented and the budget was presented to the rest of the year 2018. At this meeting the offering of the church Messiah for the activities of the church was also received. The visitors of The Ascensión church sent an offering that we received in the month of November with which it was possible to pay the costs of coordination of the second semester, the payment of the cost of water registration and other general operating expenses of the projects. With the representative of the Ascensión group, the activities and financial report were also made and the budget was presented to be executed in the second semester of 2018.

I am grateful for the support that is given from IELCO and from the Congregation of St. Paul to this mission and the ministries that are being promoted to proclaim the Gospel of the Lord in this community.

Projections for the year 2019.

By the grace of God, the year 2018 we ended it very blessed as there was a spiritual growth in the people of the church and we also received the blessings of the offerings of the sister churches to be able to continue with the work of God in the community.

In 2019, God willing, we want to continue serving the communities of the area through Sunday worship but returning to the morning schedule. We are taking advantage of the fact that there are students of the Lutheran School of Theology who need to do pastoral practices, and who will be under the accompaniment of Pastor Jairo Suárez. We will have the children's Bible school with the support of Rocío Gómez and José Cerón, and we will resume the training courses for women, youth and men. For the first semester the classes of dressmaking (handling of flat and filleting machine) and the course of electricity and electronics will begin. These courses will be held on Wednesdays in the morning and in the afternoon.

Another initiative is to carry out training in areas such as intra - family conflict management, intra - family violence prevention and preparation course for the confirmation of new members for the church. We will continue with the training in the area of music supporting the girl who is taking the guitar lessons in the San Pablo congregation.

We propose to finish the building of the temple, finish the front face, buy a security cover for the water register, and make the electrical adjustments for the dressmaking courses.

We appreciate the grace of God that is given to us through the sister churches and the institutional support of IELCO.

Cordially:

Revdo. Jairo Suárez
Pastor IELCO