PASTOR’S REPORT

GENERAL ASSEMBLY MEETING

FEBRUARY 20, 2018

Good evening.

It is always a pleasure to present to you my report on the performance of the church, its progress and spiritual growth.

We all know that our vision is to reach people and help them to become true followers of Jesus.

This church executes this vision in all of its forms through the different community projects and different programs and departments that make up the Hope Fellowship structure for the comprehensive development of its members.

The administration of this church tries to find a good spiritual fit for people of all ages. For example:

Our program for children from 3 to 12 years old teaches a healthy doctrine through interactive classes, games and fun events. The kids receive a snack every Sunday. They’re served by a group of volunteers lead by Pastor Eugenia. This ministry currently supports 64 children.

Adolescents between 12 and 18 have their meetings on Saturdays from 3 to 5 pm. They have a recreation time with table games, group games and sports. The teachings that they receive are designed to help them in their stage of transition from children to young adults. The program has as its leader Pastor Estefany.

The young people 18 and up started 2017 as a small group of 4. This program is focused on the youth’s integral spiritual development without forgetting that youth in this age bracket have a strong need for group belonging and acceptance, (in addition to a large dose of healthy fun that they require). This group has been consolidated strongly, and it has become very attractive for the youth of Coco who don’t regularly attend any church to come and then join in on the program. This year we have done five bonfires on the beach. The first one had 50 in attendance, and by the fifth one it was more than 100 young people and another 25 littler kids.

What I began last year like the sounding of a gong has become a 5th project for our church: *“Go For the Youth”* was the theme of 2017. Our new *Go For the Youth* ministry closed out the year with a dinner for 32 active young people. This ministry is lead by Raquel Gutierrez.

Men and women adults in Spanish and English hold Bible Studies each week, helping them to continue their spiritual growth. These programs are open to our members as well as to the general public.

In 2017 we sought to prepare our members and servers and encourage them in their spiritual knowledge and growth. Our goal is to be prepared for the revival that as prophesied by God. We’ll wait in our communities for this to come! We have begun teaching the “Alpha” program and the “Passport” program to many of our members. Happily, I report that many members, both men and women, have completed the programs successfully.

As we all know, the different programs of the church continued during 2017, working actively in pursuing the fulfillment of our Vision. Here is a brief summary of each project:

**- Manos de Esperanza**, “Hands of Hope” continues to execute their flagship program of teaching English as a second language. In 2017, 409 students were enrolled, using over 20 volunteer teachers. Showing great results, as in past years, we see students who are advancing in the huge tourism labor market in our area. This project is lead by Vivian Gonzalez

**- Seeds of Hope** continues without interruption 4 children’s Feeding Centers during the whole year, serving of 250 children each week. Additionally, Seeds delivered 78 food bags during the year to different families plus celebrated the opening of a new Feeding Center for 25 kids in Sardinal. This ministry is lead by Anita Ortiz.

**- The Backpack Project** blessed 254 kids this year attending 14 area schools. They were able to bring down the cost per backpack (with uniforms, shoes and school supplies) to $53 per pack. This year we changed the logistics to utilize various other churches in the area to identify the poorest of the poor in their respective barrios, and to ultimately distribute the packs. We were also able to streamline the program so that we could bless and pray for each family individually.

This year we will be working to raise the funds for the 2019 school year. We project that our budget will be $18,000, in order to hit a goal to bless 340 next time. This project is lead by Jorge Gutierrez.

**- The Home Improvement Project** started the year by building an entire house. A first for us, but when we met the family of Conchita, we had to step in. Thanks to the contributions of LifeAustin in Austin Texas and New Life in Alamo, California, we were able to build a modest two-bedroom home for this family of five.

Our second project was for a senior with intestinal problems. We air-conditioned his bedroom and made some other improvements in his housing conditions.

The third was the completion of a bathroom for a family affected by Tropical Storm Nate.

This program is lead by Alejandro Cuenca.

Regarding Tropical Storm Nate, Hope received donations and cash totaling $27,000. Of these we have executed $22,000 so far. We have one more project for those funds, to be started this March: rebuilding one of the Feeding Centers that got totally destroyed by the storm.

With the help of some large contributions we were able to distribute 446 bags of food, medicine, clothing and some appliances including refrigerators, fans and rice cookers.

If there is any “good” to come from this natural disaster, we were recognized and appointed by the community authorities as a collection and distribution center for aid. This is truly a huge honor for us, and has major implications for our future projects! The relief aid we got was spread not only Coco, but we were able to help out in Filadelfia, Artola, Sardinal, San Blas, Alto del Oak and Ocotal.

This was only possible thanks to the experience (in a large part due to Hurricane Otto last year), and the capacity for organizing volunteers and resources on a large scale.

We have learned that it’s imperative that we are prepared for Disaster Relief at a moments notice, and have set up a line item in our new budget to be able to act quickly and efficiently in the times of need.

Hope Fellowship was established by God in Coco as a salvation door for all people and continues its mission as a helping hand to other pastors and area congregations.

This year we will continue with our mission: focusing on the construction of the Kingdom of God, with a move towards involving other area pastors and their congregations. We’ll approach them to join with us in our different projects, training tools and outreach events. This will allow us to work as a cohesive unit, the spiritual leaders of our little piece of paradise, putting aside jealous differences and divisions that in the past were hindrances in this area.

*A Kingdom divided against itself does not prevail. Mark 3:24*

We will continue helping strengthen our members in all areas of their lives, through attention in counseling sessions and home visits. We’re a family church that ministers the love of Jesus in a real way. We preach healthy doctrine based only on what the Bible says. We believe in the most relevant moral values for society and we care to live and give insight to others according to the moral rule of God. This has made us grow in a healthy and sable form to the point we have already achieved.

I invite you to pray with us for the future of our ministry. God has encouraged us this year to focus on having our own building on our own land!

I thank God for His love that does not change, the support of His Holy Spirit in our last years’ growth and progress, and for each project and teaching.

Blessings to my wife and to my children, who have embraced this wonderful vision called family, and to you, who with your support, economic contributions and prayers, make this church a *church* *family*. I invite you to continue testifying of the love of our Lord, Jesus Christ, in our community and in the world until the day we see the Prince of the Shepherds descending for His passage.

MAY GOD BLESS US ALL.

Henry