



Leonard and Susie Smith

Mexico

January 2012 Prayer Letter

We have so very much to be thankful for that transpired during 2011. We rejoice in the ones that came to Christ and for the growth in number and in grace of the ones God has given us.

News since our last letter includes a trip to the USA where we were able to be in several missions conferences and supporting churches. Although our little 'mini-furlough' was indeed just a few weeks, it was a blessing to us and I hope to the churches we visited.

Upon returning to Culiacan, we had a very successful Missions Conference at **Emanuel Bible Baptist Church**. The Lord continues to bless Pastor Morales' ministry. The church is able to support several missionaries.

Amazing Grace Baptist is continuing with the construction of the auditorium. I was thrilled to be able to hand Pastor Perez the sum of \$3000 dollars for the construction. The people were thrilled and are so very thankful for the churches in the USA that have helped them. THANK YOU! The Lord willing, the roof follows... If you can assist them, please consider it. God will bless!

Our Christmas season is always active. All of our churches have special Christmas programs, pageants, or plays, which always include the Good Tidings of Great Joy in music, drama, and preaching. We had an unusual blessing at the Christmas program at **El Camino Baptist**. At that mission work we meet in a couple of homes. In front of one of the homes is an empty lot where we set up for the program.

Susie painted the back-drops, I figured out how to hang them, threw in some hay, carved out sheep and a donkey, dressed the kids up in the appropriate costumes and we took the people back in time to the birth of Jesus. Well, at the same time, 3 houses up the street, the neighbors were putting on a little girl's 3rd birthday party, including a huge jumping castle out in the middle of the street. There is nothing like a little competition to make our Christmas pageant interesting.

We proceeded prayerfully, knowing the Lord would be honored. As the people were arriving, our Christmas music was playing, and the party music was playing as well, and it wasn't the same kind of music. However, something amazing happened. When we started the play, with the kids in their costumes, singing the songs, saying their parts, the music from up the street stopped, and almost all the people that had come to the birthday party were now sitting on our chairs and benches, standing around, leaning against the cars (our crowd was now out in the street as well), all listening attentively to the Good News being presented by these young kids ranging in ages from 5 to 15.

At the conclusion of the play, with the angels, and shepherds, Mary, Joseph and the little baby doll Jesus behind me, I got up and preached a simple plan of salvation message, and invited people to pray with me as I led them to put their faith in Christ, the One who was born in a manger, died on a cross, and rose again. At least **30** people indicated by the raising of their hands that they had indeed put their faith in Christ that evening, having prayed and asked the Lord to save them. We then set up tables, and fed over **120** people and gave out bags of candy to about **80** kids. Of course we also had the kids break a couple of piñatas. That is one of the Christmas traditions down here that I have enjoyed all of my life, and never really understood. It was a wonderful way to end a particularly difficult year in that mission church.

On New Year' Eve I preached at **Emanuel Bible Baptist**. Many people filled the altar praying for forgiveness for the past failures, gratefulness for the Lord's mercy, and grace for the coming year.

Thank you for your support, prayers, and patience with us. People continue to come to Christ, thank you for sending us here.
May the Lord richly bless you!

Leonard W Smith