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The Ortegas Newsletter
March 2025

For from Him and through Him and for Him are all things. To Him be the glory forever! Amen.
Romans 11:36

Hello dear friends!

It is so hard to believe that we've come to the end of March, even while we continue to experience challenges of all sorts in life. We started January with a bang, diving on this year's theme: **"Discovering Your Divine Design"**. However, we also started without ministry support from my assistant pastor, as he felt that God was calling him elsewhere. Since I had already planned out a Hermeneutics class since several months before, I launched out on the evening of the second Sunday of the month. I was greatly encouraged by the great enthusiasm of around 30 men and women who were eager to learn how to better study and apply the Scriptures. Then on January 23, I had to undergo a nose surgery in order to allow better airflow.



On February 2, We celebrate our 36th church anniversary and also the same time for us with our beloved Maranatha Church. What an exciting time for us to experience and exalt God's faithfulness. This, of course, is done by God's grace and for God's glory. We had the honor of having our beloved friends from Tulsa, Oklahoma, Mike and Shannon Hayes. We've known them since 1996, when they brought a group of students from the Bethel Independent Presbyterian Church in Houston. Later on, they would move to Fellowship Bible Church in Tulsa and also brought some groups to do VBS at our church. We also had the opportunity to acknowledge all other churches and friends in absentia. Thank you very much! God alone knows the good and godly influence that you have been to us and to many more in our church. Only in heaven above will we really know the full impact that our deeds on earth have really achieved.

On February 14, our beloved church ladies held a dinner for couples and single people to reflect on God's eternal love. This was a lovely time.

On February 19 and 20 we had Dr. Ismael Mejía, a Christian professional counselor to impart on the importance of properly equipping men and women to address the ever-increasing needs of hurting people due to past traumas.

On March 4-8 we had our dear friends from Oklahoma, Coy Hayes and Jerry Ledford, once again who shared with us a very pragmatic kind of discipleship material.

June 2-6 is marked out for us to hold our Vacation Bible School program. This has always been a great opportunity for our church to connect with new people through this children's program.

June 30 - July 9 is set aside for us to once again venture out into the Cuban mission field. This is a highly challenging effort and yet a very rewarding time, both to give and to learn valuable life lessons on just what living by faith really means. Our Cuban brothers and sisters in Christ truly live out their faith in Jesus on a daily basis. We are simply humbled by these precious souls who really know what loving and

sacrificially serving the Lord means. I so joyfully impart Bible lessons to lay pastors, church planters and leaders. We also share valuable ministry resources with them so that they will continue to do the ministry long after we leave. Because of limited traveling finances, we really value and appreciate your prayers starting now in order to make this missions trip possible.

Thank you so much for taking the time to read and pray for us, our ministry challenges and opportunities. It is almost impossible to think that some of you have been part of our supporting team since 1991. We can't do what we have been doing for 36 years without you. May the Lord bless you abundantly.

Psalms 46:1-3 has been very meaningful to our lives. I feel that I need to bring this in prior to our last paragraph. We had originally planned a week-long trip to Panama, to rest a bit and visit Mary's relatives, starting Sunday March 30. However, our plans were abruptly interrupted by a major storm that hit us hard this past Thursday afternoon. It



came very rapidly, flooding many of our streets and even gushing into our house through all three doors. Even



while taping doors and placing sand bags outside, we could not keep water from infiltrating. We could not bucket out the water fast enough. Within just a few minutes, the entire house floor of every room was completely flooded. When we realized that our attempts to dump the water out were futile, we grabbed some clothes and

exited through our backyard window into the street. It was then that we realized that the water level at our waist. This is the first time that we've felt so helpless that we had to flee for our lives because of rain. By then, our car was also completely flooded and inoperable. Unfortunately, our homeowner's insurance policy does not cover for such flood-related situations. On the following day, Mary and I and a few precious souls from church had to sweep and mop water out of the house for the entire day, and then do it again the next day, and the next. We also cut and removed all carpet and padding to avoid mold and the horrible stench as much as possible. So much has been done, but there's so much more still to be done. Please do help us out in prayer for this critical situation. The following is a funny note, just so you can appreciate that God does have a sense of humor. After finishing my devotional plan of reading through the book of Esther, I proceeded to download the following book and start on chapter one. So, what was the next book I'm suppose to start doing my devotions on? You got it - JOB! I started laughing out loud! Yes, do feel free to enjoy God's sense of humor with me!

For His Grace, for his glory.

Franc & Mary Ortega