

# THE ALVAREZ FAMILY

## BBFI Missionaries to Uruguay, South America

### New Members

It is so exciting to see people come to Christ and join the church through baptist. Also it is good to see people who transitioned from other belief systems (that were considered “christian or evangelical”) to come to our church and find biblical truth being presented every Sunday. In recent months we had several individuals that attended faithfully and now are going through the interview process to become members of our church. Our main focus during these conversations is making sure that they can biblically express their salvation. Sometimes it is during those dialogues that we can see people’s expressions when they have these “aha” moments talking about varios doctrinal topics. Recently a young single mom stated during her interview: *“I felt Christ’s love in this church and that it is what I needed. I want to grow and serve here”.*

We will have baptisms on March 2nd and we are looking forward for many others to come. We labor and God brings the growth.



### Church Sign

We continue to move forward in regards to our church building improvements. Although our architects have stated that building permits are a year-long process, we were able to get the approval to put a brand new church sign on the property. This has been a very positive addition and we are looking forward to many other things to come. May God use each tool we have to bring people into our church family.

### Small Groups

We are excited to start small groups on Wednesday nights. This has been a desire from our pastoral team for quite some time. Starting in March, we will walk together through a book authored by pastor Marcel Sanchez (Global Church in Miami) called *“Who Do You Say Jesus Is?”*.

This is going to be a first time experience for most of the people who are going to participate. We are confident in this material, because in a culture where people use the term god in a very loose way, it is the church that needs to be equipped to present Jesus, the Savior.



## Special Visits

We have had a couple of visitors from the US in the last three weeks. It is always a blessing to have people coming and seeing with their own eyes what the Lord is doing in the ministry and how much more needs to be done!

**Steve Crain** came due to a job related trip and spent a Sunday service with us. Steve grew up in our sending church and Emily and I used to be part of the worship team together. We had such a great time catching up!

The second visit was our dear friend and former employer **Coby Cullins** (picture above). He was in South America for a few weeks and stopped by Montevideo to see us. Coby is involved in Freeway Ministries in Springfield, MO. At this point we know that addictions are taking over most of the western hemisphere and we see that in front of our own eyes here as well. On Wednesday night, Coby gave a powerful testimony about what the Lord is doing with Freeway Ministries in the USA and around the world. Our people were very encouraged by his testimony. We made John Stroup book available to the entire church so we can learn how to properly and biblically engage with someone who is dealing with an addiction problem. We were very encourage by these two visits.

## February is a reminder

that Uruguay really needs the Gospel. The biggest pagan celebration here is on February the 2nd, **Yemanjá**, or the Goddess of the seas. It is always heart breaking to see the thousands of people bringing their offerings. At the same time Uruguay celebrates the longest carnival in the world. Behind the carnival celebration there is a dark spiritual meaning (as in many other cultures). It is not just music and sensuality. It is the colors, the rhythms, the lyrics. All pointing to spiritism. It is very hard for a Uruguayan to abandon something that it is embedded in the culture and is presented as “folklore” and not as a spiritual practice. We have these types of conversation with believers whose family members (including Esteban’s family) partake of these celebrations. The only one who can change people’s heart is Jesus and our desire is that we will continue to present Him in a clear and biblical way. At times it is a huge challenge but when the door opens, we walk through it and talk about the Gospel. Thank you for your prayers. They maintain us here.

## Prayer Requests

- **Youth:** there are a few who need to make a career choice and that is one of the hardest issues a young individual deals with here in Uruguay.
- **Baptist Sunday** on March 2nd. This will be a great witnessing opportunity to families who come to be with their loved ones.
- **Men Ministry** will be launched on March 7th.
- **Ladies Banquet** on March 8th with Missionary to Argentina Sandy Todd. Our ladies are looking forward to a great meeting.
- **Ciro:** eleven month old baby who has been in the ICU for 33 days. His parents are not saved. Our church is taking the opportunity to care for this family with the intention to help and mainly to witness to them.
- **Richard:** years ago we introduced you to this 40 year old man who was dealing with cancer. For a few years he was in remission but the cancer returned.
- **Susana** (mentioned in previous letter) still struggling with her doubts about Jesus and Christianity.