



APOSTOLIC FAITH WORK CONTINUES TO GROW IN

CHILE

A presentation of the Apostolic Faith work in Chile was given on Monday evening, July 10, during the camp meeting in Portland, Oregon. The program included a multimedia presentation about recent camp meetings in Chile and an overview of how the work there began, as well as music presented by Chilean visitors and individuals who had attended a Chile camp meeting.

Sam Ajayi, Director of South America Work, opened the program by welcoming the audience and briefly telling how our churches in Chile came into existence after his first visit to Chile in 2011. The purpose of that initial trip was to meet with about twenty groups who showed interest in becoming part of the Apostolic Faith organization. Although the final consensus for most was that we adhere too closely to Biblical doctrine, one group from the town of Chimbarongo embraced the doctrines, and the first Apostolic Faith Church in Chile was formed in 2012.

Chimbarongo is the location of the Chile camp meeting, which was first held in 2013. It takes place for one week in February, with about fifty to seventy in attendance, and all services are conducted in both

Spanish and English. The multimedia presentation focused on that annual event, using photos, videos, and narration by Carrie Keju and Yvonne Wilson (two recent Chile camp meeting attendees) to transport viewers to South America for an hour.

Video clips from the camp meetings showed that the music in Chile is distinctive; their orchestra consists of several guitars, mandolins, and an occasional tambourine. The narrators described the music as “joyous” and “enthusiastic,” displaying how much the

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Chilean saints love the Lord. Two evenings of music are held during the week of camp meeting: Monday and Saturday. On those evenings, nearly all members of the church participate in some way, either in a family group, choir, ensemble, or solo, and many visitors come to hear it.

Testifying is a newer tradition for the Chilean churches, but they seem to have grasped the concept quickly. One brother told how he had been sick and tried many remedies, including witch doctors, with no success, but one day he went to church and was saved and healed! Another brother gave a miraculous account of how God spared his home from a raging forest fire which took twelve lives. The flames encircled his home but did not harm him or the house. These and many other testimonies were an encouragement for all.

The narrators also commented that the prayer services were wonderful at the Chile camp meeting this year. They said that on one night, “there was weeping and praising and hallelujah’s being shouted. It might be a small crowd, but it is mighty in prayer . . . Just when it looked like we might be wrapping up to head for dinner, some of the musicians started softly playing and singing. The blessings started flowing again. People came back to the altars to pray more. Dinner that night was very late.”



Another special moment at the 2017 Chile camp meeting was an informal meeting between some of the visitors from the United States and the Chilean young people. The youth were challenged to commit themselves to growing in the Lord through

Bible study and prayer, and to hold each other accountable to receiving their deeper experiences. Afterward, those in attendance immediately showed a commitment to follow through. The visitors also had a chance to share personally with the youth on the topics of Christian growth, dating and marriage, friends, and being led by God in the big decisions of life. It was an encouraging experience for all.

On Saturday, the ordinances of Foot Washing and the Lord’s Supper were observed. Those in attendance said there was a tangible hunger for more of God at the service, and it was very blessed. The narrators commented, “The fellowship was sweet, and afterwards there were hugs all around.” In the afternoon a water baptismal service was held at a nearby river.

At the conclusion of the multimedia presentation, the group of delegates visiting from Chile sang “Rios de Agua Vivo” (“Rivers of Living Water”), with guitars, mandolin, and tambourine. Everyone could readily see that the Chilean music is indeed joyful and enthusiastic. All Americans who had ever visited Chile joined the Chileans to sing the song a second time, and finally the whole congregation was invited to join in singing it together.

Those of us who watched the presentation had a greater love and appreciation for our brothers and sisters in Chile, and no doubt will keep them in our prayers in the days to come.



WORK IN CHILE

The 1930s

A Chilean diplomat named Pedro Alvarez Muñoz travels to the United States for work and encounters the Apostolic Faith Church of Portland, Oregon. He takes our teachings to Chile and starts an Apostolic Faith Mission there, using the same seventeen core doctrines that we still uphold.

The 1950s

Alvarez Muñoz’s work grows to include a number of churches, but discord causes them to splinter into several groups. Some of these groups and others in Chile use our Spanish literature, though we still have no official church in the country.

The 1960s and 1970s

On behalf of the headquarters church, Apostolic Faith ministers correspond with leaders of several churches in Chile and make visits. However, contact between Portland and these groups is eventually lost.

April 2011

Sam Ajayi travels to Chile to meet with various church groups who show interest in joining our organization. One of them traces its roots back to us through Muñoz’s work and decides to become part of the Apostolic Faith of Portland, Oregon.

TESTIMONY

When I was a child, my brother became very ill. My grandmother took him to hospitals and doctors, but she found no medicine that could help him. Being Catholic, my grandmother took him to the priests, and they told her that all she could do was pray that God would have mercy on him. He was given just a few hours to live.

When they brought my brother home, he was unconscious. His eyes were not opening anymore, and he had not eaten in several days. He was very sick. Then, some Christians came by who were singing and preaching the Gospel. That day my grandmother said, "If it's true that the God of these evangelicals can heal, I will convert." She invited the pastor and the others to her house, and they anointed my brother with oil and prayed for him. Then God, in His mercy, performed a miracle and healed my brother. My grandmother kept her promise and gave her life to God, and then our family began to attend a Christian church.

That was forty-five years ago, and our family has been in the Gospel ever since. I was saved very young, and later sanctified and then baptized with the Holy Spirit. I praise the Lord for that. It was difficult for our family because my mother was a single mom and we did not have the economic support of a father, or a father to advise us and help us. We did not have electricity or running water back then, and sometimes we did not have enough food to eat. It was difficult to get to church, but we started to seek the Lord, and He blessed us and changed our lives.

At the beginning of this year, I began having a lot of pain in my heart. The pain was so great that I went to the hospital. They told me that my heart was enlarged, and that was what was causing the pain.



ISRAEL GAJARDO MONARDES

The doctor said it was a serious condition, and it worried me and my family, and we started to pray. God's Word says, "Every one that asketh receiveth; and he that seeketh findeth," and I began to seek the Lord with fasting and prayer. Then one day, the Lord put it in my heart to be anointed and prayed for. When I obeyed, I felt the Lord do a work in me and heal me! I had not been able to move very much or eat because everything caused pain in my heart, but that day the Lord took the pain away. Afterwards, I went back to the doctor and they ran more tests, and they told me my heart was like that of a young man of fifteen years! I praise God, I glorify His name, and I give Him thanks for what He has done for me.

■ Rev. Israel Gajardo Monardes is Leader of the Apostolic Faith Work in Chile and Pastor of the headquarters church in Chimbarongo.

November 2011

Sam Ajayi returns to Chile to train the new congregations in our doctrines and practices. Significant changes are made: the Apostolic Faith logo is posted on their buildings; altar benches are installed at the front of their sanctuaries; collection plates are replaced with tithes boxes; a time for prayer is set aside before services, and a time for testimonies during services.

June 2012

The group of churches formally votes, as required by law, to become part of the Apostolic Faith of Portland, Oregon. A constitution is signed, presented to the Chilean government, and approved, making the church in Chile legally part of the Apostolic Faith family. Chimbarongo is made the headquarters of our work in Chile, and Pastor Mario Gonzales Cordova is named as the leader of the work in Chile.

February 2013

The first Chile Camp Meeting is held in Chimbarongo. Visitors attend from Brazil, Peru, the United States, and Tortola, British Virgin Islands.

February 2015

Pastor Mario retires and Israel Gajardo Monardes is named as pastor of the headquarters church and leader of the work in Chile, which now includes congregations in five locations.