

Not Your Average Church Growth Program

September 2021



Juan and his wife Cristina on the day we bring kids to Spectrum camp. Juan also serves as our resident bus driver!

You may remember a few years ago, I shared a story about a local Tijuana church that had to be relocated. Bringing new meaning to the phrase “church split”, there was a large and growing crack in the earth on the side of the hill where the church stood. Indeed the crack did eventually topple the church and a significant section of the neighborhood as well. The pastor of that church is Juan Toscano who is also on our Spectrum staff. Juan grew up around Spectrum. Even now in his fifties, he can vividly describe to you the first Hot Wheels car Pastor Von our founder gave him when he was a little boy!

Our solution when this was happening was to offer his church the use of our building in one of our neighborhoods where Spectrum hosts outreaches. No one really knew how this move was going to affect the church at the time, but it seemed like it was the decision God was leading us to make. In a way that only God could, He affirmed the move by mixing together the compassion ministry Spectrum has faithfully been conducting for so long, with the sharing of the Gospel. One by one, people who we’ve known for many years in this neighborhood came to a saving faith in Him. I think of Eugenia who brought her kids to

Spectrum events when they were young, being baptized in the church. And now her husband is starting to go as well! Salud, now in her eighties, is there every time the church doors are open. And Vicente, the neighborhood drunk, heard the message of the Gospel and gave his life to Christ at a Spectrum event. As the wear and tear on his body from the lifestyle he had lived, began to affect his health, he would share the truths he was learning on Sundays with the unsuspecting souls in the hospital waiting room. In 2019 Vicente passed away, but praise God we know where He is today!

As we all know, 2020 brought a whole new set of challenges to churches everywhere. Like many, when COVID hit, Juan was forced to go to on-line services which he posted live on Facebook. What would this do to his congregation? Would it bring to a halt the progress they were making? Well as the months wore on people not only inside the church, but outside as well started tuning in. Instead of shrinking, numbers grew! As church resumed, Juan was now faced with a new issue. A space is-



Leveling the ground for the new addition



So thankful for these pastors investing their time and resources in the work God is doing in Tijuana!

sue. And in a society where the government is still asking for social distancing for public and church gatherings, something needed to be done.

It turns out, God had an answer for this new problem too. I received a call from an old friend of Spectrum earlier this summer. He works in the LA area with urban church planters.

These are pastors who have a heart to see the church impact tough communities with the Gospel of Christ. My friend was wondering if there was a way these men could come alongside Spectrum and serve. Again, with God's leading, they agreed to both fund, and then come and help in early September, put an addition on the church building. This addition will provide fifty percent more space for people to come and meet! It's such a beautiful thing to see pastors, passionate about Christ's bride, coming together to see the kingdom grow!

The work of the church is never easy. If it is, it probably means you're not doing it right. But to see God's providential hand move in the midst of the earth giving way and a global pandemic. To see His church grow and people snatched from death and brought to life is awe inspiring!

Please pray for Pastor Juan and his small church that God would strengthen and use them to make Jesus known in their community. Our next Spectrum event there is September 23rd. If you would, please mark that on your calendar as a day to pray that more souls are added to the kingdom. Pray that the new seats in the expanded building are filled with people who are eager to learn and get out to tell everyone about how much Jesus has done for them!

From all of us at Spectrum, thank you for all your love and support that enables us to shine Christ's light of love and truth in the dark areas of Tijuana!

Matt Kooi
Director of Spectrum Ministries



Eugenia's baptism day!



The kids loved doing their tie-dye t-shirt
The congregation worshipping together.

"You are the light of the world. A town built on a hill can not be hidden." - Matthew 5:14