



SUSSEX CHRISTIAN REFORMED CHURCH

March 2024 Newsletter

A Note from Pastor Kendall: The God Who Comes Close

Anybody else's kids been getting sick lately? It seems to be that time of year. This week our 2-year-old got hit with the stomach bug one afternoon. It seemed to come out of nowhere and made a great mess. Without getting into any more detail, there were in fact a few instances that made a great mess. We did a lot of laundry very quickly. For Amy and me, we've figured out how to do this together. When one or more kids are sick, one of us needs to stay close to them, provide the care they need, and clean up when necessary. Since Amy had already dealt with that a few nights earlier with another kid, it was my turn to spend the night keeping a close eye on him. So I slept on a mattress on the floor of his room so I was ready for anything at a moment's notice. As you can imagine, it was mostly a sleepless night. Especially when the kids are so young, it's a little heartbreaking to see them scared and sad because the whole experience is simply quite miserable. As he went through this miserable ordeal, he would often forget I was right next to him. He would wake up and cry out as if I were in the other room, then discover that I was right there.

This is much like how God relates to us. Sometimes when we are suffering, we don't realize God has already come so close to us. We cry out, thinking he's still far away, wondering where help and comfort will come from. We may not realize in the misery of the moment that God has been with us the entire time. Especially when God's children are suffering, he comes close to us, cares for us deeply, and helps to pick up the pieces of our broken and hurting lives. He does this most clearly in sending Jesus his Son into our world, to bear up our afflictions, heal our broken hearts, and establish peace in our world. We are not promised that through him we can expect health and wealth. Quite the contrary, we can expect suffering in this world. But it's through him that we know God has overcome the forces of evil. So through him we can suffer with the grace of Jesus in our hearts and upon our lips. As we go through this life, navigating all the challenges and burdens of each day, may we do so knowing that our God comes close to us, cares for us deeply, and is at work cleaning up this world for good.

"The righteous cry out, and the LORD hears them;
he delivers them from all their troubles.

The LORD is close to the brokenhearted
and saves those who are crushed in spirit." --Psalm 34:17-18.

A Baptism

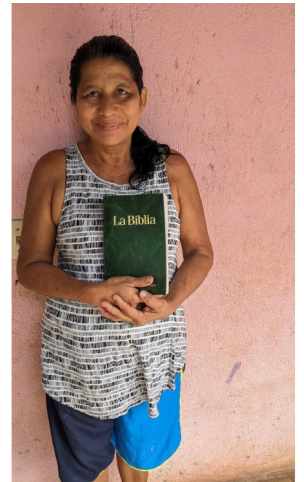
On February 11, we got to celebrate the Sacrament of Baptism with Henry & Erica Kuperus in the baptism of their son, Howard Henry.



Missionary Updates

Update from the Starkenburgs in Nicaragua

Thank you! We were blown away by your donations for purchasing Bibles! Giving out Bibles is not part of our normal ministry here in Nicaragua, but with the cost of Bibles here (pretty inexpensive), your donation has gone a long way and we will be able to continue buying more in the next month or so. Here are a few places where we were able to distribute Bibles.



House of Hope is the original location that inspired this project! The women there were very grateful to have Bibles. One woman in particular, Marta, often has it with her when I go visit and has commented multiple times how much she loves it because the translation is easier to understand.



Waspam is an area in the far east of Nicaragua, where the majority of the indigenous people speak the Miskito language. This is a remote and rural area that is very difficult to get to, and your donations were used to purchase Miskito Bibles as well as reading glasses to bring to the people in this community.

Mount of Olives Christian School - We were able to give 50 Bibles to a small local Christian school in San Gregorio at the start of their school year. They were very excited to have these for the classrooms.

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NCA Staff - NCA support staff, such as our gardeners, maintenance, cleaning and security staff, were all given a Bible to keep or to give if they already had one. (photos below)

Teen Moms -24 Bibles were given to a ministry that is working with Teen Moms who live in extreme poverty.

I have also given a few Bibles to our own personal employees, one of whom told me that her 92 year old father was so excited to have a Bible with larger text that he could read, as his was a tiny pocket version. Overall, we have been able to distribute about 250 Bibles, and we haven't finished yet! I plan to go back to the local Bible League next week to get 150 more. We are so grateful for this opportunity and know that God's word changes lives. Pray for each person who has received one, that they might come to know the Lord if they don't, or be encouraged and know Him better.

For the sake of Christian Education,
Liam and Jessica Starkenburg
Resonate Global Mission
Nicaragua Christian Academy



Have Something for the Newsletter?

The next newsletter will come out **Mar. 29** Stories are due by **Mar. 22**.

Newsletter articles can promote upcoming or recap recent events, highlight a Bible study, youth program, or small group, or give an update on a missionary or organization we support. If you have any questions about or something for the newsletter, contact the church office.

Who We Support

World Renew - <http://worldrenew.net/>
Today's Choice - www.friendsoftodayschoice.org
Prison Ministry- www.cpministries.org
Campus Ministry - Mike Mun, InterVarsity at Drew University

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