

JANUARY 2021

ANCIENT PATH MINISTRIES/LA SENDA ANTIGUA

REFLECTIONS OF 2020

**ANCIENT
PATH
MINISTRIES**





RETURNING TO THE ANCIENT PATH

¿VISIÓN 20/20?

Remember just over a year ago, when we were certain the year to come would be one of 20/20 vision? All about clarity and knowing God's will and way. Most everyone in ministry jumped all over this theme; envisioning worship, service, and disciple-making through this lens.

January 2020 we were right there, with a 15 member team at La Senda to facilitate/share in a jubilant 9th Birthday and celebrate growth of our missionary network all over the region. A weekend of joy with a sky so clear it is hard to describe. Seemingly without notice, everything fogged over. It's been tough to see for all the smoke since. Not exactly what we mused in our 2020 imaginings.

In his church birthday sermon, Pastor Jose spoke of David, seemingly out weaponized against Goliath. He embraced the complication in front of him, knocked down the enemy and took his sword, the weapon designed to kill him, in his hands, he won the battle.





THAT WEEK IN MARCH WHEN THE EARTH SEEMED TO SHIFT...

I was in Cuba with a medical mission team, carrying boxes needed medical supplies, medicines, and (prophetically) masks. We shared collaborative time with medical professionals of La Senda, taught CPR, and worked on strategies to overcome huge health care gaps prevalent there (despite press releases).



As schools and businesses began closing and quarantines began in the US, Pastor Jose & I were immersed in envisioning the rest of 2020 for La Senda Antigua/The Ancient Path. We saw record numbers on short-term mission teams, weeks of intense seminary training for pastors, new and deepening connections with churches and people across the USA, stable financial underpinnings for the future, and a project list longer and with greater impact potential than we had ever seen. In a van under a streetlight one warm evening outside the church in Jovellanos, we mapped it out. It seemed God-given, simply waiting for us to take hold. I venture to say it's possible the Lord chuckled ever so slightly as his boys dreamt of days to come.

Spring awakened, and suddenly everything was different. Bringing Good News, Connecting In Christ, Building The Kingdom would still happen to be sure. They just wouldn't look much like what we had pictured. Embracing the complication would now be more than a line of teaching, it would be a daily reality.

THE BEST LAID PLANS OF MICE AND MEN

Piece by piece, the mosaic constructed in our minds came unglued. Seminary in April. US mission team in May. Summer mercy mission to Eastern Cuba. 25+ team member visits in Sept/Oct. Seminary again in Oct. One more US team in Nov. US Visas for Jose & Yami to visit their newborn 1st grandchild in Florida in Dec. Planning at least two 2021 mission team visits (maybe more). "Sweet dreams and flying machines in pieces on the ground," James Taylor once sang. All of these fell to the giants of COVID-19 and political enmity between nations.

Threat of COVID virtually closed Cuba's borders, land & sea, for almost 7 months. Within a few days of our departure in March, getting into or out of Cuba became an arduous, often impossible task. Already in economic crisis, the nation would be plunged into seemingly ever deeper shortages of nearly everything.

Schools and businesses shuttered and new protocol was imposed. Curfews enforced. Children, youth, and young adults confined to homes. Nearly all public transport stopped and private forms: bicycle taxis to horse and carriage to 57 Chevy were 98% or more prohibited for months. Crossing provincial borders barred (physically) for weeks/months. Well into mid-summer, public worship/discipleship gatherings were forbidden. Even when permitted out, up to a year in jail awaited those found without face masks in public.



BUT THE WEAPON MEANT TO KILL US WOULD BE THE SWORD IN OUR HANDS

The Lord began to open doors to La Senda almost immediately. Through a family connection, we were able to obtain one of a very few precious vehicle licenses to allow our church van to continue to operate. This grace and some bicycles allowed our La Senda missionary team to continued to serve.



As shortage gripped the entire nation, La Senda worked hard to find and bring forth an abundance to be shared with neighbors in need in all the communities we serve. Corn, rice, fruits and vegetables, not available generally, are being harvested to plant the knowledge of God in the filled stomachs of the people. Yami reported to us that, in the middle of all the fear, difficulty, and scarcity, the people are saying,

“We praise God because this is an opportunity to see His great love doing miracles”

The people, she said, testified that God has provided in miraculous ways. This is supernatural. God is good and He is working. These moments make our faith and confidence grow in the One who is good (El Bueno) !!!



I will lift up my eyes to the hills—
From whence comes my help?
My help comes from the Lord,
Who made heaven and earth.

The Lord is your keeper
The Lord is the shade at your right hand
The sun shall not strike you by day
Nor the moon by night.
Psalm 121



RECONNECTING TO THE SOURCE OF LIFE

So it continued through spring and into summer; work of the people of God marching forward even as the world around us came grinding to a halt. Our team saw to providing staples for more than 60 families in Jovellanos and others in the towns and villages where our missions serve. Pastors visited house to house and new believers received new life in whatever setting the Lord chose for their welcoming celebrations.

New pastors and missionaries came on board, a couple of them got married, and others were consecrated to new assignments as our churches and missions were re-invigorated and our focus finely sharpened with the sword of the Word in our collective hands.



Construction projects moved forward. Church home purchases were completed and new spaces prepared for the moment when public worship would be permitted anew. When that time came mid-Summer, the Spirit carried in a wave of people seeking freedom, providence, and the breath of life in Christ.

In the US, our team continued to firm up existing partnerships and the Lord provided Pastor Kevin with opportunity to connect new people and preach in service to a congregation seeking similar revival to what we have seen in La Senda Antigua and the network. On the island and in the States, we picked up the weapon wielded against us and are using it to continue working as Kingdom Builders.

Pastora Yami summed it up by saying that in spite of all we are facing, God has visited us with so many mercies. We have remembered things lost is the busyness of ministry and seen miracles at every turn. It is supernatural!



CHALLENGE & OPPORTUNITY ON THE PATH AHEAD

As of this writing, a new wave of challenges confront us. It's as though our calendars paid no mind to the turning of the year. January 2021 has seen record daily cases of COVID across Cuba, This has brought new lockdowns. Public curfew is currently 7 pm for those who demonstrate need to be out and entire blocks or neighborhoods are experiencing complete quarantine.

Church gatherings are once again restricted. At La Senda Antigua, our much anticipated 10th Birthday Celebration (which would have drawn upwards of 1500 people) had to be postponed just days in advance. As people are leaning into Christ and the faith community more than ever, this is yet another challenge confronting us.

The incredible scarcities of 2020 are now compounded by implementation of long-rumored changes to Cuba's convoluted dual currency system. On Jan 1, 2021, one (previously most valuable) was discontinued. Value dropped by 95.8%. At the same moment, prices were inflated by 5x as were government salaries. While all citizens are affected negatively by the currency devaluation and inflation, millions not on state payrolls (including Pastors and missionaries) reap no benefit whatever from the salary hike. We are gathering insight as to what support will be necessary to allow our pastors to continue serving in ministry full-time.



Alongside the reform attempts, 2020 handed us new political intricacies to navigate. Washington tightened restrictions on US economic/personal engagement in Cuba (much religious investment untouched) and both nations made moves (each for its own reasons) to restrict flow of US dollars into hands of Cuban citizens. It is now more difficult to get funds and supplies to our folks than any time in the last decade. Procuring of visas for Jose & Yami to visit the US (wreck of a process since 2019) will not be possible until there is change in how both governments manage the pandemic. Their first grandson, born in December, awaits them in Florida as soon as we can get them to him.



Travel to Cuba, impossible for the last 10 months, looks to remain tricky for the first half of 2021, too. The US holds on to a travel warning (never stopped us before) over an issue from several years ago. In Cuba, due to COVID, flights which just reopened in November and December have been drastically pulled back. Thousands have been stranded just as in March 2020. COVID both coming and going is burdensome, at the least. Currently, we hope for our leaders to be able to visit in summer and a return to short-term mission team travel in September.

STAYING CONNECTED

While there are challenges on the path to Zion, even as we navigate them, we have opportunity for deepening the connections which have blessed us so much already. We encourage you to stay close to us. Here are a few tools:

Facebook

Kevin Jobe Tonni Jobe
José Santiago Yami Cruz

Facebook/Instagram

@ancientpathministries.org

Website

ancientpathministries.org

Email

kevinandtonni@ancientpathministries.org



COMING IN FEB 2021!!!

APM VIRTUAL KINGDOM BUILDERS FUNDRAISING EVENT

Our new virtual event is a 25 minute video experience of the work of Ancient Path/La Senda Antigua. You'll see and hear from Pastor Kevin & Tonni Jobe, Pastor Jose Santiago & Yami Cruz and APM Advisory Board Testimony from members of La Senda Antigua & US ministry partners

Introduce new friends, family, church congregations to the work of the ancient path.

Bring people alongside as new partners. Be blessed by the Kingdom witness.

Keep an eye on your email, our Facebook, Instagram pages, and Website for launch information.

Pastor Kevin is available to bring a more personal touch to your virtual or in-person viewing gatherings.

Call, text, or email him 419-944-9238. kevinandtonni@ancientpathministries.org



YOUR ONGOING PARTNERSHIP IS ESSENTIAL

To be clear, COVID 2020 saw us suffer some financial setbacks. We envisioned a year of great growth. Loss of short-term mission travel for at least a year, incapacity to make visits to our many partner churches, and cancellation of all in-person gatherings were costly, and overall ministry income was down significantly. In spite of all this, as the year came to a close, we consider ourselves tremendously blessed. It would have been easy to have found ourselves season of much steeper decline. By the grace of God and the generosity of His children our friends, we were able to achieve an incremental growth in Financial Covenant Partnerships which are the base of our ministry in the US and Cuba. Here is a quick recap:



3-year Monthly Partnership Goal
12/31/21 goal. \$21,600 mo.
12/31/20 goal \$15,000 (70%)

Actual 2019-2020 growth:

- Dec 31, 2019 \$6,334 (29.3%)
- March 31, 2020 \$6,000 (27.7%)
- Jun 30, 2020 \$6,000 (27.7%)
- Sep 30, 2020 \$6,500 (30.1%)
- Dec 31, 2020 \$6,750 (32.0%)

JOIN OUR COVENANT FINANCIAL PARTNERS TODAY

TEXT TO GIVE through Four Corners Church
Text KEYWORDS to 513-806-2724
Click link. Select Ancient Path Ministries Fund

ON OUR WEBSITE
ancientpathministries.org/onlinegiving

BANK/IRA/DAF/PERSONAL OR BUSINESS CHECKS
Recurring or 1-time Giving to:
Ancient Path Ministries
10889 Lake Thames Dr, Cincinnati, OH, 45242



ANCIENT PATH LEADERSHIP & ADVISORY BOARD



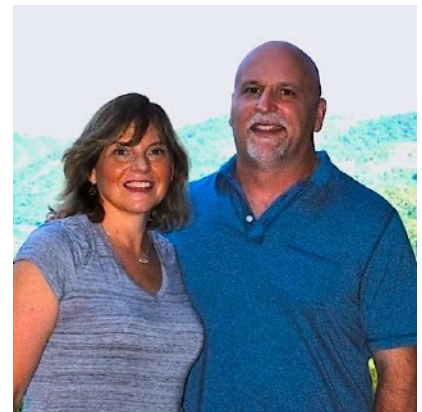
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