

APRIL 2021

ANCIENT PATH MINISTRIES/LA SENDA ANTIGUA

REFLECTIONS

2021 - 1ST QUARTER

**ANCIENT
PATH
MINISTRIES**



REMEMBRANCE



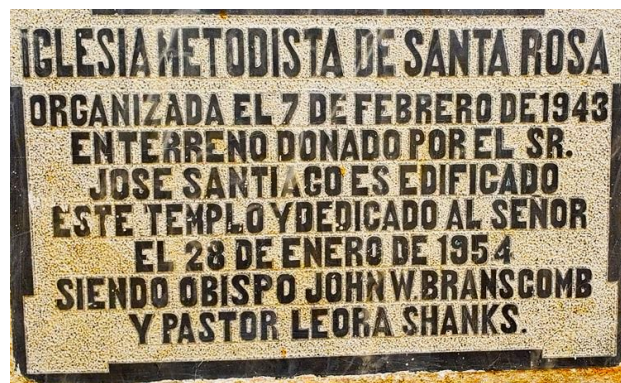
**JOSÉ SANTIAGO
VERGARA**

19 SEPTEMBER 1973

3 APRIL 2021

A WORD FROM PASTOR KEVIN JOBE

It's early on Tuesday, April 13, 2021. I am running late. People reading this were promised a remembrance and update a day or two ago but I am just finally putting fingers to keyboard (21st century pen to paper) attempting to sum up in a few pages the life, calling, and work of a man whose story is better suited to an epic novel. I am in the privileged position of knowing him deeply and sharing a supernatural brotherhood that comes with the currently crushing weight of a David & Jonathan (1 Samuel 18) "one in spirit" "loved him as he loved himself" undergirding. Pastor Jose Santiago Vergara (El Muy Reverendo, I like to say) and I are true brothers. I could write that epic work. I might someday. For the moment, I promised everyone a remembrance to glorify God and honor my brother. I pray it might also inspire you to join or deepen your commitment to the mission as we carry it forward. May it bless, encourage, and motivate you.



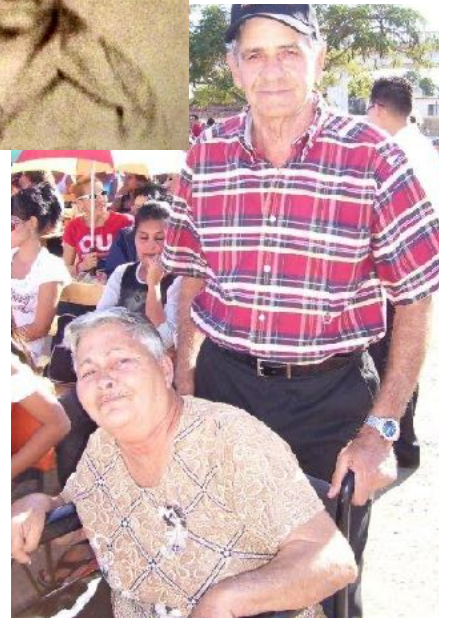
ROOTED IN LOVE

During WWII, American Methodist missionary Leora Shanks brought the Gospel to the village of Santa Rosa in Matanzas, Cuba. Her witness of Christ's love and power was sufficient to convince Margarita Garcia to place her faith in our Lord and Savior. A congregation started meeting on land and eventually in a building donated by Margarita's husband, José Santiago (our Pastor José's grandfather). The word took root deeply and the subsequent generations have carried the Gospel forward as Pastors, missionaries, and servants of God.

A CRY LIKE HANNAH

In 1964, José Santiago Garcia (Pastor José’s Dad) married Angela Cira Vergara. For 9 years, the couple attempted to conceive a child. One day in desperation, although not secure in her faith at all, Cira pleaded with a God she wasn’t certain was real and true. She had heard the story of Hannah whose son, Samuel would become a great prophet, and so she begged for a son and promised that should her plea be granted, the child would be given over to the Lord as His own. Soon afterward, she found herself expecting.

On September 19, 1973 the promised child was born, José Santiago Vergara, henceforth to be known to those closest to him as Joseito. From the hospital maternity ward, his Father drove directly to their little village where Cira placed her newborn on the altar of the church and, as she had promised, they dedicated him to a life of service to God.



JOSÉ SANTIAGO GARCIA 1944 - 7 APRIL 2021

Let us pause here briefly and acknowledge another difficult loss to the Santiago and La Senda Antigua family. Just four days after his son’s passing, Pastor José’s Dad also succumbed to pneumonia, related to Covid.

Papá (Pipo to family) was a loving, gentle, and supremely intelligent man. His detailed understanding of US history (from every angle) consistently astonished mission team members for whom he often served as chauffeur. After the death of his wife Cira following a

long struggle with diabetes, José later was married to Nerys, a long time member of our congregation who survives him. Vaya con Dios, Papá. Te extrañamos.



CLAIMING THE CALLING

A personal encounter with Christ at age 11 would lead eventually to a calling to pastoral/missionary ministry at 17. As he tells it, José was scared and put things off for a year before asking permission to start a gathering in his parent’s small apartment in the village of La Carlota. Without formal training or even a study Bible, with only the testimony of grace and salvation to share, he set out to invite neighbors to new life. Soon 70-90 people came each week for worship and Bible study, filling every space of the home, balcony, and even the communal stairs in the outer hallway. The Methodist living room gathering founded there in 1991 is still an active church congregation today.



José Santiago met Yami Cruz when both young missionaries finally had opportunity to attend formal missionary training through the Methodist Church in Havana. During their courtship, he would ride two hours by motorcycle to her home in the town of Hoyo Colorado. They were married April 15, 2000 and began the work of planting churches together.

FAMILY TIES

Along the path, Pastor José was blessed with four sons, two daughters-in-law, and a grandson, who is the image of his abuelito (grandpa). I mean, look at him.



José Fernando, Denia and Sebastien



Enmanuel and Tatiana



Left to Right:
Daniel, Pastor José, Pastora Yami, David

GOD'S DREAMS FROM LA CAPILLA TO LA SENDA ANTIGUA



La Capilla El Salvador was an old mission church that everyone had given up for dead, until José and Yami were sent there. It would be through La Capilla and a church called Grace in Norwood, OH that God would start to work out His dreams and lead us to La Senda Antigua.

I (Kevin) came to Cuba in November 2006 as Pastor of Norwood Grace. Upon our very first intense personal encounter, Joseito and I began dreaming together, with me often sneaking off from my team to find him.



He told me he had two dreams, both impossible, one of them long forgotten. Impossible was an opening to international connections, beginning with prayer pacts between members of our churches. Cuba had no cell phones nor legal email nor reliable mail service, but none of that mattered if God was in it. We pledged to each other to make it happen. Tonni and I got to work on it. The prayer pacts started to become reality in 2007 and more the 60 families from each church were eventually involved.

NOTHING IS IMPOSSIBLE WITH GOD

José's forgotten dream was from deep in his childhood, when he had visions that he had a flesh and blood brother, someone with whom he could go adventuring and maybe, God willing, someday, go riding across the USA in cars. It seems that I would be both answer to and instrument of that one. In 2009, he made the first of seven mission tours to the USA, not incidentally bringing with him a gift for delivering the Gospel with incredible power. The US connections began to spread and deepen.



2009 and 2010 brought unanticipated change. The Santiago/Cruz family was re-assigned from La Capilla in Summer 2009 and the Jobes from Norwood Grace in Summer 2010. For a time, apart from all the dreaming, we had to simply sit back, serve and wait to hear the Lord speak His dreams to us again. None of us could have known what was about to happen. God's dreams for us are always greater than our own.



BRINGING GOOD NEWS

Late in 2010, God began sewing a new work. In a place where clashing strains of faith (godly or evil) mix into a thick and difficult spiritual stew, the Lord laid a new calling on Jose & Yami.

"Go to the darkest places.
Go where light has been seemingly overcome.
Go where the gospel has never flourished,
where the spiritual forces of evil
and darkness seem strongest.
Go and take the light of Christ."



Jovellanos is home to the country's worst demonic spiritual strongholds. In awe and wonder that God would gift/challenge them such a calling, they gathered friends in January, 2011 to pray. Soon we had a church. God gave us a name, La Iglesia Volviendo a la Senda Antigua (Church Returning to the Ancient Path).



The gathering quickly grew to more than 100 people, meeting in a converted barn. Pastor Kevin & Tonni were on a race to raise funding in the USA to support the new ministry. With the help of many partners, a house was purchased. One year after the first prayer meeting, the community moved in and set out to live as people of Ancient Path; the path of the primitive church. Changing their world. Powered by the Holy Spirit to live together in Christ. Showing love and respect to initially suspicious neighbors. Growing as citizens of the Kingdom of God and calling new believers into the fold. Today, La Senda Antigua is a community of over 300, still praising God and bringing good news.

CONNECTING IN CHRIST

Following Christ's command, the people of La Senda Antigua/The Ancient Path are committed to creating an ever-growing circle of connections. In 2012, we came into relationship with the Buenas Nuevas (Good News) Association of churches in Cuba and began the work of widening our circle. In Jovellanos, we have neighborhood prayer houses, Children's Ministry outreach centers, and we take a leading role in drawing together congregations of all denominations.

Moving outward from this center, we train, anoint, and send out missionary pastors to maintain a network of missions/churches throughout an ever growing region. There are 19 operating church/mission sites. Mercy missions carry crisis relief items to the far eastern end of Cuba: food, building materials, workers, and basic supplies for pastoral families in the nation's poorest regions.



In September 2018, as ministry expanded, Pastor Kevin began working full-time to manage the mission and connectional work. Pre-COVID, Ancient Path was carrying 4-5 annual mission teams to connect to and work with our Cuban churches.

All of this work is made possible by many relationships with in the USA. Since 2011, we have taken José and Yami across the nation to meet new friends in Christ. Our growing partnership network stretches from Long Island to Seattle to Texas, Ohio, Mississippi, Florida, and places in between.



BUILDING THE KINGDOM



We are committed to continual planting and building for the Kingdom of God. We do so foremost by building people into Kingdom citizens, through relationship to God and to one another. We are called to witness to the fullness of the Kingdom of God; the present and coming reality in which all relationships in heaven and all creation are once again set right. We see God transforming lives on a regular basis.

gifted medical personnel, educators, psychologists, and social workers in the US and Cuba to help ensure that our brothers and sisters are healthy servants and stand strong as they work to carry the Gospel to new people and places.

Ancient Path/La Senda Antigua is committed to caring for the spiritual, physical, and emotional well-being of our church members and pastoral leadership, collaborating with



In order to accomplish all of this, we build and maintain facilities where ministry can happen. Physical locations throughout our network are under construction and every space we can acquire now and in years to come will require that this work continue. We are humbled to be part of this miraculous work of the hand of God, overseen by His good and faithful servant, Pastor José Santiago.

SO MUCH MORE COULD BE SAID



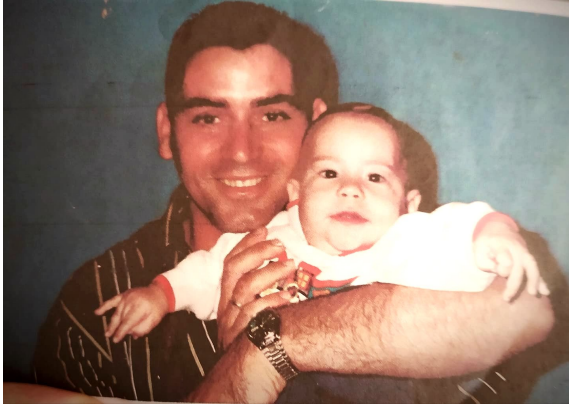
This is where space runs out but thoughts and expressions could just keep right on flowing. There is so much more story left to tell of everything José Santiago Vergara, the self-proclaimed "Guajirito de Santa Rosa" (little redneck farm boy from Santa Rosa) has meant to so many people.

I finish writing this entirely truncated remembrance with an ache in my heart. There have been more than a few tears shed in telling just this small part of Joseito's story and the tremendous work of God in his life and so many of us who have been blessed to play our part in its sweeping epic.

Christ has called his son home, and though the loss is tremendous and deeply felt, we trust that God has more dreams yet to be fulfilled through the people of the ancient path (la senda antigua).

TRIBUTE FROM AN OLD FRIEND

...he won the affection of Christian and non-Christian people, something that he never lost, if today you ask about Joseito you will see that he was a man that people loved: his simplicity, his affection for them, his desire to serve, his love for God, and his fear of God accompanied him throughout his life here on earth.



I saw him work hard, welding and even cultivating land to take care of his family, I saw him riding a bicycle to serve the Lord, I saw him walking up hills to serve the Lord, I saw him go through cold, heat, being soaked on the road to serve the Lord. I saw him share what he had with those he didn't have to serve the Lord, I saw him blessed for serving the Lord.

I saw him be faithful to his principles, values, morals, and doctrine, I saw him love and take care of his sick mother, I saw him love and respect his father and uncles, I saw him love his cousins and family, I saw him tell the truth face to face to those who did something wrong without fear and regardless of the consequences

I saw him found the Good News Church in Jovellanos, (La Senda) become a leader of that work. I saw him loved and respected, I saw him be a

Pastor of Pastors, I saw him make sure that his pastors and leaders had a decent salary, I saw him fill his bus with aid to take the needy to the Eastern provinces, I saw him believe in God and believe God, I saw him advise, laugh, cry. The history of the church in Matanzas, in Jovellanos, in Cuba should never forget men like Joseito Santiago. - Pastor Orlando Llerena Fernandez

A MESSAGE FROM PASTORA YAMILE CRUZ APRIL 11, 2021

Originally posted to Facebook

My family, brothers and sisters and friends. (Up to now) I haven't had the strength to write like this.

THANK YOU for so much support: for your prayers, for the way in which you have honored my husband and family. Thank you. Thank you for holding up my hands and drying my tears. The process has been hard, the pain is nearly impossible to withstand. I look ahead and don't know how I will be able to even be.

But the legacy of Jose Santiago: his sons, family, congregation, and I, we will continue in his footsteps, which were those of the Lord! Only God will be able to console us and strengthen us and guide us on this new path. But, though I don't understand many things yet, I know that the God I serve will not abandon us. He is sovereign and He is always, always!! He cares for us and does all things for our good.

Our home worships God!! In the midst of brokenness!! We worship Him! As for me and my house, we will serve Jehovah, God.

THANK YOU!!! For so much love, I could and I can feel your unconditional support. I am very blessed to have such beautiful people in my life, even as I have said, "See you later" to the most extraordinary and beautiful person whom God gifted me for 22 years. May God bless you all.



ANCIENT PATH-NEW DAY

CURRENT CHALLENGES

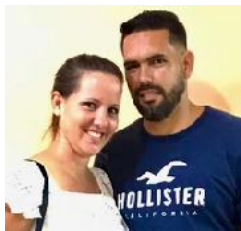
Apart from the loss of our founder and Lead Pastor, there remain very real practical challenges to confront us. Cuba is suffering the worst COVID outbreak since the pandemic started. Our province of Matanzas is hard hit. Real numbers of illness/death will not likely be published. Too many reputations are at stake. Currency changes have been accompanied by the worst food and supply shortages in decades. Tightened restrictions on flow of US dollars are making funding day to day work a challenge.



Last month, Pastors José and Kevin agreed to take steps of faith regarding the post-COVID era restart of regular mission teams to La Senda Antigua. In keeping with this, Pastor Kevin & Tonni are looking for the earliest possibility to go be with Pastora Yami and our Cuban leadership team to map out our best course for future ministry. Additionally, Pastor Kevin and a group from Four Corners Church (Ohio) are hopefully preparing for a mission visit from September 30-October 7, 2021, which we pray will serve as an opening to a full-time schedule in 2022. We ask for your daily prayer support in this effort.

GOOD NEWS ON THE PATH BEFORE US

From the start, through José and Yami's onsite work, our partnerships with psychologists, medical professionals, and seminarians, La Senda Antigua has been dedicated to development and support of strong leadership. Our team is quite simply, stacked. The bench is deep. This group of pastors, missionaries, and administrators, along with dozens of incredible leaders and hundreds of faithful servants in every area of ministry will capably carry the work forward. New gifting is about to be unveiled in many. As our partners, you will be witnesses to and foundational supporters of the work God will soon show in them. Stay tuned. It's going to be amazing.



YOU'VE BEEN ASKING. HERE IS HOW YOU CAN HELP.

First of all, please receive our humble thanks for the outpouring of support and offers of help we have received from literally hundreds of you during this difficult time. We are surrounded by an amazing group of brothers and sisters in Christ.

1. PRAY

As always, the first, most crucial thing you can do to help at any time, even more fervently in this moment, is PRAY. In particular right now we ask you to pray for:

- Yami. In her grief over the loss of her husband and partner in ministry. In her decision making as Mother, Lead Pastor of La Senda Antigua, overseer of the network, and, member the the Buenas Nuevas Association.
- The whole Santiago family as they deal with the loss of Dad, Grandfather, Husband, Brother, Uncle, and everything that Pastor José and Papá José are to them.
- The leadership of Ancient Path-La Senda Antigua recovering from our loss and re-equipping ourselves for the work ahead.
- For Cuba in a time of great financial and medical crisis, and for the US and Cuba in the ever complex political relationship.
- Each other. Pastor José's impact on the lives of many of you reading this was quite deep. Your loss is real.

2. BECOME A FINANCIAL COVENANT PARTNER

In the Summer of 2018, on one of our long car rides (in Cuba) Pastors Kevin, José, and Yami mapped out a ministry financial projection to carry the work of APM-LSA through the next decade and beyond. Accomplishing the projection will allow us to cover the expenses of everything we do, from day to day operations to regular annual large projects and purchases. The original vision was to meet our goal across 3 years, 2019-2021.

As a way of expressing what needs to happen, we have employed the term 100/20/20. This means we need to secure 140 monthly partnerships (or their equivalent). 100 at \$100, 20 at \$250, 20 at \$500. 140 committed people or churches can make this happen. Change the world. Then, specific requests can be made of our partners for unexpected needs or new project opportunities.

As the chart below shows, COVID greatly slowed (but did not stop) our growth across 2020, leaving us at 1/3 committed 2/3 of the way through our 3-year plan. As our world re-engages post-pandemic, this is the best way you can physically help the ministry.

<u>3-yr Monthly Partner Goal</u>	<u>Actual 2019 to date growth:</u>
12/31/21 goal. \$21,600 mo.	Dec 31, 2019 \$6,334 (29.3%)
12/31/20 goal \$15,000 (70%).	Dec 31, 2020 \$6,750 (32.0%)
	Mar 31, 2021 \$7,050 (34.7%)

If haven't already, please consider joining us in this effort that the work may have a strong financial foundation for years to come. While monthly income makes for our simplest bookkeeping, current partners also give their covenant commitments on monthly, quarterly, or yearly basis as best suits their planning.

Here is how to sign on:

Note: the online giving portal for Ancient Path/ La Senda is provided by Four Corners Community Church in West Chester, OH



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

BANK/IRA/DAF/PERSONAL OR BUSINESS CHECKS
Recurring or 1-time Giving to:

ON OUR WEBSITE
ancientpathministries.org/onlinegiving
Follow prompts to Four Corners giving site
Select Ancient Path Ministries Fund. Recurring

Ancient Path Ministries
10889 Lake Thames Dr, Cincinnati, OH, 45242

3. CONNECT US TO NEW FRIENDS

Here are a few tools for helping us build Kingdom community across the USA

APM VIRTUAL KINGDOM BUILDERS FUNDRAISING EVENT



A 25 min. video experience 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, churches to the work of the ancient path Bring people alongside as partners. Be blessed by Kingdom witness. Click on the logo to see the video on our YouTube channel.

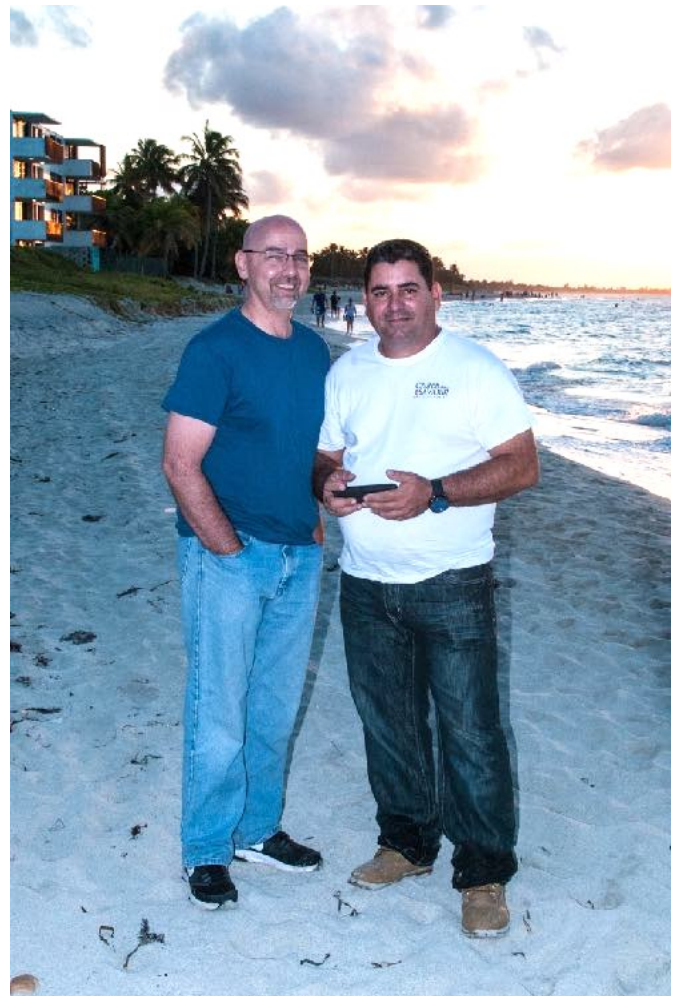
PR. KEVIN JOBE COMES TO YOU

Kevin is vaccinated and anxious to come and see you!

- Now!
- Anywhere in the USA!!
- In your home, school, church community, or business.
- Preaching, teaching, presenting, relating, or eating.
- Masked or bare-faced.
- Large or small groups.
- Form is flexible to suit your needs.
- You provide help with transportation cost, place/time, eager group of friends to hear an amazing story of the hand of God at work.
- Kevin provides the narrative.

POINT FOLKS TO ONLINE / SOCIAL MEDIA

- Website
 - <https://ancientpathministries.org>
- Facebook
 - Yami Cruz
 - Kevin Jobe
 - Tonni Jobe
 - facebook.com/ancientpathministries.org
- Instagram
 - @ancientpathministries
- Youtube Channel. Access video and subscribe here.
 - <https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCF9uhj4aK-J78-S2vDJDuxg>
- LinkedIn
 - <https://www.linkedin.com/in/kevin-jobe-1749a517b/>
- Email/phone contact list for regular updates
 - kevinandtonni@ancientpathministries.org



Once again, we thank you for all of your friendship, prayers, and support. What an amazing team we are together for the Kingdom!
May God bless you richly. Que Dios les bendiga mucho.

ANCIENT PATH LEADERSHIP & ADVISORY BOARD



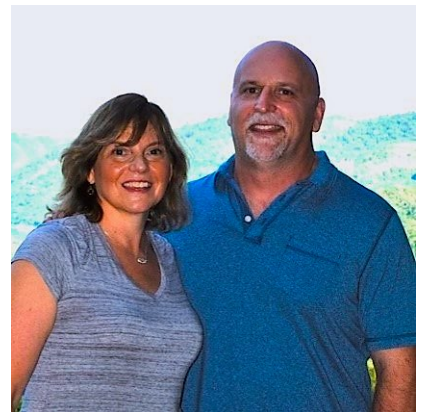
Jose Santiago & Yami Cruz
Jovellanos, Matanzas, Cuba



Kevin & Tonni Jobe
Cincinnati, OH



Kyle & Jennifer Kaufman
Mason, OH



Brad & Laura Walden
Montgomery, OH



Cheryl Wahlstrom
Jamestown, NY



Linda Wallace
Cincinnati, OH



Vicki Sheaffer
Longview, TX

