



Sports Ministry Team to Medellín

Travel to Medellín

Bernie LaTour, the president of YES missions, and I met our California mission team of nine people and flew together to Medellín, Colombia. After we arrived, Pastor Seir Lopez and several Colombian youth from different evangelical churches greeted us.

We boarded a large bus and traveled 45 minutes to the city of Medellín, the second largest city in Colombia with a population of approximately 3 million people. We all enjoyed the spring-like climate, which is prevalent year round.

Most of our mission team stayed at Pastor Lopez's home. A few stayed in the homes of other pastors. Pastor Lopez is President of a network of 25 churches throughout the city called "Emanuel."

Soccer Match Ministry

One of the main priorities of this mission trip was for the California group, which included seven young people (five university students), to play friendly soccer matches with community teams in different areas.

The soccer fields are concrete instead of grassy fields. The sports ministry team played six soccer matches throughout the week.

Following the matches we had the opportunity to form friendships and

pass out evangelistic tracts to the Colombian teams.

Some of these teams were made up of youth who attended one of the Emanuel churches but other teams were formed from local neighborhoods.

These soccer matches provided a wonderful opportunity for spiritual seed planting and forming strong relationships between our mission team and the Emanuel young people. We felt that the Lord prepared these matches.

The *El Pacífico* Neighborhood

Another important opportunity for our team was a visit to a place called "El Pacífico," which is a neighborhood ministry started by a local woman named Socorro and her husband Hernán. Its main purpose is to provide a place for children to learn about the Lord through a variety of activities such as singing, listening to Bible stories, and participating in other children's activities.

The children numbered around 100 and all of them were so happy that our team came to visit them. They come from very poor neighborhoods where drug use and prostitution are a way of life.

Through various fundraising projects, construction of a new Children's Club building in "El Pacífico" was completed a few months ago.

The next project is to finish the church sanctuary on the second floor. Pray for the Emanuel churches as they start children's clubhouses in needy areas around the city.



Hope for an Orphanage

During our stay Pastor Lopez, a few church members, and team members visited two areas in the mountains where *Emanuel* Churches would like to purchase land to build an orphanage. The orphanage will enlist Christian instructors to teach the children and offer basic vocational skills.

Pastor Lopez has asked Y.E.S. to help raise funds for the orphanage. We will pray and ask God to open up doors of opportunity for this to be accomplished. If you feel the Lord leading you to contribute financially to the orphanage please send funds designated to the Medellin Orphanage fund at Y.E.S.

A Baptism

Also near the end of our trip one of the youth from the California group asked to be baptized. He had never made a decision to follow the Lord in believer's baptism. After a time of discussion with his pastor, the young man decided to confirm his decision to believe in Christ as his Savior and be baptized. On our last morning in Colombia, we held an early morning baptism service at one of the *Emanuel* churches to baptize Cody. Many youth from the churches attended and witnessed Cody's baptism.

Farewell and Thanks

Overall this mission trip was very positive for many reasons. The Lord fostered a strong unity between our team and the *Emanuel* churches. I was able to meet pastors with whom I will be working in the future, presented the gospel to many local youth, and also spoke at two worship services. Many of the young people on our team have made a commitment to return within a year to Medellin. A few of the young people are also praying about a future in missionary service.

I would like to express my thanks and gratitude to you for your faithful giving and support of the ministry. I ask that you continue to pray for the Lord to open doors for others to join us as financial and prayer partners in this new year. May each of you have a great new year filled with many blessings from our Lord.

Sincerely in Christ,

Glenn Cantu
YES National Representative

