



Praise Yahweh from the earth...
Stormy wind, doing His word...

Psalm 148:7-8

A Sudden Move

As I shared some prayer requests in one of the first emails I wrote in 2026, I mentioned that, in many ways, the past year had been the hardest of our ministry. I added that I didn't necessarily expect 2026 to be less challenging – but that I did expect to know more of our all-powerful God who is always with us!

Well, if you get our email updates, you know that 2026 started with a bang! Right after the holidays, the owner of our rental house came to visit, letting us know that she was planning to move back into the house with her family.

Oh, and that she was renting out part of the property for a street bar, starting immediately.

This is a little hard to explain, but in our front yard was a small building, the size of a garage, used for storage but designed originally as a little storefront. It opened not to our yard, but to the street. However, the thin back wall was only a couple of metres from our living room.

So the fridges were installed, the DJ came with his big speakers, and the bar opened 4-5 days a week for 10-12 hours a day, usually until 1 or 2 am. They used the same electricity as the house, causing power outages. And they used our water, which meant we frequently ran out.

To make matters more interesting, this was a small dead-end (formerly quiet) street – now taken over with cars blocking everyone's driveways, and customers sitting on every curb, or dancing if there was still space!

Perhaps the most immediate issue – *we were getting very little sleep!*

But God heard the many who were praying about the situation. We have been able to find a new house, and are already moved in (translation – **we are sleeping in the new house!** Although surrounded by boxes.). The new house is considerably more expensive to rent, but we're hoping it will be a more long term and stable situation.

I want to leave room for other things in this newsletter, so I won't list the **many** ways in which God opened the door for this to happen so amazingly quickly. Yes, our lives will still be in chaos for a while as we get settled and organized, but we've seen God's hand in so many ways through this time.

Thanks for your prayers! Yes, **even the stormy winds obey His command!**

On to Ontario ...

For various reasons we decided to cut our trip to Canada short last year, which meant that we weren't able to go to Ontario as planned. So we're trying again in 2026! Lord willing we will be visiting from early June to mid-July. We will try to post information on our website when it becomes available.

Nathanael and Gang

We're looking forward to having Nathanael visit, along with three of his friends, in early March. They're hoping to learn more about missionary work, and Nathanael will be staying a little longer in order to visit the dentist – and spend time with us and friends, of course!

Church Property Update

You may be wondering about the purchase of a church property, so here's an update.

We're hoping to purchase the new property using the official civil association ("A.C.") that we have here. This will help with the accounts and transfers of funds.

However, our coworker Rod is working with others in the AC on some paperwork. There's no reason to get into all the complications, but please pray that they can get the documents in order soon so that we can move ahead.

Thanks to all of you who have donated to this project. It will be so helpful to have funds in hand when we're ready to make a purchase. To give, just go to <https://bit.ly/avant-donate>, choose the country to give through, and look for information on the "Path of Life Project".

Keith

Our former director, Keith Elliott, passed away unexpectedly in January. We very much appreciated his ministry, and in fact had hoped to have him and his wife here again in Ixtapaluca for a conference. Please pray for his family during this time. More info: <https://cottrillcompass.com/blog/keith>

Grace & Peace,
Jim & Shari

Neighbourhood Ministry

In December, our church (at it's new location in the neighbourhood of Las Palmas, Ixtapaluca) set up a stove to give out free *ponche* on the street! Ponche is a typical Mexican Christmas punch full of local fruits and sugar cane. Great for a cool evening!

We sang Christmas carols and were able to share the gospel with many in the community. We also handed out little packets with candy, a verse (e.g. above left – "The people who walked in darkness have seen a great light" (Isaiah 9:2), and our church address and service information.

We estimate that about 200 of these got into the hands of people in the community, which means many more people have heard God's Word, and know that there is a church there. *Praise the Lord!*

Notes of Prayer and Praise

♪ Praise the Lord for the many doors He opened, allowing us to move quickly! Thank Him for those who prayed and helped in other ways.

♪ Please pray for Hannah and Brandon as they prepare for married life.

♪ Please pray that God would provide a permanent place for the church to meet, and for the funds needed.

♪ Please pray for endurance during an exceptionally busy time, including settling into a new house.

♪ Please pray for unity and healing in our church, as we face many challenges.

♪ Please pray for quality time with Nathanael and his friends in early March.

To update your address or change other preferences, please visit: <http://bit.ly/join-change>