



Al & Helga Bonikowsky

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Church Planting

Iglesia Bautista Bíblica, Misionero Lecuona, 38. Irún, España
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Basque Farmhouse Restoration

"Aierdi" Retreat Center. "In the foothills of Mount Aitzgorri "

June, 2014

Dear Church & Friends,

"I have fought a good fight, I have finished my course, I have kept the faith" 2 Timothy 4:7. With these words of Paul, we are sending our last prayer letter from Spain. The Lord has given us a blessed 42 years of ministry. It is time to pass on the torch!

Our time of transition is slowly drawing to a close. The church is responding very well to Israel, our new pastor, and his wife Laura. Last Sunday they brought their new little girl, Maialen, to church, and we had a great time of fellowship after services, with everyone wanting to see and touch the baby!

Israel has asked me to keep on alternating with him for the Sunday morning preaching until we leave, as he adjusts to a fulltime schedule of preaching and teaching. He feels very strongly about the church having a Bible School again and has about 20 coming for Thursday evening classes. With the Spanish work schedule it is not easy to choose an evening as the normal work hours are rather late. Israel is well trained and I am greatly enjoying the flow of the Spanish in his ministry. The Lord surely has gifted him and we know the Lord will bless them and the church.

A little bit of local Spanish culture. Israel had his second funeral service as one of our long time members went home to glory. A few anecdotes about funerals for Irún, our particular city. The local funeral home, called a Tanatorio, has a small chapel and there is also one at the cemetery. The tanatorio is a rather "cold" place for a spiritual funeral. For the last funeral the family asked for a memorial service at the church. We were extremely crowded and many commented about how they enjoyed the service. We always have a good opportunity for a short evangelistic service. At this last funeral, the family again asked for the service to be held at church. We decided to have it in the Dining Room area at the back of the church, which has more space than our auditorium! I placed 110 folding chairs and there were a fair number of people standing outside the door to the street and in the hallway leading back to the auditorium. Israel preached a good salvation message. On Monday morning quite a few went to the cemetery and we held a very brief service in the chapel there and then followed the casket to the "niche" for "burial."

This is where things get interesting. Years ago, if you bought a family mausoleum, there was room for a number of family members. After that, niches. But with them, the remains are removed after 8 years and everybody gets cremated! So in our city, with the ocean on one side and almost surrounded by mountains, we can't "bury" anyone!

We thank the Lord for unsaved people visiting almost every Sunday morning. We feel some are close to salvation. Please pray that the Lord would give them conviction of sin and bring them to himself.

Pastors, you should be receiving a letter by snail mail detailing our return to the States, a final report to the churches that so desire, and retirement at the end of the year. We have tickets for September 22nd.

Please do not send any mail to Spain after the middle of September and send any mail to Mark Bonikowsky, 128 Manchester Drive, Mauldin, S.C. 29662. His cell phone is 864-6316553. Our Email continues to be Bonikowskyal@gmail.com.

Thank you so much for your continued prayers and support.

Al & Helga Bonikowsky

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