

GAMBOA UNION CHURCH
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DECEMBER 2014 WHAT IS GOD UP TO? That is the question I was thinking about recently in the midst of some personal changes. Here are two events that I share with you.

A few months ago, Panama inaugurated a new president. Shortly after that I learned at the prison that many prisoners were going to be released. About twenty-five of these men were members of our weekly chapel meetings. So suddenly I had only 5 to 8 men attending. Others were glad to be released but they missed their fellowship.

Now, just as I was praying with the men to seek God and His purposes, four new men came to the meeting. They had just been transferred from another over-crowded prison and wanted to meet the believers. They had come to meet Christ recently. The following week there were more new men. Since they had very little understanding of the Bible, I now knew that I had to start with the basics for these men. We learned that in the coming weeks, there would be 200 new men transferred to this prison. Now I had a whole new "congregation" to reach. Some were minors, under eighteen years old. God is up to something at the prison.

Panama has the 20th highest incarceration rate in the world of 222 nations surveyed. Panamanian prisons hold almost twice as many people as the 8,500 persons its facilities are designed to hold.

Another big change for me is that recently I was told that I was no longer allowed to get on the tourist buses in Gamboa to present my book. I have been doing this for eight years and hundreds of books have found their way to many families and countries. But a few weeks ago, some tourist complained that I had been on the bus and promoted a "religious" book to the visitors. The person had contacted the office of the main shipping company in Seattle which then made the decision down here.

I was very sad and disappointed because the book had touched many people for Christ. I had gotten many letters telling how much the book meant to them. One couple actually came back to stay in Gamboa for three months to help work at the church...what a blessing to us all. So now I am asking God, "What are You up to here?"

Just a few days after that, I got a letter from a Youth With A Mission team of seven in Kona, HI asking if they could stay at the church for 10 days of ministry and serving. This would give me the opportunity to teach and lead them. Also they can serve in so many ways in the church during Christmas time. So now, let's just see what God will do?

Some ask about our twins...where are David and Becky now? David, Martha and boys Joseph, Jonathan and John David live near Philadelphia now and Becky, Matt and Markie and Elyse live in Albbrook here in Panama. We are proud of these good looking five grandchildren growing so fast!

We pray that you have a blessed Christmas season and seek God's direction for this coming year. Thank you for all your prayer and support for this past year. In His Service, Bill and Ann