

MINISTRY UPDATE

Pastor Fernando Rocha • Costa Rica



*Together in the Gospel
Proclaiming Christ with passion*

Beloved Family,

Hello and blessings to you all. I pray this letter finds you well. I thank God continually for you, my family in the faith, and for the profound blessing it is to have you standing beside us, supporting and ministering alongside us. As we labor together, I am reminded of the words of the Apostle Paul: "I thank Christ Jesus our Lord, who has strengthened me, because He considered me faithful, putting me into service" (1 Timothy 1:12, NASB). By God's grace, we continue serving with a burning desire to see the name of Christ glorified in everything we do.

Though our schedule is full, our spirits are encouraged. Serving alongside those who are part of our lives as brothers and sisters in Christ reminds us of the true purpose and joy of this work. While working with people means we also share in their struggles and hardships, these situations grant us the privilege of walking alongside them and helping them seek God-honoring solutions.

Service in Puriscal and Church Planting

We are currently walking alongside several families going through severe trials, including health crises, unemployment, and other heartbreaking situations. Standing by them is a core part of our work in the Puriscal area and aligns with the vision of our Church "Arraigados", to serve the community through planting a new local church.

We are still in the preparation phase, and it is a tremendous blessing to equip the men who will serve alongside me in this work. I am also deeply grateful to partner with the three pastors of Arraigados in this mission. There is still much to do, but we are moving forward toward a future of greater responsibility.

While we have not yet officially launched the church plant from the pulpit, we are working diligently behind the scenes. We are counseling the youth and discipling the growth group, which I am teaching and guiding through the Word. Additionally, we are constantly evaluating our planning, the order of service, and any necessary adjustments to serve the congregation better.

Christian Ministerial Academy

The school year is drawing to a close, and we are in the final stretch, completing the last module of the year. Praise God, several brothers and sisters are about to graduate. It is a joy to see them finish their studies, trusting that what they have learned will equip them to minister, help, and teach others with a solid theological foundation while modeling Christ-like service.

Currently, I am making sure everything is in order for the graduation ceremonies. The students' performance and growth encourage me greatly; they have done an excellent job. I thank God for the privilege of directly influencing their lives, watching them serve, and receiving their expressions of gratitude. All that gratitude belongs entirely to God, for He alone has given me the understanding and training I possess. What I have received by grace, I also give by grace.

Technology and Resources for Students

I am continuing to learn more about social media and the practical tools available to us. As Dean of Students, I want to teach our students how to utilize technological resources to support their studies, focusing on free and accessible options.

While smartphones are useful for quick messages or minor tasks, writing and studying extensively on a phone can be difficult. Some students manage it easily, while others still write everything by hand; both methods are valid as long as they keep learning.

However, I clearly see the need for a computer lab in the future where students can have proper access to computers.

When I was a student at the Grace Bible Institute in Rosarito, Baja California, we had simple but highly functional computers. There, I was able to teach other brothers how to type and use a computer properly. God allowed me to serve in that capacity, and I know some are still benefiting from those skills today. We have not yet secured that resource here, but I trust in God's goodness and keep this vision alive.

Immigration Process and Trusting God

We are still waiting for a response from the Immigration office. I think about it daily, but I trust that everything will resolve well. We are deeply grateful for the church's desire to have us here and the blessing of serving in Costa Rica. We also eagerly hope to visit Tijuana and, Lord willing, spend a week and a half in Cancun on the way back. My wife and I went there years ago for an anniversary and have always wanted to return. However, all these plans hinge on our immigration status.

We have worked hard and navigated various challenges, but we keep our eyes fixed on Jesus Christ. Please keep this process in your prayers. Our lawyer, who is also a brother in Christ, remains fully confident that it will be approved. He checks in with me weekly, reminding us that while men establish laws that we must respect and follow, God is ultimately in control of everything.

This waiting period is a daily reminder of God's sovereignty. Fittingly, at church, we are studying the book of Acts, where we see how God established the early church, how the Lord Jesus Christ foretold what would happen, and how the Holy Spirit directed every step. The history of the church is still unfolding, and our own stories are still being written. I need to continually remember that truth, live with confidence, and invite you to join us in prayer.

When faced with the problems of others, we often rush to offer solutions. Yet, we must cultivate the wisdom to pause and say, "I am going to pray for you"—and whenever possible, pray for them right in that very moment. It is simple, but incredibly powerful.

Our Family's Ministry and Health

It is a beautiful thing to see how God is using my wife and how she is growing in the women's ministry. She is teaching other women how to disciple and make godly decisions, and she already has a team of sisters working alongside her. It brings me great joy to see her so focused—preparing lessons, counseling, and serving. After our Sunday services, many sisters seek her out to discuss their various needs.

Please pray for her. Right now, her health is good, and her treatment is progressing favorably.

We will return to the doctor very soon, as her treatment is nearing its end. Time has flown by, and we hope everything continues to go well, trusting that God is in complete control.

The most important thing is that we remain united, trust in the Lord, and live for His glory. That foundation gives us the strength to face whatever comes. As for me, thank God, I am also in good health and confidently awaiting the answers He will provide in His perfect timing.

Practical Needs and Prayer Requests

We thank you for continuing to pray for the families in our community, especially those facing severe health challenges. Please also pray for our growth group as we move toward becoming a fully planted church in Puriscal, and for our entire family of faith. We thank God for providing for our vehicle needs. The car is now in good condition and running well, and we want to maintain it that way. However, if God grants our visa approval, we will consider acquiring a newer vehicle down the road. Our current one is solid, but it is quite old and has almost become a classic, though these Hondas are very popular here in Costa Rica!

We also need prayer regarding our housing. Our lease expires in November, after two years here. We love this house because it has ample space for Bible studies, meetings, and fellowship with the church family. We still need to speak with the landlord to see if he will renew the contract, raise the rent, or if he needs the house back.

If, for financial reasons or by the owner's decision, we cannot stay, please pray that we find a similar place suitable for living, teaching, and hosting church activities. Rents here are expensive, and we must wisely steward what God has entrusted to us.

Prayer Requests:

Please pray for all the ministries of the church, for our evangelism, and for the plans we have laid out. God moves, changes things, and opens doors according to His perfect will. We are His servants and simply desire to be exactly where He wants to use us.

Pray that we can continue serving the Lord faithfully where we are planted, and that He will supply all our needs, especially in our finances, so that we can advance the work without distraction and with full confidence in His provision.

Specific Prayers:

- The families facing health crises, unemployment, and other hardships.
- The growth group and the future church plant in Puriscal.
- A positive response from Immigration and our future plans.
- My wife's continued health and her growing women's ministry.
- The Academy students, the upcoming graduations, and our technological needs.
- The renewal of our housing lease or the provision of a new, adequate home.
- Our vehicle, our finances, and the wise administration of our resources.
- The church's ministries, our evangelism efforts, and future plans.

Conclusion

To conclude, brothers and sisters, my heart overflows with gratitude for each of you. As you read this, please know how deeply you are loved and appreciated. In a world full of uncertainties, having a spiritual family that stands in the gap with us is a beautiful reflection of God's grace. Whatever struggles, waiting periods, or heavy burdens you might be carrying in your own lives today, I want to encourage you to rest entirely in the hands of our Savior.

He is holding all things together; our plans, our families, and our futures. We can step into tomorrow with unshakable confidence because of who He is. As Colossians 1:17-18 (NASB) powerfully reminds us:

"He is before all things, and in Him all things hold together. He is also head of the body, the church; and He is the beginning, the firstborn from the dead, so that He Himself will come to have first place in everything."

May Christ continue to have first place in our hearts, in our homes, and in the work we do for His Kingdom. Thank you for taking the time to read this monthly letter and for walking this journey alongside us. As always, if you have any questions or simply want to talk and pray together, please reach out. I would absolutely love to connect with you.

With deep affection and hope in Christ, let's keep in touch.

Pastor Fernando Rocha



