



FEBRUARY 2010

UK Spanish Speaking Classes

When Hector Antelo heard that his friend, Margaret Edmunds, formerly a Missionary in Peru and Bolivia, was running a Bible Study Class, he wanted to know more. Hector's passion has always been to see God's Word working in people's lives. When he heard that the courses were also available in Spanish, he wondered whether God was leading him to start his own class for Spanish speakers. That was a few months ago and now Hector is leading the first Spanish speaking CBSI class in the UK. His friend David Titiboco, hearing about this, also attended training with Hector and has started a Spanish speaking class in Peckham, South London.

Although Hector and David came from the same village in Bolivia, they didn't meet until a mutual friend introduced them in 2006 in the UK. Since then they have become firm friends, encouraging each other in their Ministries.

Having trained as a Pastor in Bolivia, Hector

went back to his own village after theological college. Here he saw many local people trusting Jesus for the first time and saw others grow in their faith. He met and married Helen, who had gone out to Bolivia as part of a Latin Link 'STEP team'. After marrying in the UK, they served for 5 years in Bolivia, first in a shantytown in Santa Cruz and then in a rural town. Hector and Helen have returned to the UK, where they have been living for the last 5 years with their four small children. They are praying for God's guidance in their lives and Ministry.

Since Hector's faithful steps in starting the Spanish class, we have had other interest in Spanish classes here. The UK and Peru were the first classes to start outside the US thirty years ago. Most of the studies we have available to us are also available in Spanish. Please pray with us that God will continue to open the door for Spanish Speakers in the UK.



The Adventure Begins...

Hi from Letchworth, Hertfordshire.

We may be inspired or mad, but we've just signed a lease for a small shop in our town. We intend to use this as a community art gallery and as a meeting space for Community Bible Study and other spin off groups. The shop is in the Wynd, a small pedestrian street in Letchworth, which is due to be demolished in the next few years. The owners are offering shops at low rents and

on short notice. We took this opportunity to make a home for the Bible study groups, to take part in our local community and to act as a bridge for the many people who turn up in the local Christian bookshop wanting to know more about Jesus.

We have met with a number of local artists (many of whom are Christians) who are keen to use the shop as a gallery and a meeting place. We discovered that other

A Strong and True Faith

As we work our way through the book of Paul to the Romans Paul is laying down some very strong foundations, In giving clear, practical guidelines to all believers To trust God, through the Holy Spirit to guide us.

From a life of sin, fear and rejection
And being set apart from God's love and perfection,
Because by sinning we are cut off from God's way
For God's will is for us to seek Him when we pray.

Our purpose is to give unto God all the glory
If not, it is going to be a very different story,
We will, by God, be cast out and put aside
If we sin, we put Him on one side by our foolish pride.

We need a strong and true faith, and trust too
In all that God can do, for me and for you,
He is the great and Almighty One above
So let us rejoice in His faithfulness and love.

God, His Son and the Holy Spirit are all we need
Whatever nationality, tongue, colour or creed,
So let us call on God our Father, Guide and Friend
To be with us, and we with Him, until the very end.

By George Reed (Bolsover morning class)

Christian groups are also looking at ways to encourage the links between faith and creativity, so we are encouraged that this small step might actually be part of a bigger purpose of God.

We'll keep you updated as we get further into this adventure. We would appreciate your prayers that this little shop might be like a mustard seed, and that God will give us creative energy to use this resource to demonstrate His Kingdom in our community.

Karen Nolloth



Valerie Basford

Leicester

Called home to be with her Lord, 13 Nov 2009

Many of our CBSI UK family will have met Val over the years of her association with the CBSI ministry. She looked forward to, and regularly attended the annual conference for leaders where she enjoyed meeting people and hearing of the growth of Community Bible Study, both internationally and within the UK.

Val joined the local CBSI UK class in Leicester a couple of years after its inception 16 years ago and was pivotal in establishing the class. Her enthusiasm for the Word of God and her willingness to share her deeper knowledge was quickly recognised and she served as the assistant class leader to Canon John Tonkin, eventually replacing him as class leader in 2001.

For a short while Val served on the National Servants Team, where she brought her own inimitable style. She was always keen to promote Bible study, and found an ideal forum for this in CBSI UK. She relished the challenge of studying the less well-known books. One of the last comments she made to one of our members who visited Val in the care home was: "well, you'll be fine with

Isaiah - what are you going to do for a challenge next year?"!!

Always a faithful member of the class, it was very rare for Val to miss a meeting. She eagerly anticipated any social gatherings that were held, and could always be relied on to bring a quiche to any 'bring and share' meal!

Over the last two years we have seen her health deteriorate, but not her desire to meet with the CBSI class in Leicester. Indeed, there were many weeks earlier this year where it was evident that it took a great deal of determination to attend, and the effort to participate was great.

Val leaves a legacy of biblical teaching that will continue to bear fruit. We are grateful to God for her service within the Leicester class, and give thanks to Him that she is now free of her pain and able to see Him face to face.

In recognition and appreciation of Val's life and work, the CBSI classes in Leicester Braunstone and Birstall gave a donation to Project Malawi to purchase Bibles for women who have recently learned to read.

Caleb news

WALES

By Janet Morgan Phillips, Caleb to Wales

On my last trip to Wales this past October, the Lord had a two way surprise planned for Jenny and me. We were both visitors at a church woman's group one midweek morning. She was there to introduce that morning's speaker and I was there to follow up on a former visit where I had been the speaker. Someone told Jenny that I was in Wales to introduce a Bible Study and then told me that Jenny was very excited to see if 'my' Bible Study was what she had been searching for the last few years. By the time we were able to talk, we were both full of hope that 'her study' was 'my study' and 'my study' was 'her study' and that finally there would be someone who really understood what we had both been talking about. And it was so! CBSI was just what Jenny had been searching for since moving to Wales. Her life had been radically changed by the CBSI approach to studying scripture for 6 years prior to her move. But in Wales she had searched in vain... until that morning.

I don't know who was more thrilled: Jenny or me! Jenny had her hope restored that there would be a class for her where she could soak up the Word in the warm fellowship of others who longed to know the Lord more intimately. And I was so thrilled for an unqualified positive response from someone who truly understood the strengths and blessings of the CBSI approach to Bible study. We held the first official CBSI-Wales Training Day on January 16, 2010. Jenny had hoped to attend but was not able to, due to a family bereavement the day before. But she and I are still hopeful that the Lord will bring key people together so that eventually, by his Grace and Providence, a CBSI class can be planted and many lives changed in Bridgend, South Wales. Will you join us in that prayer? We would both be so very grateful.

SCOTLAND

By Pete and Helen Jane Peters, Calebs to Scotland

We have just returned from the 35th Anniversary Celebration for Community Bible Study. We were very encouraged by the number of CBS Classes that pray for the UK Classes. There were many opportunities for us to share what the Lord is doing with CBSI in the UK and around the world.

Thank you so much for all your prayers on our behalf. We moved back into our home after our house fire, on Nov. 16, 2009. We are doing very well health wise. Your prayers and concern are very encouraging to us. Praise the Lord for His faithfulness and yours. We look forward to our trip to the UK in May.

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'I am the light of the world'

Having disposed of our Christmas trees some time ago, this may seem a strange picture to have in the New Year Newsletter but read on! Rachel Smith, our National Administrator, heard about a Christmas Tree festival in her village and felt that it was a wonderful opportunity to have a Christian presence and speak about God's gift of His son and all that His birth meant to the world. At the same time it seemed a wonderful opportunity to inform about CBSI in the community.

Rachel put texts on the silver balls with reference to light:

"The true light that gives light to every man was coming into the world..."

"The light that shines in the darkness, but the darkness has not put it out..."

The paper chain has words representing darkness, war, slavery, people trafficking, debt etc. An open Bible with a candle was placed next to it and invitations to join the local CBSI class. Of the 46 trees represented this was the only tree mentioning the true meaning of Christmas. Since Rachel has moved to Barton, she has made it her business to be a light in her community, knocking on doors, introducing herself. Rachel has started a CBS class in her home in the heart of her community, where there is always an open door to neighbours and friends.





The Leith Class

Led by Elyse Sayle, the Leith class is a diverse and vibrant class, caring and working in the heart of the community. Elyse and her team care for each member and love to see the people in their group growing in their knowledge of God. Each member helps the next and this makes for a wonderful atmosphere in which individuals are valued and understand God's love for them.

One valued member is Aman who comes to

the group with his carer. His mother, who was a missionary, adopted Aman in Hong Kong. His total dedication to finishing his study every week is such a witness and encouragement to those around him. Aman is virtually mute and also has some visual impairment. He communicates through a voice synthesiser, which he activates via a keyboard. This way he can share in discussion. Can you imagine the patience and dedication that he has to complete his home study questions and the joy it must be for him and others as he shares what God has been saying to him?

This class has also started the first Teen Class. In faith, Russell Simpson and Louise Whatnough have started the class with just two members, but we know it will grow as they start to invite their friends. The teenagers are really good at coming prepared and answering their questions. Discussion is great as they often come with questions of their own. One member is a brand new believer, so it is the first time he is hearing some of the stories in Genesis and certainly his first time studying the Bible. He has a fresh perspective on many things, which enliven discussion.

Please pray for Russell and Louise as they nurture their mustard seeds!

Both groups are studying Genesis, Adult and Teen versions.



Veronica's Voice

Slow down!

As I was travelling on the train this January, thinking about how the recent weather conditions in the UK had caused us to slow down and reflect, (the train was certainly taking this to heart), I passed a large hoarding, with a quote from Ghandi which read: ' There is more to life than increasing its speed'.

How true this is, and it takes something like snow to stop us rushing at life at such a speed that we forget that the most important things are passing us by.

Yes, we could say we are going too fast to look at creation, to take time with elderly relatives, to play with our children, read a book or perhaps to talk to our spouses or friends.

All this is true, of course, and we could all add to this list, but we can also forget to take time to be with our God. If we could just remember to get God into His rightful place, everything else slots into its place. A young girl, whose father had recently died, was asked how her mother was coping with her sisters and brothers. She replied that her mother always made sure she spent time first thing in the morning with God, so that she could fit everything else in! Time spent with God is never wasted and He always gives you back that time, with more added on.

*Veronica Alvarez,
CBSI National Director*



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