



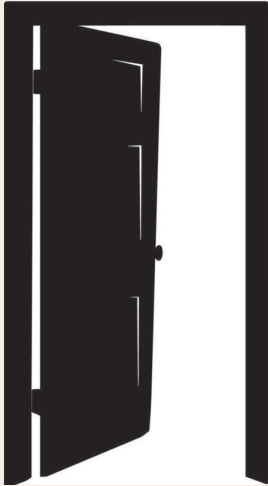
# BAPTIST COURIERS FOR CHRIST

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May 2025

## An Open Effectual Door!

by Donald Stertz



Our evangelistic outreach to the Dominican Republic was an eye opener for me and our team members. Joshua and Tim Carpenter (director of Wyldewood's BPS ministry) had made a preliminary trip to Santo Domingo last August—meeting the national pastors we would eventually be working with, scouting out distribution areas, securing lodging, etc. The greater Santo Domingo area has a population of over four million people and covers a large area of land. The two churches that we worked with were over thirty miles apart although still in the same city. Prior to the team's arrival in D.R., Joshua had chosen a hotel near the center of the city, which served our needs well. We divided our whole team of eighteen individuals (from seven USA states) into two teams of nine. Joshua led one team and I led the other as we headed in opposite directions to work with the churches that had been selected. The pastor (José Manuel) that I was privileged to work with stayed in our hotel. He was also our van driver, which thrilled me because the traffic was terrible. Pastor José and his wife Judy are wonderful people. The Lord has greatly used Pastor José as he has planted and pastors a church that averages about fifty people. When a large church building was needed, Pastor José and his congregation got to work saving and preparing. It took them over six years to purchase materials, and then they did most of the work themselves.

There were two definite things in the Dominican Republic that reminded me of Eastern Europe prior to the wall coming down in 1990. Joshua had previously told me that the D.R. is a relatively poor country. As we went from home to home in the neighborhood of the church, it reminded me so much of the many cities in Romania while the country was under the communist control. The second similarity is how receptive the people were in taking

*Continued on inside page...*



Top photo: "B" Team

Above: Don distributing Romans in the barrios

At left: Jonathan, Don's grandson, worked with the "A" team







## STAFF NEWS

### From the Josh Stertz family

The Bible says in Philippians 4:11 ...**I have learned, in whatsoever state I am, *there-with* to be content.**

Well, our family has enjoyed being in 12 different states and 4 foreign countries in the last year. We have met new friends and reconnected with churches we know and love. Our faithful travel van, Gulliver, turned 21 years old this year and just hit 230,000 miles. We praise the Lord for all of His blessings, and even the trials, as He is ALWAYS ONLY GOOD to us.



#### ➤ **Zachariah**

Zachariah is in sixth grade this year. He ran on the school cross-country team in the fall and is playing baseball this spring. He was involved in choir and theater this school year. When we aren't on the road, he is a faithful usher for the bus offering on Wednesday nights.

#### ➤ **Jonathan**

Jonathan (Judge) is in eighth grade. He played football and basketball on the middle-school teams. He got the opportunity to go with us to Dominican Republic for his first missions trip this spring. At school his Bible class

was studying restricted access nations, and Judge got to talk to the whole class about Couriers for Christ. The boys get to do virtual school with their normal teachers (via Google Classroom) while we are on the road, and they enjoy connecting with their classmates on the screen. One blessing of life on the road is the ability to take educational field trips with Judge and Zach. This school year they toured many museums, a sports stadium, and Niagara Falls.



#### ➤ **Claudia**

Claudia is 18 and graduated in 2024. She teaches Sunday school weekly and runs the sound booth for many services. Claudia felt led to join us for the whole month of March in Dominican Republic, which meant leaving her job. Pray that God would direct her to her next adventure (whether that is working a job, going to college, or serving on a mission field), as she is surrendered to His plan for her life.

#### ➤ **Caleb**

Caleb is 20 and has continued his college studies at our home church (Wyldeewood Baptist Bible Institute). After this semester, he will be half done with the full course. He still works in construction during the week, and on Sundays he teaches junior church. Both Caleb and Claudia keep



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## An Open Effectual Door!

Continued from front page...



People gladly receiving the scriptures



the book of Romans. When the wall came down in Eastern Europe, wherever we went to distribute scriptures, people crowded around us to get one. The precious people in the D.R. were also very receptive. Almost everyone would take the scriptural booklet from our hands. Many people on the streets and in the suburbs were very solemn looking as I approached them. I would still greet them with a smile and hand them a book of Romans. The response was always the same: they would break into a big smile and say, "Gracias!" Please pray for these pastors and churches to continue to grow and for the 22,000 plus who received a book of Romans. It is our desire that they would read them, take the message to heart, and trust Christ as Lord and Saviour. **For a great door and effectual is opened unto me....**  
- I Corinthians 16:9 -

up with the lawn mowing, snow shoveling, and general upkeep of the house while we are traveling, and we are so thankful for their willingness and responsibility.

### ► Kelli

Kelli enjoys helping the boys with school while we travel. When we are home, she plays the piano for some of our church services. Occasionally, she gets to work a shift at the hospital in the operating room to keep up her nursing skills. Please pray for wisdom for us regarding her knee, which was injured last summer and has now degraded to bone-on-bone on the medial side. It is less painful and slightly more functional than it was last fall, but it's still difficult for her to participate in the physical work of mission trips.



### ► Josh

Josh is continuing to learn the ropes as the director of the ministry. He counts it a privilege to serve alongside the other representatives and partner churches for the furtherance of the gospel. The latest project in the Stertz homestead has been to finish the laundry room. Josh got to use some of his skills from 20 years in construction to frame, drywall, and finish out the space. Josh loves working with his kids around the home when the need arises for a car repair, home update, or even yard work. The kids are growing up too quickly, and Josh is trying to enjoy them as much as possible. The highlight for Josh this spring was spending the month of March with Claudia and Kelli on the back-to-back missions outreaches in the Dominican Republic.



Thank you for your love, care, support, and prayers for our family. We truly have seen Luke 18:29, 30 come to life through you all, **"...There is no man that hath left house, or parents, or brethren, or wife, or children, for the kingdom of God's sake, Who shall not receive manifold more in this present time...."**

God is good all the time and we are daily thankful for His provision and protection.

# Hope for the Valley

## .....Scripture Campaign.....

We are excited to offer you an opportunity to join us on a scripture distribution campaign in Porto Alegre, Brazil, towards the end of the year. We will be working alongside missionary Nathan Ring with the goal of spreading the seed of the Word of God in several cities and villages in one large valley in southern Brazil. This valley was ravaged by a terrible flood back in the spring of 2024. In the wake of the devastation and as the rebuilding process has begun, the Lord has softened the hearts of many people to the gospel message. Nathan has told me that this is the most open to the gospel that he has seen the people in his region over the course of more than ten years!

**Please consider joining us.**

**DATES: October 27 - November 11, 2025**

**COST: \$2950**

Acts 16:9 ...**Come over...and help us.**

Please visit [couriersforchrist.com](http://couriersforchrist.com) for more information about the Hope for the Valley Campaign.

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