

# Merry Christmas

**Gary and Sandra Clow**

45328 Creekside Drive Chilliwack, BC V2P 7K6

604-792-9373 Gary.Clow@worldteam.org

<http://garyandsandra.com>



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***“Behold, the virgin will conceive and give birth to a Son, and they shall name Him Immanuel,” which translated means, “God with us.”  
Matthew 1:23***

Dear Midtown Church Family,

December, cold and snowy for most of Canada, but not so much where we live on the west coast. We have mainly cold rain. This is the month of shopping, Christmas carols, Christmas parties, time with friends and family, gifts and dinners. It is a busy time with lots of running around. But amid all this rush, remember what it is all about. God's greatest gift. Jesus was born long ago. Our Saviour and King. Spend time in thanksgiving for God's love for you.

We have had a busy fall. In September Gary got ready for two World Team online courses which he oversees. In the end, the courses were cancelled due to a lack of students, however two students took a course in an unusual way. This couple, ministering in Brazil, took the course, doing all the work individually but without the input of an online cohort with them. Gary sent them material each weekend and they worked on it through the week. Each Friday of the course they met online with Gary to talk through what they had studied that week. Gary asked them questions as they talked, making sure they had absorbed the key elements of the material studied. Gary probably enjoyed it just as much as the couple taking the course.

At the same time Gary was facilitating the course for the couple in Brazil, he was taking a course himself. Both of us were asked to take a newly redesigned World Team course called Gospel Foundations so that in the future we could facilitate the course. Sandra decided she was too busy as it was and would not be able to serve as a course facilitator in the future, so only Gary enrolled. The course was six weeks long, finishing in November. Gary enjoyed it and looks forward to being a facilitator for future students.

The country of Cuba is in great difficulty. The economy is in almost complete collapse. In September we wrote that in the past two years over a million Cubans had fled their country. That exodus continues, and among those leaving are a great many pastors. The Cuban peso is currently almost worthless. The infrastructure in the country is collapsing. Electricity is off more than it is on. Many blackouts have been nation wide. People are struggling to eat. Medicines are unavailable. In the midst of this horrendous situation Christians are sharing their faith in Jesus and showing God's love as they try to help others even though they are no better off than anyone else. *Please pray. Ask the Lord to speak through His people with the message of love, hope and salvation. Pray many people will see their only hope in life and eternity is Jesus and receive Him as Saviour.*

There are a few ways you can help in Cuba. Projects include help for the Los Pinos Nuevos Seminary, general assistance to the denomination and a project to purchase a 16 passenger van to be used by the denomination and seminary. Let us know if you would like more information about any of these Cuba projects. *Please ask the Lord to touch the hearts of those who can help with these needs.*



## Gospel



Would you like to receive regular Cuba Los Pinos Nuevos prayer requests? Let us know and we will email you monthly prayer requests for Los Pinos Nuevos people and ministries in Cuba.

In November we went away and had a great, relaxing time in Puerto Vallarta, Mexico. We were able to rent a nice two bedroom apartment so could cook our own meals and have a relaxing time. We spent a lot of each day walking, usually between 8 and 10 kilometres per day, so truly enjoyed the fresh air and warm sunshine. We also found a wonderful small church a couple of blocks from the apartment. We were the only non-Mexicans in attendance. The congregation was surprised to find we were Spanish speaking Canadians.



Both of us continue to serve in our local church, involved in various ministries from leading Bible study to being on the church board. And ski season is here, so we will be with all our winter friends again. Gary will again be teaching skiing at Manning Park Resort so will be with a whole new group of young adults who are seasonal employees.

*Please ask the Lord to use us with all those with whom we spend time.*

We will have a busy Christmas day, cooking for our entire family, as well as both Katrina's and Christian's parents. Perhaps Katrina's and Christian's siblings and spouses as well. We pray that you, too, will be able to be with family and friends to celebrate the birth of the Saviour.

Thank you for your partnership in ministry, your prayers for us and the ministries to which the Lord has called us.

In Jesus' love,

*Gary & Sandra*  
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# World Team

11-1020 Matheson Blvd, Mississauga, ON L4W 4J9 - Box 516 Box Hill, Victoria, Australia 3128 - BOX 1007 Warrington, PA 18976

*Glorifying God by working together to establish reproducing churches focussing on the unreached peoples of the world.*