

JOHN & KARRY BARNES

COSTA RICA



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CONTACT INFORMATION

Email

johnrbarnescr@yahoo.com
karryibarnes@yahoo.com

Websites

www.biblicobautista.org
www.campamentobautista.org

Costa Rican Cell Phone

506.8382.8944

Vonage Phone

417.423.7215

MISSION OFFICE

P.O. Box 191
Springfield, MO 65801

FIELD ADDRESS

Apdo Postal: 830-2400
Desamparados, Costa Rica

Dear Pastor and church: thank you for your commitment to our Lord and His church. Commitment? That is what we see and experience in our life here in Costa Rica — God's wonderful, precious commitment! He has prospered our efforts here so incredibly that were I an author — which I'm not — I would do my best to share all the miraculous things His commitment has brought about.

I was recently surprised by a ruptured appendix — at my age 🤪 — and while recuperating one of our pastors' wives visited me and was sharing some recent experiences. This type of thing always fills my cup! Anyway, her husband, Pastor Luis comes from a financially comfortable but dysfunctional family. He ran the streets with a group of 10 friends till he was 15 at which time he received Christ. Luis left the group, throwing himself into the life of the church and service to the Lord. Luis has since graduated from Bible College and is pastoring a flourishing church which unfortunately was plagued with break-ins and theft

(Change scenes) Back when, Luis' closest friend was Andre. After accepting Christ Luis sought Andre who promised Luis to go to church with him but never made it. Luis kept seeking him but over time their friendship became cooler and more distant

(Change scenes) The metropolitan area of San Jose is divided into sections that are governed by drug lords. There are two huge such areas on the south side of the capitol. Pastor Luis recently heard that Andre, his ex-friend, is the one who governs both.

(Change scenes) Luis and the men of the church have formed football teams as part of our AVANCE Sport ministry to attract unsaved young people. One of the new recruits is named Jordi, he is 15 yrs old and has accepted Christ and is growing in the Lord. Jordi's grandfather is the drug distributor for a large area surrounding the church. Some days ago a rival gang beat Jordi up pretty badly and sent him to his grandfather. Last week the two involved were found dead. This past Sunday, to everyone's surprise, Jordi's parents accompanied him to church. Pastor Luis approached them and extended his hand saying, "I'm Pastor Luis Monge." The father looked at him and said, "I know." Luis responded, "Have we met before?" The father replied, "Does the name Andre mean anything to you?" Luis paused and answered, "Yes." The father said, "Jordi will be coming to your church. You will train him. You will have no problems here." We don't know what connection Andre has to Jordi but we do know that Andre has extended his territory into our area and that for some reason although he himself didn't follow the Lord and Luis' example he dose want Jordi to.

God is just stupendous in His workings and creative ways. His commitment and mercy to us never ceases to amaze me. I hope this little story makes sense to you. It is such a small sample of the impossible things God does.

John & Karry
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