



## Agape Brethren Assembly

Dallas, Texas

God's love is known as "Agape". The essence of agape love is goodwill, benevolence, and willful delight in the object of love. The name 'Agape' was chosen for our assembly in 2011, with a desire to truly reflect the love of God through the ministries and outreach to the surrounding community. There were only 10 members at the Breaking of Bread when the assembly first met in 2011 under the name Agape Brethren Assembly (ABA).

Over the next few months, a new family from a Hindu background was added to the assembly. Having forsaken their idols, the Bhatnagar family joined the fellowship and testified to their new life in Christ through a public baptism at Lake Lewisville.

For the first few months, the assembly met from house to house. At the same time, a search began for a building that would be suitable for meetings of the assembly. The good Lord opened up an opportunity to gather in a facility owned by Seventh Day Adventists. The building was leased, and meetings were held three days a week. Since they did not meet after sunset on Saturday, nor on Sunday mornings, there was freedom to use the whole building for assembly activities. Within a year, more families were added to the assembly.

ABA organized Gospel meetings in various parts of the city, and was instrumental in other Gospel activities. God honored these efforts and the assembly grew in number. Within a few years, there were 50 at the Breaking of Bread.

After a few years, conflicts with the Seventh Day Adventist's special programs at the building became a problem. In 2016, these inconveniences prompted a search for a meeting place of our own. Prayer for such a facility began in earnest.

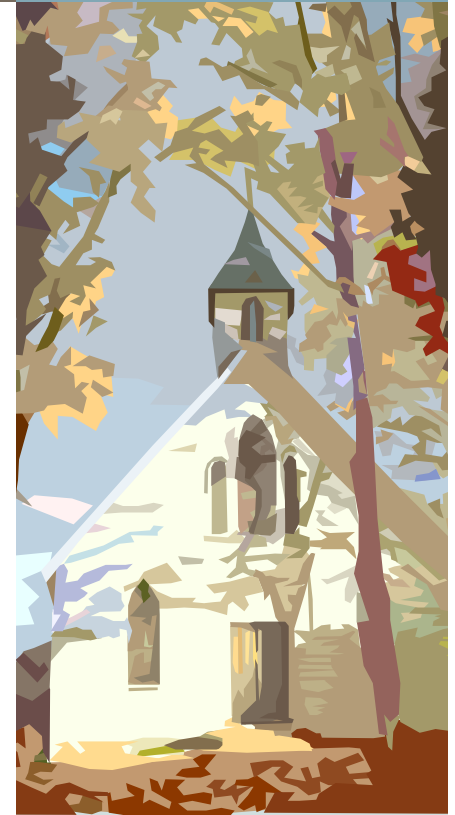
A few brothers volunteered to look for land to construct a new building. Property in the Dallas-Fort Worth metroplex was in high demand and costly, making it difficult to find and purchase a site within our budget. In addition, factors such as city codes and zoning restrictions, driving distance for the members and our budget limited the choices.

In 2018, those brothers still looking for a site, came across an advertisement for the sale of two acres of land with a residential and a commercial building. A construction company confirmed that the commercial building could be remodeled and connected to the residence, thus provide enough space for a sanctuary and Sunday school classrooms.



The ABA families sacrificially contributed towards the project, raising a substantial sum for the building fund. However, the estimated total cost for purchase of the buildings and the necessary remodeling work was significantly more than had been contributed. A commercial bank was contacted for a loan, but the lending requirements were too difficult to meet. At this point, Stewards Foundation was approached about the possibility of supplying a loan.

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# *I CORINTHIANS 4:2, "IT IS REQUIRED*

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Stewards Foundation's loan requirements were much easier to meet. They provided assistance through the entire process of applying for and obtaining a loan in a timely manner. Doug Rice visited the site and offered advice on dealing with city officials and contractors.

For various reasons, the remodeling work lasted for two long years. Along the way there were many hurdles to clear before the project was completed. Included in those hurdles were unforeseen requirements by the city that increased the construction cost. Stewards Foundation approved additional funding to help with the added costs. Near the end of construction, city inspections and approvals were delayed due to the pandemic.

*"I have set before you an open door,  
and no one can shut it"*

In May 2020, a Certificate of Occupancy was finally obtained from the city permitting occupancy of the building. Even though the pandemic was at its peak, within two months the Lord provided all that was needed to furnish the building. On Sunday, July 5, 2020, the assembly met for the first time at 19204 Windmill Ln, Dallas, Texas.

The total cost of the property, buildings and remodeling work was covered by the funds raised by the assembly and the loan from Stewards Foundation. In October 2021, the Lord provided a way to significantly reduce the loan balance through the sale of an unused portion of the property. All glory to God.

Brothers Abraham George and Steve Thomas, who serve the assembly as elders, are committed to leading the congregation in upholding the New Testament pattern and teachings for the local assembly.

"I have set before you an open door, and no one can shut it; for you have a little strength, have kept My word, and have not denied My name." Rev 3:8

## *Commended Workers*

*Michael and Elaine Dubberly*

Mike and Elaine were both raised on the mission field as missionary kids, affectionately known as MKs. Mike's family served the Lord in Uruguay, Elaine's in Colombia where her grandparents began mission work in 1937. Mike trusted the Lord Jesus as his Savior at the age of 4; Elaine placed her

faith in Christ at the age of 4.

In 1985, Mike graduated from Bob Jones University with a degree in accounting. Elaine studied cross-cultural missions at Moody Bible Institute finishing her studies in 1990. Following graduation, Mike took a job in Chicago, where he was in fellowship at Local Evangelico de Avondale, a Spanish-speaking assembly. For seven years, Mike was actively involved with the assembly, serving as treasurer, preaching, working with the young people and doing visitation.

Mike and Elaine met in Chicago where they were married in 1991. Two years later they began fellowshipping at Norwood Gospel Chapel. In 1996, the assembly commended them to the Lord's work in Colombia. The assembly at Local Evangelico de Avondale added their commendation in 2010, as did Overbrook Gospel Chapel in Greenville, South Carolina in 2021.



Elaine home-schooled their four children, all of whom are adults. Rachel is married to Joel and they are the parents of two daughters; Kristina is an oncology nurse; Anna is a special education teacher and Andrew is in college. Elaine is now engaged in a ministry of hospitality and discipling women.

Mike serves as an elder at Iglesia Cristiana Aposento Alto Noroccidente. The assembly is located on the northwest side of Bogota, Colombia's capital city which has a population of eight million. Mike is active in teaching and preaching, and discipling other men who teach and lead the meetings. Together, Mike and Elaine spend a lot of time counseling families.

Noroccidente, is one of roughly 20 assemblies in Bogota. Aposento Alto is a government-recognized "association" that has 27 affiliated assemblies in the country. These various

# IN STEWARDS THAT A MAN BE FOUND FAITHFUL”

fellowships work well together, while respecting the autonomy of each assembly. One of the ministries of Aposento Alto is Instituto Fiel, an online Bible institute with the goal of training students who will serve in their home assemblies.

Most of Mike and Elaine’s time is spent with various ministries connected with the assembly. The work includes men’s and women’s meetings, Sunday School and Bible studies. In addition, Mike’s work includes training and workshops on evangelism, Biblical counseling and the work of elders and deacons with the goal of preparing those who will assume leadership roles in new assemblies.

The assembly meetings moved to an online format in March 2020. In the second half of 2021, in-person meetings resumed in various rented locations while searching for a facility to rent or purchase. Prior to the start of quarantine, the average Sunday morning attendance was 150 adults and young people along with 35 children.

*“our desire being that all that is done will be for God’s glory.”*

The testimony of Noroccidente has been effective both in Colombia and in other countries. Five assemblies have been formed by believers from Noroccidente: Calle 80 in 2001, Cazuca in 2002, Muzu in 2009, San Francisco in 2013 and San Carlos in 2021. Missionaries have been sent from the assembly to the south side of Bogota, Argentina, China and India.

A group of Christians in the town of Mosquera, 16 miles west of Bogota, hopes to begin Sunday meetings in early 2022. We are praying about starting assemblies in Bosa, a large area on the southwest side of Bogota, and Tocancipa, a town 14 miles north of Bogota.

While Colombians are traditionally very religious and open to hearing messages from the Bible, it is not easy for them to accept that salvation is a free gift from God.

Please pray **for** us as we continue the work in Colombia, our desire being that all that is done will be for God’s glory, not our own. Please pray **with** us that our children and grandchildren will have a heart for God; that there will be greater involvement by the believers at Noroccidente in evangelism and discipleship; that we can start an Evangelistic Bible study with our neighbors; and that the assembly will be able to find and purchase a facility or land on which to build.

## News you Can Use

### Stewards Foundation Donor Advised Fund

Stewards Foundation has now made it possible for our work to be supported by the gifting of assets such as securities, real estate and other physical properties. We have accomplished this through a partnership with Believers Stewardship Services to create a Donor Advised Fund (DAF). A DAF simplifies the process of gifting these types of assets and provides you with a tax benefit for your donation.

We are happy to be able to provide more options for giving to the work of Stewards Foundation. As always, we are grateful for the continued support and prayers for us.

### Assembly Service Organizations Seminar

The 2022 Stewards Foundation Semi-Annual Board Meeting is scheduled for Friday, April 22nd in St. Louis, Missouri. On Saturday, April 23rd, a Seminar will be conducted at Fenton Crossing Bible Chapel about the history and services of three Assembly Service Organizations.

Doug Rice, Executive Director of Stewards Foundation, Rob Sullivan President and CEO of Believers Stewardship Services, and Jesse Gentile, Board Member of Assembly Care Ministries, will talk about the work and ministries of these service organizations. There will be a Q&A session offering an opportunity for questions about the services offered to the assemblies. Then join us for lunch.

The information presented may benefit:

- An assembly considering a building purchase or construction project, or that may have questions about the process of such an undertaking
- Individuals interested in financial and estate planning
- Elders interested in protecting the assembly from current legal issues
- Those responsible for the care of commended workers

Stewards Foundation’s Board of Trustees will be present to interact with those attending the Seminar. We encourage anyone who is interested in Stewards Foundation and our services to take advantage of the information on our website, [www.stewardsfoundation.org](http://www.stewardsfoundation.org).

Psalms 126:3, “The LORD hath done great things for us; whereof we are glad”

*Winter 2022*



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[www.stewardsfoundation.org](http://www.stewardsfoundation.org)

PLEASE  
PLACE  
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