



EXPOSITION

Monthly e-Bulletin from Virginia Beach Theological Seminary



From My Window

Al Capone was a notorious gangster in Chicago during the Prohibition era. He was born in Naples, Italy, grew up in Brooklyn, and moved to Chicago in 1920. For almost seven years he was “king of Chicago” as the boss of the underworld. But was his fame worth it? He died at age 48 in his Florida mansion. At his death, his body was defiled with venereal disease; he was blind and could not see the beauty of his home on Miami Beach; and he had to be constantly cared for until his final breath. Jesus said, “What does it profit a man if he gains the whole world and loses his soul?” Clearly, fame is fleeting and sin a tyrant. How much better to heed Jesus’ call: “If anyone serves me, the Father will honor him” (Jn. 12:26).



Mark (*MDiv*, 2011) and Anahí were both born and raised in Argentina and have a rich spiritual heritage in their parents, who serve Christ full-time in this beautiful country of 44 million people. Mark graduated from Bible College in 2006, married Anahí in 2007, and moved to Virginia Beach to begin his seminary training that same year. They joined Colonial Baptist Church and began teaching in the Spanish Sunday School Class in which they served all four years of seminary. Their influence and biblical teaching still has an effect in the lives of many church members. Their passion for Argentina is summed up by Mark with these words, “We long to preach the Word and disciple those who have been saved to be mature followers of Christ.” Thank you, Mark and Anahí, for your selfless ministry and hearts of grace!



Our Church Plant in Buenos Aires

Mark Self (Missionary & VBTS Alumnus)

After graduating from VBTS in May 2011, Anahí and I wanted to plant a Bible preaching church in a Buenos Aires suburb. Having been born and raised in Argentina, we believed that the Lord had prepared us for this very assignment. After three years of deputation, we arrived in Argentina as missionaries in 2014. We immediately began to focus on my hometown—El Talar—a community of 40,000 people without a Bible preaching church or Gospel presence. Our strategy to plant underneath a mother church (pastored by my father 20 minutes away) became an important factor in the stability and growth of our church plant.

Initially, we began a Thursday evening Bible study in the home of a godly couple from the mother church. For several months we canvassed the community and searched for a church building on the main road with easy access to public transportation to establish high visibility in El Talar. After much prayer and searching, God led us to a sizable piece of property in a strategic location with a small home on it. We immediately moved our Thursday evening Bible study of 13 people to this new location. At this time, most were from the mother church. And even though we only experienced minimal success in reaching our community, we believed God was at work. So we continued to pray and lead the Bible study.

When the auditorium was completed in October 2017, we began Sunday services. We were thankful for our great location, the new building, and the families God provided from the mother church to help us get started. However, we were greatly burdened about our immediate community, and we sought God's face for the privilege of reaching El Talar with the gospel of Jesus Christ. During the first few weeks, God began to answer our prayers and He brought many new families from the community to our church. We soon began to disciple those who were faithful. We also started a soccer ministry that opened up more opportunities to share the gospel with men from the community. Later, we started a Children's Church ministry which allowed us to visit many families in their homes. The Lord was good to us by wonderfully increasing the size of our church, and soon 90% of the people were coming from our community in El Talar.

Our vision is to be used of God to build His church in this community of El Talar. Our passion is to preach God's Word and disciple those who believe in Jesus. Our long-term goal is to faithfully minister in this local church and equip men and women who can be sent out to start other church plants in other suburbs of Buenos Aires, or in another province of Argentina, or even in another part of the world. Thank you for praying for us! We desire God's blessing as we bear His Word and Name to many in Argentina who do not know our Lord Jesus Christ.

