



Touch of Fire Ministries

Inside this edition

Message from Scott & Brigit
 Uvita Christian Academy News
 Victory Christian Academy News
 Created 2 Conquer
 What's Going on in Costa Rica
 Call to Action
 What's to Come 2021

Message from Scott & Brigit ~



Wow, it's been too long! That's right...our last Annual Report for TOFM was sent out in the year 2016...WHY?

I've got the answer: running two Christian schools in a foreign country takes a whole lot more than most people think! Over the last three years specifically I, Brigit, had to fill in when teachers who started with us, didn't finish. In short, I became an ongoing substitute teacher, because it was needed. It wasn't really my plan, as the director of our school in Uvita. But, Scott and I have been committed to our Christian schools in Costa Rica no matter what the cost! So...we've been busy! We've always tried to keep things running smoothly for the families who trust us, no matter what unexpected surprise comes our way with staffing.

We've managed all this with two growing teenagers in the house...that alone can keep a family busy! I know some of you can relate.

Even though Isaac has returned to the United States at the time of this writing, (as a senior who graduated from UCA in 2020), we've still got our Abi at home! Life is busy with this one, let me tell you. She keeps us on our toes, and is one of the most social kids I've ever known. If there's a party, she wants to go! She loves people, and is a true friend to the people in her life. We are proud!

In the beginning of our lives in Costa Rica, we were hosting a few mission trips here and there, along with handling the day to day operations in our schools. Over time, our focus shifted more to concentrating on Uvita Christian Academy and Victory Christian Academy, and developing our staff. Please remember...Christian influence where we live is sparse...there are not many believers. Our Christian schools are the ONLY ONES in the southern part of Costa Rica. The southern part is rural, and we want our God to be known here.

We are staying true to the original work God asked us to do in Costa Rica way back in 2012. Our commitment hasn't changed, and our desire to reach children and families with news about Jesus is still our biggest focus.

Recently, I launched Created 2 Conquer...a division of TOFM geared toward helping people overcome and conquer in their lives! Right now, you can find various teachings on YouTube on my channel called Created 2 Conquer. More about that to come!

Special thanks to our friend and partner in crime, Jean Hooten, who personally helps us with EVERYTHING! Whether it's updating our websites for Touch of Fire, UCA and Victory, or helping me post on Instagram, she's got what I need. She's simply amazing and helps us take care of ministry details.

AND special thanks to YOU! If you're reading my message, it's because you CARE! We are truly touched by this, and hope you'll read this Annual Report and be inspired to pray and give, knowing that we pray for you.

Contact Touch of Fire Ministries, Uvita Christian Academy, Victory Christian Academy

Mail: 4700 Millenia Boulevard Suite 175 PMB 95362 Orlando, FL 32839 / Email: Scott.Bogard@touchoffire.net
 Websites: touchoffire.net / uvitachristianacademy.org / <http://victorychristianacademypzenglish.weebly.com>



Uvita Christian Academy

Since 2016, we've done all the things that should be done in a school - we've enrolled new students, and had to say good-bye to a few too soon. We've hosted science fairs, and even hosted our first high school dance! We've hired new teachers, and in some cases, they left way too early. Most important, we've hosted chapel service after chapel service in an effort to share our faith with the kids who have been entrusted to us. Whether they are enrolled for years, or only a few months, we try to make the biggest splash we can. Our biggest goal is ALWAYS to share about Jesus in a way that's easy for the kids to understand.

As you already know, 2020 has been the strangest year...our students were only allowed to attend classes in person for the first seven weeks of the school year, and then we were on mandatory lockdown. It was a surprise, to say the least.

At the first sign of trouble, we made plans for virtual learning, and put them into practice; our staff did an amazing job making the switch from face-to-face learning, to hosting their Zoom classes. It wasn't our first choice, but we constantly fought to keep our doors "open", so that we could continue to have a voice in this community. Our Christian voice comes through education.

Because my husband, Scott, is a great business strategist, and did a good job saving money for years before the global pandemic, we've been able to weather the storm. To be blunt, we constantly hold on to the promises of God where money is concerned, knowing that failure isn't on the menu (see Deuteronomy 28). No matter what, we are not planning for failure...we ARE PLANNING for success.

In 2020, we allowed students to come to the building for one-on-one instruction with their teachers even though schools were not allowed to receive students...after all, they needed a little "face time." By law, they could come to pick up materials; we took advantage of this! Of course, we honored the code of mask wearing and social distancing as we should have...

Due to the virus, we also had weekly driving restrictions and curfews in Costa Rica, in addition to the closure of businesses and schools (beginning in the month of March). Around the month of October, things started to ease up a bit, but even when the rest of the world began to open up, we remained somewhat "shut down." As restaurants, casinos, and soccer teams in Costa Rica were allowed to re-open and get things back into motion, students were NOT ALLOWED to come back to the classroom.

In October, we made plans for student enrollment in 2021. We did our best to foresee any possible direction the Costa Rican government could take...the matter was, after all, in their hands. We had to strategize about how we would handle it, no matter the restrictions put in place. Our families WANTED to send their kids back to school ASAP...just as kids were returning to school in North America. In Costa Rica, there is continued talk of keeping kids out of the school building in 2021 - but we say NO!

This cannot continue, and I ask you to declare with me that ALL STUDENTS RETURN TO SCHOOL IN Costa Rica in 2021! (Mark 11:22-24)





Victory Christian Academy

Would you like to sponsor a tico (Costa Rican) student? Your giving would make it possible for a child to attend our schools and get a Christian education. They will learn English, and a whole world of possibilities will open for them! If you already do, thank you!

Victory suffered a bit more than UCA...after all, 2020 marked only the third year that Victory's been open and operating as a school. Just as Victory was beginning to pay its own bills and become self-supporting, families were forced to keep their kids at home. Because most students were Daycare kids and therefore not old enough to learn online, many families pulled their kids out of the school and therefore stopped paying.

Rather quickly, we found ourselves having to eliminate teachers, and strategizing with our school director, Johanna, about how to best keep this school alive.

We had to move out of the building in San Isidro where we were operating, and put our things into storage. Only a couple of teachers continued to give lessons from their home, for the few families still "attending" Victory.

THEN...something amazing happened! After praying and trying to figure out some solutions, a door opened up to us to re-locate Victory to a local church property in the San Isidro area. This seems to be a place where we can lay down roots, and begin again.

By the way, the teachers at Victory share the love of God the same way we do it in Uvita at UCA. In fact, we recently heard the story of a married couple (Costa Ricans) who were sending their child to Victory. Their marriage was on the rocks, and they were considering divorce. However, as their family got involved with the teachers at Victory, and as their child began to learn about God, they felt that their situation was changing for the better. They noticed a change in their child, and their marriage began to heal and get stronger. In the end, they decided to stay together, and they attribute this happy ending to what their daughter learned as a student at Victory.

Thanks for caring about Victory, and the teachers who make a living from working there. They are good, Christian ladies. They deserve to have solid jobs, as they minister to the children they love. When you give, it keeps the Victory dream alive!

*Would you consider sponsoring a Costa Rican child to attend school at Victory? Think about it. There's NO OTHER Christian school in that city – the second largest city in Costa Rica.





Created 2 Conquer ~

About two years ago, God chatted with me about putting some teachings on YouTube...He told me to start with teaching about how to overcome anxiety. (Some of you may know the struggle I had for years when my kids were much younger.) At the time He talked with me about this, I was substitute teaching in a classroom, and it just wasn't possible to add anything like that to my schedule. I was working hard to keep up with my family, filling in as a teacher at UCA, and handling "director" duties, too. Talk about stress...I didn't want to add a single thing! Not to mention the fact that I knew absolutely nothing about shooting videos, editing those videos, or uploading them on social media. It seemed like the deck was stacked against me!

But in June of 2020, I uploaded my first Created 2 Conquer episode on YouTube about how to overcome anxiety. To date, I've got over 30 different videos uploaded, ready and waiting for YOU! They're not all about anxiety...you should take a look at my Mistaken Identity series geared toward clearing up some of the wrong thinking out there about God and Who He is. You can also type in my name, Brigit Bogard, to search for the videos I've posted on YouTube.

What's Going on in Costa Rica ~

It's not really in the international news right now, but we want you to know how CR is struggling. The current president has made some choices in recent years that have caused a lot of civil unrest.

To protest in this country citizens shut down bridges, in an effort to keep trucks from making their deliveries throughout the country. The hope is that these road blocks affect normal business operations in the country, to bring about change. The current president wants to triple property taxes for all, put a tax on beans and rice, add a new tax on credit card use, and more. This turn of events comes after tax hikes that were already put in place during 2019, and that alone was difficult to swallow.

All who live in CR are concerned about this turn of events. During 2020, there were several public demonstrations and strikes in efforts to push back against a president who seems more dictatorial than democratic. Many Costa Ricans we know personally are pleading their cause, and want the world to know what's happening in their beautiful country.





Touch of Fire Ministries

A CALL TO ACTION ~

Where we live in rural Costa Rica, most adults only have a 6th grade education. On average, 21% of all births are among girls under the age of 18. Therefore, education and planning for the future are more important than ever! SINCE THE MONTH OF MARCH 2020, the majority of our UCA families have lost their income completely. This is because TOURISM is the backbone of the economy here, and their businesses are based on tourism. Through no fault of their own, their economic situation has changed, and our families haven't had the OPPORTUNITY to work.

TODAY, you can help our students continue to get the education they deserve, despite the global pandemic that's stolen so much already.

If you decide to give today, you will help cover outstanding student debt and new student enrollment for the 2020-2021 school terms.

We believe that all children deserve a quality education and the ability to learn the word of God, so their lives can be transformed. If a Costa Rican child can speak English, their chances of living above the poverty line go up dramatically. This is what we do at UCA and Victory: teach children to speak English. This is our path into their lives, and we're grateful for it.



WHAT'S TO COME IN 2021 ~

We've got our sights set on a couple of properties we'd like to own in Uvita for UCA...in fact, we've already been talking with the property owners, and using our faith to move forward. One of our biggest goals is to leave our current UCA building. For years now, the building we rent has needed repairs that have not been made, and it's too small for us. If we want to see change, we have to re-locate to a new facility.

The trouble has always been that there simply isn't a lot of real-estate here that would make a good school. However, with the recent closing of another private school in town, we now know the perfect place! For the last 6 months, we've been doing all we can to secure this now-on-the-market school property, and TOFM has even applied for multiple grants stateside in efforts to buy it. Please join with us in prayer to acquire this property and building. At our current location, (which is literally falling apart), we cannot get our approval from the ministry of education (MEP) in Costa Rica. Just another reason to move on. Our hope is in God to see this happen!



Touch of Fire Ministries
4700 Millenia Boulevard
Suite 175 PMB 95362
Orlando, FL 32839



Touch of Fire Ministries
Taking the Gospel to the nations
with passion and purpose!

