

Martin and Valerie Silverberg

CHURCH PLANTING
IN THE
SOUTH BRONX
New York City

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Dearest Brethren,

2/23/12

We would like to announce our new, and perhaps, the last project we may do here in the Bronx.....

The Jonah Israel Silverberg Memorial Playground for the Children of the Bronx

We always envisioned the front part of the Church yard as a playground for children. Now, with your help and your prayers, we'd like to make that vision a reality. As you know, during Jonah's short time on earth of almost 8 months, he never left the hospital, but we are sure that he would be happy to know his short and difficult stay on earth might result in sharing some moments of happiness for the little children who attend our Church and live in our community. We, of course, need help raising the funds for the playground equipment, which must be safety approved as well as the rubber matting. We will also have to move our front fence and replace it, and move my beloved shrubs, which will probably look better elsewhere anyhow.... If the Lord puts it in your heart to help us with this Playground Project, we would be most grateful... **Donations can be sent to: BMM, PO Box 308011, Cleveland OH, 44130-8011. Note "Jonah Silverberg Playground Project"**

Our Family.... We want to say thank you so very, very, much for all the clothes that were sent for the children, and for the Veggie Tales DVD's and Videos and for the replacement of Josh's i-Pod. We **wish you could have seen Josh's face, so very happy.** We are thankful to the Lord for you all. Thank you for your love for us and our family..... Your prayers are very much appreciated concerning **Joshy.** He is growing larger all the time. Everything else is pretty much the same. It is difficult to get him out of bed in the morning, and to get him to eat a little breakfast. He won't eat his lunch in school, no one in school cares, Val has volunteered to come in to help him eat but the school said no, so Joshy comes home sick everyday after a long bus ride. **Praise God, he has been safe at Church..... Shakinah** is doing better, as she now has her Mom home, and that has made a big difference. We are looking to buy a standup piano for the house, and then try to find someone to teach Shakinah to play. This will be a good way to serve the Lord, and it doesn't look like we will ever have someone here in the Bronx to play piano. Shakinah will be 10 soon, so we are running behind on this too.... **Josiah** is doing well. He will turn 8 years old on April 18th **Val** is doing alright. She is still struggling with **Jonah's** death. She is now all alone in teaching the Children at Church on both Friday night and Sunday morning. She must also keep careful watch on Josh at the same time. Val also teaches the Tuesday night Ladies Bible Study. She is still very involved at both Joshy's and Shakinah and Josiah's School.... I (**Marty**) continue along with quite a busy schedule. Please continue to pray for my spine. For a little over a year now I have been moving several pews in the Church every Friday to create room for a small group discipleship Bible study. After unscrewing them, I had to lift each end of the pew onto a dolly, then move them. To get each end of the pew off the dolly, I had to lift, then use one foot to move the dolly out, causing much damage to my lower spine and left hip. I recently decided to start moving them on Sunday, right after service, and ask some of the men to help. After a couple months of this, I am pleased to report that the past 2 Sundays, the men, mostly young men, moved the pews entirely without me and set up the tables and chairs for Friday night, while I ministered to our congregants. This was a blessing! Please continue in prayer for me, lower spine and back pain and left hip, left side of the body pain is huge, all day, every day. My new physical therapist has given up, and I concur. I am taking a break from doctors for a while to recoup, and get some work done. I am considering a new Doctor who has diagnosed new and significant arthritis in the lower spine and has prescribed epidural shots in the spine for some temporary relief. I am concerned about all the walking and stair climbing for Easter outreach. Your prayers are appreciated and I have no doubt they have been an effectual help to keep me going. Thank you.

....**My Uncle Murray**, my **Mom Helen's** brother, recently took a bad fall. At 87, he was hospitalized for a while. My Mom was pleased that I made a hospital visit to him. I felt he didn't have long. The visit did not go too well. At first he seemed glad to see me, but soon was exclaiming how he loved to be Jewish, **and that my life was a wasted life, "it would have been better had you never been born"**. He went on for a while, then proceeded to publicly curse me and throw me out of the room. I was a bit shook up, but realized that this was his belief, and that is why I am shunned by my family.... **A short while later, Murray died.** My Mom wanted me to go to the funeral. With great hesitation, I went with her. To my surprise, there were no incidences against me. It was a very interesting Jewish funeral. They believed Murray had eternal life with God. I know he rejected his Messiah and Savior. **One good thing may have occurred, as I re-met my cousin from France, Jacques.** He is actually my Grandfather's brother's son. My grandfather and his brother Eliezer were very sweet men. Eliezer was one of few family members to live thru the holocaust. Jacques lost his father at a young age, and seems to be searching for answers about life. **I know I have the answer. Please pray for Jacques as I will be meeting with him again.**

The Lake Family moved out of the Bronx on Jan. 30th. They are preparing to begin a new ministry.

The Ministry... We have been very busy reorganizing both the Teen and the Children's ministry. A young woman named Issis had been very helpful with the children, but suddenly disappeared about 10 weeks ago. We made several unsuccessful attempts to contact her. When she was ready, she got in touch with Val and spent many hours explaining the multiple troubles in her life. She has not returned to Church. She has a basically sweet spirit, which is rare around the Ghetto. We have not found many here of noble, diligent and faithful character. But this should go without saying. That is the very reason we are here. However, lives that have been spiritually devastated for many years, do not change overnight. Change begins with salvation. Sometimes faithful Christian character can take many, many years to develop. Please pray that we continue to be very patient as we remain faithful in this difficult ministry. **Please pray for Issis.** We can't imagine that she is very happy....

We thankfully received a piano from First Baptist Church of Manhattan. After having it repaired, it sat, unplayed for almost 2 months. **Joanna Hall** from Calvary Baptist in Bayshore had been coming once a month to help with our worship service. Praise the Lord, she **was able to make it one more time before her wedding to T.J. Syrutenk,** and moving to Canada. We had a wonderful worship service, singing for about an hour. The music was so beautiful, as was the piano playing. I couldn't keep the beat up on a song or two, as my physical condition held me back, and my hand went numb twice, but that's not bad. Overall, it was a wonderful service. What a difference Joanna made. She has been a blessing to us, and will remain in our fond memories and prayers. Your prayers have made a difference, as my numbness and problems playing guitar have been much less. Please continue to pray...

Please pray for our good friend Dr. Joel Grassi. Joel has been a help to us here for nearly 3 years now, not just a blessing to the ministry, but a blessing to our family as well. Joel has been a tentmaker, humbly serving while living across the street from the Church. He has been working any job he can find to pay his rent, but has now been out of work for a while. **If he does not find work soon, he may have to leave, as you know, this is a very expensive area. Please pray that he can find work. He is able to travel to L.I., Queens, Manhattan or Westchester, if anyone knows of a job opening.. Joel has been a huge blessing**

By the time you receive this, our **Easter Outreach** will be under way. ... Our goal will be to get to 15,000 doors and hand out 20,000 pieces of literature. Your prayers are most needed, your help is still wanted, even if you are one person...as of now, we have 3 groups coming to help. Thank you so very much.....

There has been much planning for our **Summer Outreach.** As of now, we have 5 groups coming. We will be doing 3 VBS's, but have only one Community Outreach BBQ scheduled as of now. We could really use help doing one more VBS, and 2 Community BBQ's. Would you and your Church prayerfully consider helping us be able to do these outreach events to help make contacts and share the love of Christ in our very needy Community? We would be most grateful.....

This is also the summer of our **BMM Biennial Conference in Iowa.** Please pray for us as this is always a very difficult undertaking for our family. Having only one dog left, our first who is now the last, Princess, does ease the burden some. It will be a very rough trip for Princess, who is now 15 years old.....

The violence and killings have escalated here in the Bronx. There are 2 or 3 incidents each day. Among the worst we are aware of lately was the murder in the building on the corner by the Church. The Super got drunk as usual, as a great many in our area do daily. This time however, he got into a fight with another man in the building and ended up stabbing the other man to death. Also, a woman with a heart filled with hate stabbed her former best friend's baby in the head, screaming, " I hope your baby dies". The baby is still alive, and may recover. PTL. Please pray. And then the story of Armando Bigo. Armando , a very happy, and very large little 8 year old, went to the corner store with his mom to buy some chips. While he was looking over the selection, the door to the store opened, a teen "gang banger" fired one shot, and little Armando was hit by mistake. The bullet entered his shoulder, nicked his lung, and lodged near his cervical spine. Armando is also recovering. PTL. Many we have ministered to in the area, upon receiving the Lord, especially parents with children, have moved out of here at first opportunity. They say "**this is not a place to raise your children**". I no longer try to talk them into staying. I now agree, this is not a place to raise your children. **Please pray for us, as we labor with much difficulty to raise our children here. Thank you for your prayers.**

Finally, we still need help replacing the sheet metal on top of one of our roof eaves. One company I hoped to hire called the eaves a Yankee Gutter, but they refused the job. I'm thinking of renting a bucket lift truck to try to do this job. My repair patch will not hold much longer and it will leak into the house again causing many other problems.

**We love you dearly in Christ,
Marty, Val, Joshy, Shakinah and Josiah
The Silverbergs**