

A Story of Restoration and Mission

The vision of the valley of dry bones in Ezekiel 37:1–14 presents a powerful picture of God’s sovereign work. In a context of death and hopelessness for the people of Israel in exile, God reveals that His Word and His Spirit have the power to bring life where there is none. Although this passage belongs to the redemptive history of Israel, it points to an enduring principle: God is the One who restores what seems lost and gives life to what is dead.

Five years ago, **Iglesia Bautista Spotswood**, the Hispanic congregation of **Spotswood Baptist Church** in Fredericksburg, Virginia, was experiencing a difficult season. The congregation had endured deep division, discouragement, and decline. Attendance had dropped sharply, many hearts were hurting, and this Hispanic congregation was close to dying.

Through the faithful support of Dr. Drew Landry, Dr. Dan Cook, the pastoral team, the deacons, and the entire church family of Spotswood Baptist Church, the Hispanic congregation was given the opportunity to heal and be replanted.

That support was more than organizational help; it was a testimony of Christian love, unity, and commitment to the Gospel. As Jesus said, “By this all people will know that you are My disciples, if you have love for one another” (John 13:35). Without the support of the full church body, the Hispanic congregation likely would have disappeared.

The road forward was not easy. There were difficult moments during the replanting process and seasons when progress seemed slow. Yet each week the Gospel was preached, believers prayed, and new believers were added and baptized. English-

speaking and Spanish-speaking members began walking together in grace and mission.

Today, the Iglesia Bautista Spotswood gathers around seventy people for each service. More importantly, the Word is preached week after week, and there is worship, fellowship, and a renewed passion to reach others. God did not simply rescue a congregation; He transformed it into a church living on mission—one of the core values shared by Spotswood Baptist.

Spotswood Baptist also embraced a broader vision to reach many nations and languages in the historic city of Fredericksburg. That vision began with support for a Vietnamese church planter. On the same campus, a church serving the deaf community was started, and later a Chinese-speaking congregation was added.

During three consecutive Sundays in February, the three church planters were invited to share at Iglesia Bautista Spotswood.

Vietnamese church planter Phuong “Patrick” Phan (**Grace Vietnamese Baptist Church**) shared the burden and joy of reaching the Vietnamese community, a people deeply rooted in the traditions of their

ancestors. His testimony deeply moved those in attendance.

Bob Rhoads (**Spotswood Deaf Church**), who is planting among the deaf community, shared how Christ saved him and called him to reach deaf people who often cannot enjoy Christian fellowship in churches because of hearing barriers. Today, however, there is a lighthouse of Gospel hope in Fredericksburg. Chinese church planter Qingjiang Jiang (**Spotswood Chinese Christian Church**) also shared stories of faith, challenge, and hope. Through tears, he

described suffering persecution in his home country for faithfully preaching the Gospel.

The response from the Hispanic congregation was beautiful. Members committed to pray, support, and serve alongside these planters.

The story of Iglesia Bautista Spotswood is a beautiful reminder of how God works through our hurts and our struggles for His glory. Through His Word, He gives new life to the broken so they may live on mission. ●

