

# Report for Gardner Hall

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Carlos' Baptism



With Beverly at Weehawken, NJ

## West Harlem

West Harlem is by far the best-organized congregation I have worked with. Two of our young evangelists, Tim Bunting and Caleb Churchill are especially effective at organizing useful projects. Every year we have a congregational reading plan and a high percentage of the brethren take it seriously. The Wednesday night Bible studies are designed to help compliment the reading plan. This year, the plan is to read through the gospels several times. Roger Polanco and I do the adult Spanish classes. He's taken the Wednesday night class to go through the book of Matthew and I've taken the Sunday morning Spanish adult class where we are reviewing basic Bible teaching. We've had studies on topics such as: Grace, Our response to grace, Christ's sacrifice on the cross, How God talks to us, etc. I've noticed through the years that we sometimes take it for granted that brethren know the basics, when such isn't the case.

## New Christians and Visitors

We have had several more baptisms at West Harlem. Our challenge is to keep the new converts. One, Carlos, visited our services with traditional Muslim garb but listened closely to the lesson. Afterwards, he stated that he had been raised in a Christian denomination, become disenchanted and joined the Muslims but he always admired Jesus and realized that his disenchantment was not with Jesus but with the hypocrisy he saw in his denomination. He was baptized and has attended several services, but we have not seen him for the past two weeks and he's not making himself available for studies. We have had several who have been baptized into Christ and later fallen away rather quickly. We hope such won't be the case with Carlos.

Another new Christian, Derrick, is very sincere but is battling years of drug abuse. Also, he says that he feels a little left out since there are no other African-American men that are his age to hang out with. We think we're helping Derrick with teaching and also with our friendship.

Most Sundays and Wednesdays we have a new set of visitors. Some are from out of town, but many are from the community. Our young evangelists and other members will invite all of them to read the Bible, usually starting in the book of Mark.

## Projects

I stay busy with regular projects: bulletins, home studies, phone studies, our recorded Bible message, etc. These projects in turn lead to a number of emails, questions on face book, phone calls, etc. They aren't interesting report material, but believe they can be beneficial.

## Fair Lawn, New Jersey

There is a better spirit at Fair Lawn after some rocky times. I attribute the improvement to several blessings:

**(1) The women** - They haven't been involved in the disagreements about who should be on the list to lead in services and have kept on loving and serving others.

**(2) New converts** - Victor and his wife, Kenia, are very enthusiastic in their new service to the Lord and their enthusiasm is rubbing off on others. Natalia and her husband, Gilberto attend services with their sweet little one year old, Joyce.

**(3) Children** - It's hard to keep on being grouchy with so many cute ones around!

**(4) Needy brethren** - Several have had to stop working because of illness. The church has rallied around them with needed benevolence, which has helped bring on a little more unity. Curses can sometimes provide blessings. We are still not out of the woods yet.



Three of six babies under a year of age at West Harlem:  
Callen, Mia and Cy.