

Mark Rodriguez serves as pastor of Love Unlimited Church, Hialeah. His wife is Leilani Rodriguez.

Visit our website floridabaptisthistory.org

<https://flbaptist.org/miami-church-plant-celebrates-new-life-with-drive-by-baptisms/>

Miami church plant celebrates new life with drive-by baptisms

Home Stories Archive Miami church plant celebrates new life with drive-by baptisms

Written By: Keila Diaz

September 29, 2020

Equipped with portable baptistry, pastor and musical instruments, Love Unlimited Church of Miami drove to the homes of four new believers to celebrate their new life with Christ through baptism—for all the neighbors to see.

“This is as close as it gets to baptizing like John the Baptist did,” said **Mark Rodriguez**, pastor of Love Unlimited. “I don’t know if there is a better way to declare your faith publicly than this.”

Much like birthdays and graduations have been celebrated since the quarantine began, the church’s worship team and Rodriguez drove up to homes in a parade-style caravan honking car horns and cheering from car windows. The worship team played a short worship set at each location and Rodriguez shared a quick Bible message.

Neighbors left their homes to witness the celebration of the drive-by baptisms.

Christine Plaza was baptized that Sunday, Sept. 13, for all her community to bear witness. She thanked the pastor and his wife, **Leilani Rodriguez**, “and our Love Unlimited family for coming to our home and welcoming us to your church. You have changed our lives in Jesus’ name.”

“Talk about a witness,” said Al Fernandez, southeast regional catalyst of the Florida Baptist Convention. “Now the neighbors know that these people are Christians also.”

Prior to the pandemic, **Love Unlimited** was meeting in a Miami-Dade County public school in the East Little Havana community near Marlin’s Park.

Since COVID-19 struck, the congregation has been worshipping online and does not yet have a date for returning to in-person gatherings. Even though the county is making moves towards opening schools, no date has been set when outside groups will be welcomed back.

Still, not having a physical place to assemble did not stop the Gospel from changing lives as three of the new believers started attending church and received Christ online. Two are already serving online.

In the weeks leading up to the drive-by baptisms, many expressed how excited the whole church family was about the event.

The church had considered several possibilities for the baptism event, including “putting a pool in the back of my truck and going house-to-house,” said Rodriguez. Thankfully, in the middle of the night, he remembered the Florida Baptist Convention had a mobile baptistry located at the Southeast Regional Training Center in Hialeah.

“This happened not because we were trying to be creative but because we were trying to meet a need,” said Rodriguez. “Many times, we limit what God can do because we are used to our comfort, but at our church we don’t let our circumstances dictate what God wants us to do.”

“That a church would go to those that have trusted Christ just says a lot about their passion for evangelism,” said Fernandez.

“This is a story of a brand-new church that faced immense challenges due to COVID-19 restrictions but didn’t give up and through thinking outside the box reached people with the Gospel that would had never visited the church plant.”