

**Dear Friend, Encourager, Partner-in-Mission,**

### **Personal Updates**

**In early June, we spent time remembering the beautiful Memorial Service, 1 year ago, for our son, Aric, and the love of our church family and friends. We continue to grieve the loss of our youngest son yet we are blessed in the prospect of a growing relationship with our oldest son, Colin.**

**We video-Skyped with Darrell's Mom for the first time in June.** The look on her face when she saw us on the screen was priceless! Donna has dementia and the condition continues to progress. **We are so blessed to be able to "see her" and "talk" with her via technology.**

**The Lord has restored us from our third bout with sickness since our arrival here 1 year ago.** We've been assured that most missionaries have a rough first year on the field battling against "foreign" critters and that our immune systems simply need to learn how to recognize and fight against them. **The hidden blessings:** 1) We've come to know our Dr. well and are developing much trust in his expertise. 2) We're approaching the end of "the first year here" and trust that our bodies are adapting. 3) Darrell has lost 35 lbs since our arrival. One or two more "amoebas" and he should be at his recommended weight!

**Sondra tried out the free dance therapy sessions that are only ½ block from our house.** Amazingly, even at 9,300 ft altitude, she was able to keep up with all the "much younger" women doing the steps of Latino-salsa, and other traditional dances for the full 1 ½ hours! As much as she enjoys this she simply does not have the time to do this 3 days per week and has decided that she will participate as time allows. The daily walking, and, the climbing steps, bending, and lifting she does 2 days/week at her ministry at Reach Beyond keeps her sufficiently physically fit. **We are grateful for the many opportunities the Lord provides for us to "keep our lungs healthy" at this high altitude.**

Most Sundays we attend a Spanish-speaking church here in Quito. Occasionally we attend other churches. The English Fellowship Church offers their service in English and in written form for those who are learning English to follow along. **We recently attended the EFC service during which they had a special worship service with North American "country hymns"! We thank the Lord to be able to not only occasionally worship in our native language but also to sing old familiar hymns!**

### **Everyday Cultural Lessons**

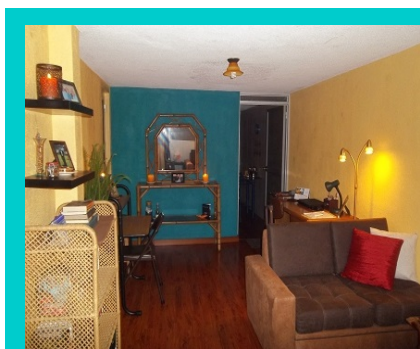
**In June we accompanied our friend, Rosita and her family to her mother's house in Otavalo, an Indigenous Indian community.** We enjoyed a long walk in the country with her husband and her children while she and her mother prepared us a meal in the kitchen (Sondra was not allowed to help). After several hours of their loving labor, **we enjoyed a delicious guinea-pig meal** with their family. Sondra helped with the dishes and we treated the whole family to ice-cream at one of the local shops. We also visited the local markets looking for a hand-made pendant in which to hold our son's ashes. **We are grateful to God for this growing friendship with them.**



Enjoying a Guinea Pig Meal with Indigenous Friends

**We decided it was time to paint our apartment!** Darrell, wasn't especially fond of the "Pepto-Bismo colored walls throughout. Painting our apartment has ended up being very time-consuming because the walls are porous cement which has to be painted with a brush. Also, deciding on paint colors in Ecuador is quite a challenge; most paint stores don't have color charts to loan out! The first 2 color choices we made resulted in us donating 2 gallons of paint to the church!

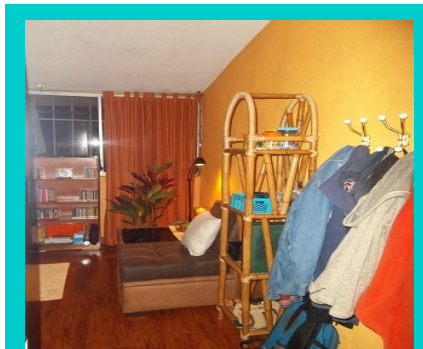
**Ecuadorians seem to love painting with bright colors. Trying not to look typical "North- American", we painted and are decorating our apartment accordingly. The guestroom-office is now orange. Our windowless living room is bright yellow with an accent wall of bright aqua. One more room to go, but have decided we will tone things down for the room in which we sleep with sky blue, denim blue, and lime green. We thank God for the couple in our church who are a painters/designers by-trade who were willing to loan us their paint-color wheel and give us advice on decorating Ecuadorian-style!**



Our "Pepto-Bismo"- Colored Walls Replaced with Bright Yellow and Aqua !



Adding Colorful Decorative Pieces



Orange Guest-Room/Office Area

**Our landlady, Marianna,** has an alarm system installed within her building which is connected directly to the police department just a few blocks away. She recently asked us to re-wire the system so that the alarm button is located in our apartment so we will have control of using the alarm if there is a problem. Marianna, who is in her 70's and who has limited mobility tends to be skid-dish about strangers and worries a lot about intruders. With her living on the third story, she is less likely to see and hear things as we can. Perhaps because of the time we make to converse with her and to help her with minor repairs in the building, **she seems to have developed a strong trust-relationship with us which is something that normally takes a lot of time to do in this culture. We thank God for the opportunity to assist her, befriend her, and help her to feel more comfortable.**

**We continue to enjoy having guests in our new home.** Pastor Salomon (of our church), Lucy, and their 2 children came to enjoy a meal in our home one Sunday afternoon. We also had our professor, Adrianna, her husband, Pablo, and son, Pablo Jr. over for an evening meal. Each family brought us several gifts, including Ecuadorian chocolates. **Whether it's "in ones' budget" or not, it is customary to bring gifts when someone invites you to their home; especially for a meal. We are continually blessed by the generous spirits of the Ecuadorian people and have much to learn from them.**

### **Missionary Relationships**

**We delighted in a beautiful Sunday visit in July with Dr. Nelson and his wife.** We enjoyed a fish lunch, seeing Quito from their high-rise terrace, and taking a long walk through the Metropolitan Park located on a plateau of the mountainside. One can only get there by vehicle; buses won't make the steep climb. **We are grateful to Steve and Dorothy taking us away from this noisy city for some time of relaxation. We thank the Lord for our friendship with them.**

**In the future, when Darrell gets his Ecuadorian license, we'll soon be able to make trips to many places not easily accessible by bus with our new used "moto" (small motorbike). We made this recent purchase from a missionary family permanently returning to Switzerland. The moto is only 3 years old and was sold to us, along with an attached travel case, helmets, and rain-gear, for only \$700! Darrell took it to a shop to prepare it for government inspection. It cost only \$13 to change the oil, make 3 small repairs, wash it, and apply a special wax (to protect it from the volcanic dust in the air). With the price of gasoline at \$2/gallon, we are so blessed to have the opportunity to travel, economically, for both personal and ministry purposes.**



Darrell and His Fire-Engine-Red "Moto"

**We attended a cook-out/send-off for two Reach Beyond missionary families who have served approximately 20 and 30 years in Ecuador. Many other families are on furlough at this time, so also enjoyed a pizza night and social with the remaining staff. Sondra attended another of the Ladies Night Out events (held quarterly) at a restaurant with fellow female missionaries. Getting to know the other missionaries on a more personal basis has been such an encouragement to us.**

**Sondra completed a 6-wk Beth Moore Bible Study brought in-country by a visiting missionary family. Approximately 10 women attended the study. Thank you Lord for the opportunity to be studying Your Word in our native language.**

### **Trials and Hidden Blessings**

**Sent Darrell's broken eyeglasses to the U.S. to have 2 repairs done to them. One of the employees forgot to write out both of the requests for repairs and only wrote out one. Darrell's glasses were sent to an address to be brought back to us via a Reach Beyond missionary returning to Ecuador. The business owner felt so bad about the mistake that he not only promptly completed all the repairs but ordered a second (spare pair) of glasses, identical to the first pair, for FREE, for Darrell to use as a "back-up"! Praise God, when we come in Sept, Darrell will have 2 brand new pairs of glasses for less than \$50!**

**Spent more than 4 ½ hours on the phone trying to reserve our airline tickets for September. Buying one ticket directly while trying to gift points for the other flier-mile ticket gets a little complicated. Thank the Lord we have unlimited phone minutes to the U.S. with Skype-phone for \$6.99/month And Praise God the agents (I finally reached) were pleasant, helpful, and now have our missions website address. One of them told us she will be praying for us!**

**Darrell shares an office with Ralph, Reach Beyond's writer and editor, who loves Ecuador's mission history, movies and books. It was discovered that both Ralph and Sondra have a deep desire to know as much as they can about the story of the 5 missionaries who died in 1956 deep in the Amazon jungle of Ecuador. As a result, Ralph has loaned Sondra several special books of his. Some of them have personal notes and signatures from Elizabeth Elliot (who died this past June), Dayuma (who helped Rachel Saint learn the Auca language), and the 5 Auca tribal men who speared Jim Elliot and the other 4 missionaries. Sondra, of course, has read all 5 books and made copies of all the photos, personal notes, and signatures. What an awesome opportunity to learn so much from Ralph and other HCJB-ReachBeyond missionaries who have had personal contact with these people. God's work to the Auca tribe was faithfully carried out by these 5 martyred men and their wives, and still is being carried out by the children and even grandchildren of not only the missionaries but also of the Auca families who have given their lives to Christ!**

**May we, too, persevere  
to carry out His work, here in Ecuador,  
and remain faithful in this work  
until His plan for the people He loves  
- - - is fulfilled!**

**Darrell and Sondra Holden**

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**in Ecuador, South America**



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**Letter/Cards/Gifts Under 3lbs Can Be Sent Directly To:**

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