



Holden Newsletter - Dec 2016 (Part 1)

We hope the following highlights will help you find and read what interests you!

Main Topics

Main Points

Praises/Requests

Dear Friend, Encourager, Partner-in-Mission,

Typically we write two mission newsletters for you every two months. We do this because the process of selecting photos, writing, proofreading, editing and emailing/ mailing them takes about one week from start to finish. But this December was so packed full of activities this year we decided to send a special newsletter and to send it in two parts! We've included lots of photos for you and hope you enjoy them!

Dec 3 - Celebrating 20 Years of Christmas Fiestas in the Dump

This December Extreme Response (ER) held it's 20th Christmas party in the Zambiza dump in Quito, Ecuador where 800 children, single moms, and families in distress were ministered to. This year ER reached a grand total of 5,511 of the poorest of the poor in not only Ecuador but also in S. Africa, and the Philippines. Here are some photos from this year's Zambiza Dump Christmas Party in Quito!

Sondra and Pastor Ramiro Baez

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first met in 2005 on her first mission trip to Ecuador with Operation Christmas Child (OCC)!



Papa Noel (Darrell) and His Helper (Sondra) Hand-Puppet Entertained Children During Photo Shoots



Family Photo with Sonia and Her Children Sonia's Family Lost Their Home in an Avalanche in 2015



This year Operation Christmas Child (OCC) returned to the Zambiza dump bringing shoe box gifts for the children of the dump workers !



Sonia's family, - - > along with hundreds of other families like hers, received a family photo with Santa, a bag of food staples, OCC shoe box gifts for their children along with the booklet "The Greatest Gift of All", and a bag of treats for each child!



Families were also given the opportunity to participate in children's craft activities, face painting, nail painting and family games, winning prizes of candy to take home for Christmas. In addition, they enjoyed live dance and worship events and were given the opportunity to hear the Gospel!

Dec 4 - Christmas Party in Argelia Alta

Argelia Alta is a small community that exists in southern Quito where severe economic hardship, alcoholism and domestic abuse once dominated the families that live there. Pastor Ramiro (not Ramiro Baez) has planted and leads the first Christian Bible-teaching church in the area. His ministry also includes a school, a seminary, and special programs for children and families. At this year's Christmas party, ER provided family photos with Santa, face painting, nail painting and family games. The local church provided a time of teaching, worship, and food staples for the families that attended.



Outdoor Worship Service and Teaching



Indigenous Worship Team



Families Receiving Food Staples from the Back of a Vehicle



While Darrell kept busy with photo shoots and walking through the crowd visiting with children and adults alike, Sondra kept busy with painting the nails of many of the women and their daughters.

With each session taking about 10 minutes, there was ample time to engage in conversation and build relationships.

Many families, like this one -- > went away happy, blessed, and with a new knowledge of Jesus as their Lord and Savior!



Dec 7 - Christmas Star Shines Once Again

One of HCJB/Reach Beyond's traditions has been to light a large star at the top of a 140-foot tower above the mission property. Since our arrival in 2014, we had not yet seen the star lit. This year we learned that one of the reasons was because of some much needed repair. The star is huge and the bulbs are very expensive, as is the transformer that needed to be replaced. This year, a handful of HCJB and ReachBeyond employees and missionaries worked diligently to get the star back in working order. Here is a link to the calloftheandes blog where you can see photos (including one of Darrell) and read an article about this endeavor. <https://calloftheandes.wordpress.com/2016/12/07/4025/>

Dec 8 - The Art of Baking in Quito

Each year, DeNise Love, Missionary Personnel Director, holds a cookie exchange at her apartment for the ladies of Reach Beyond. This year, Darrell whipped up a batch of three dozen organic cookies for Sondra to take to the event. Approximately 15 women attended and Sondra came home with a variety of cookies to share with others in our home during the holidays. With Quito's 9,300 ft. altitude, limited ingredients, Ecuador ovens only having one rack that cannot be raised higher away from the flame, and a temperature dial with no numbers, baking is actually an art! We thank God that Reach Beyond and HCJB missionaries have their own cookbook "Cooking in the Andes" to help with the challenges of learning to cook and bake here in Quito.

Dec 12 - Pastor Luis Meets with Patricio and Rosita

Some of you have been praying for the meeting between us, Pastor Luis and our friends Patricio and Rosita. We had made several attempts to get the five of us together but the enemy always seemed to put something in the way of achieving this. Finally, we able to gather in our home this month and the conversation went very well.

In the beginning, Rosita, and especially Patricio were nervous about talking with Pastor Luis (an indigenous evangelical Christian) because they are Catholic. But for every nervous comment and question they had, he shared his faith with grace and the testimonies of those he knows in his family and in his church, lovingly answering their questions. The Holy Spirit truly gave him the wisdom and grace needed to discuss delicate subjects like "not changing one's religion" and "keeping their indigenous traditions". He also invited them to consider attending one of the three Bible studies held throughout Quito for indigenous

believers. **By the end of the evening, everyone agreed to meet again during which we will share a meal in our home on the 9th of January so that Pastor Luis's wife, Gladys, who is a Christian counselor for women, can get to know Patricio and Rosita as well. Then, Pastor Luis, driving far out of his way, took Patricio and Rosita home so he could continue building a relationship with them. Please continue to pray for the Holy Spirit to open the hearts of Patricio and Rosita and for them to take a bold step toward knowing God's Word better through formal Bible studies, and having a relationship with Him on a much deeper level.**

Dec 13 - Reach Beyond Missionary Christmas Party

Each year in December, Reach Beyond's missionaries and their families join together to celebrate the birth of Jesus Christ. This year we enjoyed a catered meal along with home-baked cookies and desserts, family games, and other fun activities including singing.

During this time of worship, we sang various Christmas hymns in English, Spanish, and German. At the end of the evening we lighted candles and sang 'Silent Night' in these same three languages. **We Praise God for being able to celebrate Christmas in this way, being reminded that all over the world people are celebrating the birth of Jesus singing in thousands of different languages!**



Dec 15 - Tyra's 'Miracle'

This Christmas season we not only celebrate the miraculous birth of Jesus but also a very special way in which the Lord recently showed his love to a very special little 6-year-old and her family.

Tyra attends Extreme Responses's after-school program at the Quito Family Resource Center. Tyra, and 35 other children like her, are of some of the first generation children of dump workers to attend school.

The parents of these children do not know how to read or write, therefore, comprehending and completing homework assignments would not be possible without the three or four adult volunteers who work with these children each day. **Each week, I, Sondra, help several of the youngest children with their homework including Tyra who seems to struggle the most. With only four adults to help 36-40 children, Tyra does not get all the help that she desperately needs. This is terribly disturbing not only to me but to the other teachers as well. The program coordinator recently told me that if Tyra does not progress quickly she might not pass this year's grade. He's also been concerned because Tyra's mother, Maria, who has two other children, works from 6 am until 6 pm in the dump and then until 11 pm each night at another job which makes it difficult for her to be available to help and encourage Tyra. So during the next four days, I began praying for Maria.**

The beginning of this story actually starts back in September when Darrell and I decided to contribute some money to Extreme Response to help some of the dump families buy the required school uniforms their children need each year. It had been difficult to get together with Robyn, the gal to whom I needed to hand the money, so she told me to give the money to Robbie, the after-school program coordinator. Each week time I brought the cash with me to the QFRC, Robbie wasn't there, and then each time he was there I had forgotten to bring the money. This went on for weeks until finally, one day in December I was able put the money into Robbie's hands. Robbie then contacted Robyn, letting her know that he had the cash; but much to our disappointment, all of this year's uniforms had already been purchased. So Robbie kept the money in his pocket until the next day when I would come to the center.

Then, the next morning, much to Robbie's surprise, **Tyra's mother, Maria**, who rarely comes to the center, came to talk to him. She said she decided to keep Tyra home from school that morning and from the center that afternoon because she decided to stay home from her job that day to help Tyra prepare for a school exam that she had the next day. And then Maria began to cry. She told Robbie she **was thinking about pulling Tyra and her two siblings out of school at the beginning of 2017 and stated that because she has made it through life without an education so could her children.**

After delving deeper into the conversation, Robbie discovered that Maria had been too ashamed to admit that, this past semester, her three children did not have any school supplies and she was told by the school that Tyra and her siblings would not be allowed to attend school the following semester without the required supplies. Robbie then told Maria to "wait right here." Knowing what he had to do, he took the money we had given him and went to the nearest store, purchased everything her three children needed (with only \$5 leftover), and gave the items to Maria! Maria began sobbing harder- but this time they were tears of gratitude and joy! **Because God's delay in getting our money to Robyn, Tyra's family was able to experience the loving intervention of Our Heavenly Father! - We praise Him for His perfect timing!**

Dec 16 - HCJB's 85th Anniversary



This year marked the 85th year that HCJB Radio has provided Christian programming not only in Latin America but to several countries around the world.

In December we celebrated the event with prayer, speakers, live entertainment, eloquent snacks, wine glasses filled with sparkling juices and a commemorative book.



Anabel Cabezas, HCJB's Director, < - - asked Sondra to help with the displays of HCJB's history in the conference center where the event would take place ->



The HCJB radio celebrities and missionaries - - > along with Reach Beyond staff and missionaries our thankful to the Lord who has been faithful to build and sustain this ministry for more than eight decades!

GREAT IS THY FAITHFULNESS - OH GOD OUR FATHER !



Dec 17 and 18 - What Is Christmas Without Shopping?

Shopping was especially fun this year as we placed our focus on those most in need. Our Ecuadorian family had endured great trials this year with multiple plumbing leaks, Verito's boss increasing her hours and cutting her pay, and Carmen losing her job in December due to the business she works for having to close. We prayed asking God to show us the best way to bless them. This resulted in purchasing a large family cooking pot (which was stolen several months ago) and filling it not only basic food staples (grains, pasta and cooking oil) but delicacies of tuna, popcorn, gelatin and cooking spices. And as expected - God's timing was perfect as they recently had to pay a large water bill due to a break in their plumbing line which they did not discover until the meter had soared. **Through her tears, Carmen told us that she had recently told her family of eight that because they had to pay for this large water bill there was now no money for food. We again praise God for His perfect timing and direction!**



Darrell and Sondra Holden

Ripe For Harvest Missionaries - Partnering with Reach Beyond - Ecuador, S.A.

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