



Holden Newsletter - Mar 2017

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

MAIN TOPICS **MAIN POINTS**
PRAYER REQUESTS / PRAISES



Dear Friend, Encourager, Partner-in-Mission

EXTENDING OUR PARTNERSHIP AGREEMENT

March 1st we signed a new two-year contract between our base mission agency 'Ripe For Harvest' and 'Reach Beyond' where Darrell serves in crisis management and maintenance and I serve part-time with gardening projects. We are thrilled to continue to be a part of what God is doing through them!

I, Sondra, will also continue part-time with Extreme Response (ER - a local ministry partner of Reach Beyond) serving within the Quito Family Resource Center (QFRC) helping young children of the Zambiza dump-workers with their school work and encouraging their mothers. I will also continue to serve with Dunamis helping to teach English to young girls rescued from human trafficking and assisting and encouraging them during their life skills workshops. Darrell will continue helping with special projects with these ministries of ER as well.

In the past, I had also served with Alma Libre (Free Soul) helping with Bible studies at Casa de Confianza (House of Trust) a small local prison for women who are pregnant or who have young children. Unfortunately, within months after the N. American leader returned to the U.S., the ministry group dissolved. There are still some Ecuadorian women from the group visiting and conducting their own individual Bible studies there but the situation is not spiritually healthy. Therefore, I, and Rosy (my Ecuadorian co-worker in the mission), prayerfully made the decision to wait upon the Lord to open the door for another leader and another group of ministry workers if that is His will. Since that time, one of the Ecuadorian women invited me to join her in holding Bible studies in the large Latacunga federal prison located far south of Quito. This would entail obtaining a special government pass (which is not easy to obtain) and my round trip travel time for each visit would be six hours from where we live. So it seems the Lord is leading me to serve more hours in the remaining ministries I am involved in.

BLESSED ON THE LONG ROAD TO RECOVERY

For several weeks from mid-February through mid-March I was at home very ill with the flu, bronchitis, and a black mold contamination. Within 24 hours of having the mold removed by our friend, Verito, my health improved rapidly! During my last week of recovery, two ladies from our church and Carmen came to visit and to pray over me. Also our indigenous friends, Patricio and Rosita, offered to help in any way that we needed. We are praising God for a complete recovery and thanking Him for the natural medicines to which we have access and for the care from our church family and friends.

HOW ONE NASTY 'CHILD' CAN DISRUPT SO MANY LIVES

Here in Ecuador we've been coping with the coldest, rainiest, 'El Niño' season in over 40 years! The locals have told us that this weather phenomenon is properly named 'the child' (in Spanish) because of it's 'bad behavior' and the affects it has on the climate and those who live in it. The rains began early this year, in November, and are just now beginning to subside in some areas of the country, including here in Carcelen. Not much has been reported internationally, perhaps for fear of it affecting

tourism. But we've check local news sources, talked with people from different parts of the country, and seen with our own eyes the nasty affects of this weather phenomenon - - - flooding, mudslides, crumbling roadways, collapsing houses, sinkholes, and mold contamination with an increase in respiratory illnesses. Some of the reported statistics are: 21 deaths, 50,000 cubic meters of mud blocking a major road, 5 hours of torrential rain and 6 inches of large hail in certain areas of the country. Because of this combination of unusually cold temperatures and dampness we've recently purchased an electric space heater, a dehumidifier (which normally is not available in the stores here because of the typical dry climate in Quito), a portable fan, and several quarts of white vinegar to clean up the mold we keep finding in our home.

We are thanking the Lord for Carmen's family who has been helping us with the cleaning and mold removal, and for the ability to purchase the things we need to cope with this winter/rainy season; many people here do not have the resources to do so. Pray for God's provision for the repair of significant damage caused to our church building due to water run-off from the adjacent property.

WHEN BODY HEAT IS NOT ENOUGH

Sintia, a single mother of three and a cleaning person for HCJB Radio, lives in southern Quito in a 1st-story apartment where the moisture and cold easily penetrate into the cement walls of homes and the bones of those who live there. **This year, she and her two sons have been sleeping in her bed together and her teen-age daughter has been sleeping in a single bed nearby as they try to stay warm in the same room from each other's body heat.** (Remember, there are no household furnaces in Ecuador). Discovering their situation, Darrell and I knew we had to do something to help.

One Friday, after work, I took Sintia to a local outdoor market where she could pick out a thick wool blanket and fleece pajamas. Afterward she shouted "I am so excited! We are going to be SO warm!" and then in gratitude, she hugged me tightly while jumping up and down in joy. She then reached into her bag and pulled out a home-made birthday card for me that she and her children made. It was such a sweet gesture from someone who has so little. Afterward, I decided that because it would soon be my birthday and because she had the evening free away from her children that we should go out to a restaurant for a meal together. We savored the hand-made pizza and talked for more than two hours, enjoying our 'ladies night out' before she headed home on the two hour bus ride.

Having been a young single mother for more than 10 years with all of its challenges, the Lord has given me His compassion for other single parents who struggle with raising their children alone. **We are so grateful to God for the opportunity to become friends with Sintia and her family and to be able to come alongside them in a time of need.**

BIRTHDAY FIESTAS ABOUND

Darrell turned 60 years old this year! As time goes on it becomes more and more difficult for me to know what to do or buy for him for his birthday. But two families provided me with a solution.

March 18, we celebrated both Darrell's and Carmen's 5-year old granddaughter, Beli's, special days together at their house here in Carcelen. We shared a meal, games, and cake with the eight members of her family plus her sister Sarita, brother-in-law Fernando, and niece Darita. Then on March 19, we joined Wendy and her extended family at her house up the mountainside, outside of Quito. Wendy's mother, whose birthday was two days before, came from Pisuli to cook a meal for everyone. Also present were Wendy's brother, David, his 1-year old daughter, Scarlet, and the mother of his child, who live together in their own apartment in the same sector of Planada where Wendy, her 4-year old son, Jhoan Gabriel, and the father of her child (also named David) live.

We are so blessed to be able to spend time with 'our family' (Carmen's family) and with our 'daughter and sweet grandson' (Wendy and Jhoan Gabriel) and all of their families, during Darrell's birthday weekend. The Lord has truly blessed us with family and friends here.



Darrell (with mask) and Beli



Beli (after kissing the cake) and cousin Darita



Darrell enjoying his cake



*Jhoan Gabriel,
his father
David, Wendy
and Sondra at
our home in
< - - February*

*Brother David,
(upper left) - >
Wendy, David
(center),
Patricia (Mom)
and Darrell at
Wendy's
in March - - >*



*Jhoan Gabriel
helping 'grandpa' Darrell
up the slide (below)*



Our precious 'grandson'



*Wendy and Jhoan (above)
on the teeter-totter
at the park in Planada
on the mountainside
high above Quito
(Quito is white area in background)*



AMAZING PROGRESS ON NEW HOME/MISSION FACILITY FOR DUNAMIS GIRLS !



At an undisclosed location, outside of Quito, lies a “construction miracle” thanks to our Amazing God! In just over 6 months, the Lord has provided more than \$300,000 in increments (each time just as the \$ ran out) to construct a home/mission facility where, once completed, 30 girls, ages 9-17, after being rescued, will have a safe refuge for at least one year to heal from their wounds and brokenness from being enslaved in sex and labor trafficking.



Building Construction Manager, Tomas, and Darrell stand near the future office for on-site police officers who will be guarding the facility 24 hours per day.



We are thrilled to see there is a large fireplace which will help to keep the girls and staff warm at this significantly cool and windy location.



Because of an early inheritance gift, **additional progress is being made on Boris' (the director's) home** where he and his family are living on the property and where they will provide housing for work teams with the additional space.

Only \$30,000 more is needed to complete the home/mission facility for the girls. As soon as the Lord sends the house-parents, social worker, teachers, etc. and a security wall is completed around the 7 ½ acre property, the girls will be able to move in! **We are praying for a team from Wisconsin to come to help in the construction of the wall. Please pray for us as we visit the U.S. this Aug-Sept when we will be speaking with people from at least two churches in our home town.**

PRAISES:

We have not heard anything more from the man who demanded that 'his girl/property' be returned to him; she has since 'graduated' from the program at the government shelter and is no longer with Dunamis. **The high level breached-security situation has passed and we thank God for everyone's safety.** We will be able to share the details when we visit the U.S. this Aug-Sept at our home church. **We praise God so much for all of our prayer partners who have been faithfully praying over this situation for the past few months!**

PRAYER REQUESTS:

- 1) For stamina and perseverance for Boris and his family as they struggle to adapt to all of the activity and changes in their lives and as the mission and it's staff transition to the new property and programming.
- 2) For the Lord to work in people's hearts, and for people to listen as He calls servant workers to help complete this facility; especially pray for those whom He will call to rise up from our church(es) in Wisconsin.
- 3) For Sondra, as she becomes more deeply involved with serving the Dunamis girls and building relationships with them and for the Lord to send someone to serve (with Sondra) to teach English to the girls. (Crystal, the U.S. missionary/social worker and her husband, Tomas, the Building Construction Manager are pregnant with their first child and have returned to the U.S. to see the project to its completion via Skype. Also pray for Sondra, as she prepares to increase her hours serving in the Dunamis ministry.

Darrell and Sondra Holden

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Partnering with -



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