



Holden Newsletter - Sept 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,

THE NEED TO BE STILL

As you know from reading our August newsletter our month was over-flowing with activity. The Lord already knew this was the way it would be. So, He put it on the heart of a few people to connect us to Be Still Retreats - a free housing facility in Plainfield, Wisconsin for pastors and missionaries. The timing was perfect as it was set up in middle of our first eight weeks in Wisconsin. Here we could just be ourselves, and be alone, together, able to focus on each other and our Lord.





*Busyness has a way of eating away at one's soul.
Here we could heal.
Here we could just "be".*

*Five of the 10 days we stayed 'at home'
soaking in the silence
and the green space around us.*

*Tears of relief flowed, heart rhythms slowed,
and our souls began to heal amid
the beauty of God's creation.*



The other five days we spent visiting Sondra's hometown friends from grade and high school, the cemetery where her parents bodies rest, and friends who now live in her parents home. We also visited Darrell's brother in southern WI sleeping in one of the camp cabins at a camp where he serves as the director. Between chats, we sorted through possessions, loaded the SUV with items to sell /give away, then afterward Darin and his wife treated us to a yummy meal at a restaurant. We were so blessed to be able to visit family and friends during our time away.



UNPACK, REPACK, AND TRAVEL AGAIN

We were sad about leaving Be Still Retreats yet were looking forward to seeing more friends and family in northern Wisconsin and Minnesota. We stayed overnight at friends in Chippewa Falls on the way to visiting our son, Colin, and his wife for four days in Minneapolis. We stayed in one of the four bed and breakfast units he owns and/or manages.



Seeing all the work he has done on his 135 year old historic home, including how he integrated items he inherited from his grandparents into the décor of his house,



**Shenandoah and Colin
married one year Oct 7, 2017**



meeting his wife and her family, sharing a meal at a patio restaurant on famous "Eat Street" and spending quality time with him were the highlights of our stay.

HOME AGAIN

After returning from the 'Twin Cities' and resettling in to our final 'home' in Wisconsin, came the realization that we finally did not have to live out of our suitcases and shoeboxes anymore. Each host has provided us with very comfortable accommodations but knowing that this would be our final place to 'live' here in Wisconsin, we let out a sigh of relief knowing that we could finally unpack everything.

Now during our final stretch of our stay before heading to California, we could focus on the next task at hand. We held a garage sale with our possessions we had transported from Darrell's brother's house and donated the leftovers which would help support a missionary in Haiti. At this stage of the process, we had decided to get rid of any items we could replace should we ever need to return to the U.S. permanently. At the sale we had also set up a table with the items from Ecuador to sell which helped us engage in some interesting conversations with those who attended.

FINAL WEEKS BEFORE HEADING TO CALIFORNIA

The final three weeks we enjoyed both work and play. 'Work' involved: meeting with pastors and ministry leaders of two churches, holding a mission presentation and sales night in the home of a member of a third church, writing mission newsletters and a quarterly report, preparing mailings for appeals for support, sending out thank-you's, engaging in a Skype Bible study, and meeting with our dentist and chiropractor for appointments. 'Play' included: being treated to BBQ-ribs, pizza, bluegill (fish), pasta meals, grilled brats and hamburgers and other dinners with our friends. Naming every delicious N. American dish brings the flavors to our lips again in memory of the delightful visits with our friends.



One special treat was when our friends, Rubens and Vanessa made us Mexican food. Enjoying time with Spanish-speaking friends took our minds and hearts back to the people we love.

Another evening we enjoyed was when our friends Brad and Dawn treated us to a meal at a supper club. Darrell enjoyed steak and Sondra savored her special pasta dish. We were also treated to wine and



dessert because we were celebrating our 31st wedding anniversary.

And another special evening was when we enjoyed steaks on the grill at Don and Lori's and Darrell being able to drive go-carts with Don throughout his property. Sondra and Lori enjoyed taking a walk and soaking in the sunset.



For the past two months we've been treated to 21 meals with friends in their homes or restaurants and more than 50 meals lovingly prepared for us by the hands of our gracious hosts!

**AGREDECEMOS A DIOS PARA TODOS! - WE GIVE THANKS TO GOD FOR ALL OF YOU!
CALIFORNIA HERE WE COME**

A trip to California was not originally in our plans but our mission suggested it and we were in full agreement. No it is not a vacation, nor is it a retreat, but a specially designed program for pastors and missionaries for renewal and restoration. Today's statistics indicate that the burnout rate for pastors is five years and two years for missionaries! We've already been on the field three years full time and part-time the nine years prior to that. In addition we have some special personal needs which need to be met. **So we will be in California from October 2nd from four weeks up to eight weeks (the average stay is six weeks).** Reach Beyond highly recommends this program to many of its missionaries, and our senior pastor at our home church in Wisconsin is familiar with the program as well. Everyone is pleased that we will be participating. We are incredibly blessed because although our base mission agency is Ripe For Harvest and we are simply 'loaned' missionaries in a contract of service to **Reach Beyond**, RB treats us like 'one of their own' **providing us with the many missionary care services they offer!** In this case the only things we need to purchase our own plane tickets and then our own food to prepare while there but **we have faith that the Lord will provide the finances we need as He sees fit.**

Darrell and Sondra Holden

Missionaries of -



Partnering with -



in Ecuador, South America

Send Financial Gifts To:

**RIPE FOR HARVEST
ACCT 20319
PO BOX 487
MONUMENT CO 80132 - 0487**

Our Email:

dsholden.ec@gmail.com

Our Personal Website:

www.ReachBeyondTheMountains.com

Our Skype Name:

dsholden1

Newsletter Email Address Origin:

tinabush@wctc.net

Mail Letters & Cards To: (Items Will Be Scanned and Emailed To Us):

Holdens, c/o Tina Bush, 1250 Peach St, Wisconsin Rapids, WI 54494

Mail Letters & Cards Directly To:

Darrell y Sondra Holden
REACH BEYOND
Casilla 17-17-691
Quito, Ecuador 170508

Ship DHL Packages (Under 3 lbs) Directly To:

Darrell y Sondra Holden
REACH BEYOND (frente el Hospital Vozandes)
Oe-52 Villalengua y 10 de Agosto
Quito, Ecuador 170508

SOUTH AMERICA

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