

Our Dear Brothers & Sisters and Friends,

2014 August

And now, why delay?  
Get up and be baptized,  
and wash away your sins  
by calling on His Name.

**Acts 22:16**

Our first news this month is the introduction of Dr. Joanne Tomkins. She defended her dissertation on Monday, Aug. 11th, and was fully approved by all committees and university departments before the end of the month. In fact, her 228 page study has been submitted to ProQuest for publication. All committee members gave her rave reviews and her Chair said she intends to submit Joanne's dissertation for the Excellence in Research Study award given annually by Walden University. Her commencement will be in Orlando, FL on January 31 and we plan to attend. In the meantime, she is spending a lot of time playing "catch up" around the house; working with our house girl to clean out and organize rooms, shelves and drawers that have been neglected for five years. In this environment we have learned the danger of neglecting serious cleaning and clearing at the expense of several books and pieces of furniture destroyed or defaced either by termites or severe mold. She has already found some interesting items long forgotten, like her cross stitching materials. She will also be writing an extensive article about another ministry here that we pray will be published by the Christian Chronicle and will help their support.

### **Gracias, Lempira**

At 4:45am on Sunday, Aug. 17, we left the house to get Joanne on the first bus to Tegucigalpa. She traveled 11 hours on three different buses that day to arrive in Gracias where she spent the week serving another missionary family by caring for their three foster children. The Goodwin family of six had to make their annual trip to the capital city to renew their residency cards. During the daytime the three foster children are cared for by two paid nannies, so Joanne was responsible for the children from 7pm until 7:30am. That seems simple enough, until you consider the ages and characteristics of the three charges. Yosima is five years old but was severely neglected until the age of four. While he shows no neurological nor mental limitations to his faculties, he cannot walk, talk, feed himself, or control his hands in any way and still wears diapers. He weighs only 27 pounds. Joanne describes him as a five month old in a very lanky body. But he loves to smile and sing to himself, and is learning to focus on faces and to hold his gaze still. Gabrielle is nine months old and a positive joy. He sleeps through the night and entertains himself in his crib for about an hour after he wakes up. Esperanza (Spanish for "Hope") is only two months old and was up several times most nights. The week was slightly complicated when the oldest two charges developed croupy coughs and congestion that even necessitated pulling out the long unused nebulizer for Yosima. However, the week was a great blessing for the Goodwin family and one that Joanne would be willing to repeat....once a year if necessary.



*Joanne and her charges in Gracias, Lempira*

### **Breaking Chains**

After leaving Gracias, Joanne spent two nights with Amber Foster and her daughter, Rosie, in Tegucigalpa while waiting for a Monday arrival. Amber serves a mountain of people throughout the city of Tegucigalpa, but her primary focus is a shelter for homeless people. She gives them a safe and secure place to learn the love of Jesus, to experience unconditional acceptance and affection, and to consider a different lifestyle. The Sunday worship service at Breaking Chains takes place at 2 in the afternoon and was attended by nearly 100 people, from the streets and from other congregations that are affiliated with the ministry. As is typical of most Honduran congregations, there were far more

women and children in attendance than men. However, Joanne was impressed with the service, with the attendance, and with the love and connection demonstrated by all present.

### **They're Baaaaack**

On Monday, August 25th, Amber dropped Joanne at the airport to meet the arrival of our youngest daughter, Rebecca, and her son, Andrew. They are living with us for the next year and Rebecca began teaching at a local Christian school on Sept. 1 as their third grade teacher. For the time being, Joanne will serve as Andrew's primary caregiver, which is a responsibility she accepted with great enthusiasm. The school conducts most formative subjects in English, so Rebecca's greatest challenge is just learning the school's processes and the Honduran students' approaches to learning. She is excited about the challenges. But she is also still in college, taking on line courses through Phoenix University, which adds to her time demands. It is great to be able to offer her a free and secure living arrangement that at least lightens her stress level to some degree. Rebecca missed church on her first Sunday here after developing a fever of 102 Saturday night, probably contracted from her day observing at Vida Abundante on Tuesday where a virus "is going around".

### **The Saenz Family**

This month we invested the last donations given for the widow of Lidio Saenz and his three children by commissioning a roof over their bathroom/wash area and a drain pipe and septic tank for the run off. We hope to have photos of all improvements for next month's report.

### **Prayers**

Thank you for your prayers for the Saenz family and for our travel. Please continue to pray for our residency status.

Love, Dwight and Joanne Tomkins