

Our Dear Brothers & Sisters and Friends,

2015 March



View of flowers (and the cross) from our front door

When I look at your heavens, the work of your fingers,
the moon and the stars, which you have set in place,
what is man that you are mindful of him,
and the son of man that you care for him?

Psalm 8:3-4

March 2015 has probably been our quietest month in ministry for several years. Dwight continues to teach at PLN in the morning, and Joanne has made weekly trips to a community project, but the majority of our spare time has been spent on almost weekly trips to Tegucigalpa for different reasons. When one is busing four hours each direction and taxiing numerous different places, a trip to the capital city can eat up a lot of one's discretionary time.

Being that this is the hot, dry season in Honduras, the night skies are often beautiful. This year we have had much more rain than usual and unusually cooler weather, though the last couple days have been well into the 90s (until today). It was interesting seeing the moon and Venus in close conjunction a few days ago and knowing that the same sight was blessing others around the world on the same night. It is also the time when the beautiful flowers are most obvious, as you can see from our front door.

Jicaro Gordo

The community project in Jicaro Gordo is still focusing on the first task of latrines for all families who do not have any form of sanitary disposal; 34 properties in all. We started with the largest families, with 14 people, and are working down to the smallest, with one person. The preacher in the community, Javier Perez, visits the subject families weekly to check on progress of digging the hole, which is measured to accommodate the family size for 20 years. The family's contribution to the project is all manual labor. The Tuesday after the hole is ready, Joanne carries cement and rod iron out, and sand and cinder blocks are ordered and paid for. So far we have seen five latrines completely finished and seven more near completion. But 12 latrines is barely over 1/3 of those needed, not counting other households who have requested latrines because their older facility is filled. We lack the ministry funds to help with more than three more latrines. It would be a great blessing if you might consider donating specifically for this community project.

School at Por Los Niños

Dwight was informed the day that school started that he would have 20% more students than he was expecting – including double the number of 1st graders. That would be no problem for a class with just desks and chairs, but it took practically the whole first six weeks for him to round up enough computer equipment and peripherals for all the students in each class. They are doing well irregardless and we know they will enjoy this week's break for Semana Santa (Holy Week). Thank you Ron, Mike, and Jorge for your part in helping to supply what was needed.



Park in Guiamaca next to the hotel where we often spend the night before finishing the drive into Tegucigalpa

Prayers

Joanne's health is better, but now Andrew is battling some sort of cough. Please pray that that can be resolved. Dwight found out this month that he has high blood pressure and has had a mild stroke (could it be the surprise of having way more students than he was expecting?) He is now on medication to bring it under control. While he is displeased to have to take pills for the first time in his life, we thank our Lord that there are ways of controlling that condition.

Love, Dwight and Joanne Tomkins

Life in Honduras

Tim Beavers of Sugar Land, TX was the first to name this plant correctly. While it is an exotic, decorative plant here in Honduras, it is a plant that most Texans should recognize. For it is the plant that at one time was the primary agricultural export of the USA. We know it as the Cotton plant. Tim also suggested that when I was back in College Station, I should pick up some maroon cotton seed – i.e. Cotton seed that produces maroon cotton. Of course, it was developed at Texas A&M. I wonder what color the flowers are?



Birds are easier to see this time of year also.



Cotton

OK, another question? Any of you bird experts have an idea what this bird might be? It landed near Dwight as he was waiting for the bus near Por Los Niños and the Universidad Nacional de Agricultura (UNA). It did not sing. It looked a little like a shrike in its movements.