

Our Dear Brothers & Sisters and Friends,

2015 April

"Why do you look for the Living among the dead?
He is not here: He has risen!
Luke 24:5b-6a

The quietness of March was definitely short-lived, as April proved yet another month filled with ministry and magic.

Shipment from Texas

The month began with the annual "Holy Week" called Semana Santa, which immediately precedes Easter. The majority of businesses, including all banks and government offices, are closed for at least the last half of the week. Public and private schools are closed for the entire week. That meant that Dwight was not teaching that week and Joanne was not meeting community people to discuss their latrine progress. April 1st we received a shipment from Texas of 21 boxes. Thus we were able to focus our time on the 21 boxes of clothing that came packaged around computers, speakers, and cables passed on to us from Cornerstone Christian School. More on this later.

The day before Easter, Joanne bussed to Tegucigalpa to meet some special friends, Kathy and Jerry Guise, who carried down some special items for us. She was treated by the Guises to a wonderful lunch at Chili's, did some shopping while in town and then returned to Catacamas the same day. As a result of the long and grueling travel she was once again sick the next day. Our doctor finally put her on a strong antibiotic and she finally recovered fully after over two months of on-and-off sickness. Eventually Dwight started the same strong antibiotic because Joanne was generous enough to share her bug with him. (Just as an aside, how many of you - besides family members of a physician - can call your doctor's cell phone and talk to him or her directly, be the next patient seen when you arrive at her office, and leave paying nothing? Catacamas has blessings that we never even would have considered listing as priorities when looking for a ministry location.)

Ladies from the churches came to our home on Monday, April 6th and spent over seven hours helping with organizing and sorting the overwhelming amount of



Dwight at the doctor's office



Ladies from Catacamas area churches helping sort and pack the clothes to take to village in the mountains of La Paz.

Janice Garner for leading the effort and John and Paula Watson for delivering the boxes to the shipping company in Houston.

Latrine funding started up again the next day, April 7th, with visits to measure the volume of the pits before purchasing cement, sand, and cinder blocks for the interior walls. Once the walls are up, Joanne carries rod iron and more cement to the properties for the floor of the outhouse. So far there have been

clothing from the boxes. Items were distributed into 31 different suitcases or leaf bags for the families in the mountains of southern La Paz and will be delivered the first weekend in May. Joanne spent several hours each day over the rest of that week adding bags of dried beans, and either a blanket or sheets to each of the bundles. The shipment contents were gathered, inventoried and boxed by the ladies of the A&M Church of Christ in B/CS, TX, and we again extend appreciation and love to all of them; those that did the physical shopping and packing and those who funded the efforts. We send special thanks to



Family with a partially completed latrine. Next they will get funds for the 'plancha', the concrete top which encloses the latrine and upon which the seat is fastened.

10 latrines completed, 12 more provided with materials for the pit walls, and two more waiting for funding. We want to express our sincerest appreciation to all who have funded this vital project. We pray that anyone who has been contemplating help for this project to please help us with the funds still needed for the remaining 10 latrines. At this time we have used up all available funds.

Friday, April 24th we made another day trip to Tegucigalpa to visit the U.S. embassy for a document issue. We enjoyed lunch together at a typical food place and traveled back on the 2:15 PM bus. Interestingly, at least three other people who had been on the 5:15 AM bus with us also traveled back at the same time. It makes one wonder how often people travel the four hours into the city for a business purpose and bus the four hours back on the same day.

The following day, April 25th, was Andrew's fourth birthday. Joanne baked brownies in lieu of a cake, and Becca provided vanilla ice cream. The birthday candles we used were old, and we didn't realize that they were non-extinguishable until Andrew kept puffing at them to no avail. It was hilarious to watch him on his fourth try when he finally realized they just weren't going to go out no matter how hard he tried. Church friends of Becca's were remarkably generous in providing a birthday pool party for Andrew on Sunday after church, which included homemade pupusas, a pinata, and lots of balloons. Andrew thoroughly enjoyed his extended birthday weekend.

School at Por Los Niños

The Honduran Minister of Education declared that all schools would close early each day or start late for afternoon classes last week because of the hot weather. This is the first time we have seen this done. Until late Thursday it was in the high 90s here. We had some cooling rain showers then. It has not gotten as hot this week.

Dwight has used some of the computers that came down in the shipment to replace some of the really, really slow computers at the lab. Most of the first graders have radically improved since our last report, but there are a couple that still are struggling with counting or knowing their numbers or letters.



Deisy working on one of the three computers donated by Refuge International

May activities have already started, so we'd better get this April report off quickly. Blessings to all.

Prayers

Please pray for Dwight's cough. It has been debilitating and he still finds it difficult to walk long distances or sing in church. Pray for Katie and Raul, Dwight's two first graders who are still struggling with the basics.

Love, Dwight and Joanne Tomkins



A Great Kiskadee

According to Steve White, former President of Baxter Institute, this bird is a Great Kiskadee, known in Honduras as a Benteveo (I see you well), from the song it makes. It is an insect catcher like a scissor-tail flycatcher or kingbird, and is in the same family as those birds.

Life in Honduras



These young ladies are either planning on where to plant their trees for Earth Day or how to take over the world!