

Our Dear Brothers & Sisters and Friends,

2015 August

I confirm My covenant with you,
that never again will all flesh be wiped out by the waters of a deluge; ...
And God said, "This is the sign of the covenant...
I have placed my bow in the clouds,
and it will be a sign of the covenant between Me and the earth..."

Genesis 9:11-13

Once again, not much to write about our work for our Lord in Olancho, though unfortunately there has been some bad news while we were gone to Ireland.

The Bloechers

Although Lisa and Chip had decided to stay for at least another two years, unfortunate events caused them to change their minds. They reported to the authorities that children were being mistreated in a children's home with which they were familiar (**not** Por Los Niños). Unfortunately, due to death threats, they felt it wise to leave. The people involved have since been convicted and are awaiting sentencing. We enjoyed having the Bloechers here in Catacamas and are sorry to see them leave. While we will miss them, we are thankful that they stood firm against sin.

Joanne

Joanne spent much of her time prior to our leaving tying up projects and being a great assistance to our community.

Reunion

The most special part about our trip to Virginia was being picked up at Dulles Airport by our Houston daughter, Mary. She had driven up to spend a fun week with a college room-mate and her husband and was on the way back to Texas. The next day we all drove to Smith Mountain Lake (see photos from newsletter of Aug 2014) and had a grand time at the annual Tomkins Reunion with many cousins and their children (50 people?). This is the first year that someone of my father's generation have not attended (10 brothers and sisters and 10 spouses). One uncle was not feeling well and the other lives in California. We all missed Uncle Duane and Uncle John.

We had a wonderful time with Joanne's mom at her home in the Shenandoah Valley both before and after the reunion. We are very thankful for her service to us for she was the recipient of a number of items that were sent for us to bring back to Honduras, picked us up after our trip to Ireland, and dropped us off at Dulles International at 4:30 AM for our trip back here.



On this site in 1897 nothing happened.

imposing monument in Connemara. Joanne drove the whole trip (they drive on the left) without incident, though the first few hours she did give Dwight some excitement. Being that she is used to having most of the car to her right, she tended to drive with the bulk of the car too far left, i.e. halfway into the slow lane on the left (the steering wheel is on the right of the car).. Quickly though, she adapted and became an expert. That was good because most of the roads we traveled had no shoulder or berm. The tall hedges and trees on the rural roads were trimmed right to the very edge of the driving lane.

We took what we consider our "winter" clothes, having heard that Ireland can be cold and rainy even during the tiny summer they have. They stayed in our suitcases, since the weather was

Ireland

And yes, we had a wonderful time traipsing about the isle of Eire (both Northern Ireland and the Irish Republic) in a rental car for 15 days. It is a very beautiful place and thus reminded us much of Honduras. The people showed their lovely Irish charm and humor as you can see from the sign

on
an



In front of the Palm House at the Belfast Botanic Gardens

very nice, sunny, and only had enough rain to produce rainbows. We even saw a great many sunburns our first days as most tourists had not thought to bring hats.

One of our most special treats was visiting two of the four congregations of the church of Christ in Ireland. While they differed in size, we hope we have made some lifelong friends at both congregations.

Joanne enjoyed stopping for tea around three in the afternoon and we have kept that habit upon returning to Olancho. Dwight says he had the best seafood chowder he has ever had in his life in a restaurant near Galway. We will have fond memories of the Emerald Isle for the rest of our lives.

School at Por Los Niños

Probably the greatest misgiving Dwight had about going on the vacation was his classes at Por Los Niños. Fortunately he found a good substitute who is the mother of one of his students.

Sunday School Class

Dwight did not find a substitute for his pre-teen/early teen Sunday School class, but did give the director materials to give the students upon which they could work during the class time.

Vist with our elder liason from Raleigh

We had a good visit with Mac Safley and were able to have Mac, Dagoberto (his translator and long time friend), and a fellow elder from Raleigh to the house to share dinner with us. Of special pleasure was having Suyapa and David Chacón over to dinner with them. They have been good friends with us since the day we arrived in Catacamas and they work with Mac on Raleigh's project in Amacuapa, over the mountain from us. Since Suyapa liked Joanne's white macadamia cookies so much, Joanne brought back a box mix for her from the states.

Prayers

Between conversing with an old friend from Texas and seeing the beautiful rainbows in Ireland, we have been thinking about God's promises to us. It is interesting how the world has taken the symbol of one of God's first promises and corrupted it into the virtual opposite of what it originally meant. For God promised Noah that He would never destroy the earth by a flood again and He set the rainbow in the heavens as a sign of that promise. And then the apostle Peter states, "... by the Word of God, and that by means of these the world that then existed was deluged with water and perished. But by the same Word the heavens and earth that now exist are stored up for fire, being kept until the day of judgment and destruction of the ungodly." Those who face destruction have taken the symbol of God's promise to symbolize their own ungodly purposes. Please join us in praying for those who are being misled.

Thank you for your prayers on our behalf. Please continue to pray for Jorge Gonzales and his 4 children. Their wife and mother died in June without any warning. Pray for the church in Ireland to remember to put their faith and hope in our Lord Jesus and not in man. Please pray for the church here in Honduras to not be complacent with sin.

Love, Dwight and Joanne Tomkins



*Rainbow and lighthouse in
Wicklow*