

Merry
Christmas
from



Aschmann Action

December 2013

Matthew 16:18b ESV

... I will build my church, and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it.

December Ecuador Trip

Rick: Thanks again for praying for my latest trip to Ecuador with Pastor Javier Muñoz. We were there over two weekends, from November 29 through December 9, and we were able to visit three different Quichua churches.

The first was the tiny congregation in the little village of Pigulca where Segundo has been ministering every Sunday. In my rented car it was a two-hour drive north from Quito, the capital city, but for Segundo it is a three-hour trip on public transportation each direction. And as I said in the last letter, he is doing this without pay, because he knows these people personally and sees the needs of this young congregation. The Lord laid it on my heart to share with the congregation Segundo's financial need. I challenged them to at least pay his transportation costs, and explained to them that God will bless those who give to his work. Though these people are very poor, they took up a collection for his needs, which greatly encouraged us.



An elderly lady in Pigulca, tough as nails as so many of them are!

On Monday we visited the Sembradores church in south Quito. This is a church we have been involved with for many years. Javier was able to meet them and encourage them with some teaching, and they were very thankful.

The third church we visited was the church in Paltapamba in the province of Bolívar, a 4 hour drive south of Quito through the rugged Andes Mountains. Again Segundo was able to join us. We were able to encourage them, since it turned out to be a week filled with trials. Just a week before we arrived, a member of the church was in a car accident, and part of his tongue was cut off. He was actually the very first believer in the town, and many of the others had come to the Lord through his witness. The three of us went to visit him and pray with him, simply to encourage him and bring him the Lord's comfort. We were thankful that he could still make himself understood even with his injury: we had been concerned that he might not be able to talk at all.

Then the day before we arrived the wife of a church leader from a neighboring town was killed in a traffic accident. This leader was a good friend of Segundo's, and I had also met him some years back. Segundo wanted to pay his respects, so we drove over a very rough road at night to attend the wake.

Then the very evening we arrived, Gerardo, one of the church leaders, who is a policeman, had a wipeout on his motorcycle and had to take to his bed because of serious road rash to both knees. We

also went and visited him and prayed for him.

Ever since 2009 when the Paltapamba church asked to become a Presbyterian church and join with us, I



The Pigulca congregation outside the community center where they meet, with Segundo on the right

Prayer & Praise

- Praise for the good trip Rick and Javier had to Ecuador November 29 through December 9 to visit three Quichua churches and encourage Segundo in his preparation for the pastorate. The next trip will probably be in March.
- Continue praying for Rick as he studies and prepares for the last stage in his ordination process as a pastor over the course of the next year. Pray also for Segundo, as he is also moving ahead in this process under the direction of Javier and me.
- Praise God that most of the remaining amount still needed in monthly pledges has been provided! We have received a large monthly pledge which has nearly covered our monthly need, and we are very grateful. God is good!
- Pray for the training of new Colombian musicians and singers to help during church services at *El Refugio* "The Refuge" our church plant here in Bogotá.

have wanted to structure a training program for the leaders there, but for various reasons it has been hard to organize such a program. Part of the problem is that the leaders there have a low level of education, and I had been uncertain how much could be expected of them in independent reading and study. However, on this visit it became clear that they were ready to do what they could to prepare themselves, including independent study, and with Javier's extensive experience in training pastors in his presbytery and throughout South America, we were able to set up a training plan that looks very promising.

Thank you so much for praying for my health: I was well almost the entire trip, though Javier battled a bad cold most of the trip.



Leading singing at *El Refugio*



Javier with Segundo and his son Jonathan, at a waterfall just below Segundo's home town

Music Team

Betty: Three families in our church, *El Refugio*, left for their new mission field in Peru. They had been in charge of music every

Sunday. That leaves Rick and me with the most music experience in the church. We are working hard on learning the songs the church is used to singing and training new people to join the group.

Upon arriving in Bogotá, I found that my guitar had warped some in the storage and shipment from Ecuador. So I got a new guitar for Christmas! It's a little sad to see the other guitar go, since I bought it used when I was in junior high school. But, as my husband said, after about 30 years, I'm due for a new one. And I'm certainly enjoying it.



Cultural Closeup

Betty: Our children got out of school for Christmas break on December 18th, but that's quite a bit later than their friends here in the housing complex we live in. We found out that there are two different school schedules in Bogotá. Schedule A appears to be the most common. Students have their main break from the first of December through the end of January. They also start a new school year when they return in February, making it different from the U.S. system. Schedule A has a short break mid-year in July. Our children are on Schedule B, which has a two-to-three-week Christmas break, and changes school years after a long summer break in June and July, like in the U.S.

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www.mtw.org
www.hcjb.org
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Our newsletters can be seen on the Internet at:
www.Aschmann.net/Rick/Newsletter.