

Merry Christmas from the Aschmanns!

December 2024

²The people who walked in darkness have seen a great light; those who dwelt in a land of deep darkness, on them has light shone.

... ⁶For to us a child is born, to us a son is given...

Isaiah 9:2,6a

Energy Crisis

Wow, life has been hectic. Ecuador is experiencing an extreme drought and it makes daily living very difficult. The candle in the picture is a very common sight in daily life right now! We have power cuts up to 8-14 hours a day and the schedule changes every 4 days. It usually runs 4 to 7 hours in one block during the day, and 4 to 7 hours in another block during the evening and night. And now many neighborhoods are facing water cuts on yet a different schedule. (We haven't yet, but they keep threatening.) It is nearly a full-time job looking up the schedule for the upcoming days.



This affects many things in daily living. For example, I can't grocery shop on a regular schedule. I can't bring home meats or fresh produce to put in the refrigerator when it will be off for the next 7 hours. I can't cook just any recipe, because during outages I only have the stovetop available for cooking. And it is really difficult to find a couple of hours to wash clothes.

Rick has a system set up where he can often work during a power cut. He has a car battery connected to an inverter. He can keep his computer and a router running for about 6 hours. Then, the second the power comes back on, he charges the battery. Sometimes, he can get the battery re-charged before the power goes off again, sometimes not. It takes about 6 hours to charge the battery fully, but many times we only have 3 hours before the power is cut again. I am sure you can feel my frustration in this letter. Please pray for us. I do feel so blessed, though. God really does give peace and protection to his children. And our provision does not come from a business here in Ecuador. We have the money to go to the grocery store during odd hours. Some of our Ecuadorian friends' businesses are struggling and they can't make ends meet.

God is blessing ministries.

- Throughout this struggle that Ecuador is facing, ministry is being blessed. Our pastor in training, Segundo Anrango, has been faithfully working with the group of believers in the small town of Pigulca. Anywhere from 12 to 25 people meet every Sunday. We have committed to driving there once a month to hold a special communion service. We have been there twice now, and it has been such a blessing to meet and encourage the believers.



Rick preaching to the congregation in Pigulca before serving communion

- The Quichua and Cofán Old Testament translation teams are both continuing work in spite of power issues. Daniel Sigla, the Quichua translator, struggles most. He has a setup of two big monitors and a computer in his home because he has issues with his eyesight and needs big monitors. However, this system makes it difficult to find a backup source that will power it for very long, and he can't take his system somewhere else because it's not portable, and even if it was, it's dangerous to carry that kind of thing around his neighborhood. He has been working odd hours, though, getting the Scriptures translated. Despite the struggles, God's Word will get out!

- Betty has just finished her first term of mentoring with the missionary training program called "Corrientes". She mentored two gals, from Mexico and Nicaragua, who will

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both be heading to Muslim countries as missionaries. She is mentoring specifically about living life and working cross-culturally. Things like how to keep up your relationship with God in another culture, the importance of work with your missionary team and local Christians, how to learn about another culture and language, etc. It has been such a blessing. Next term starts mid-January with a different group of missionary candidates.

Prayer & Praise

- Praise God for keeping us safe and for providing for us, even in this time of difficulty and desperation. There are many people desperate right now, and crime rates are rising even more. Please continue to pray for our safety and the safety of our Christian friends.
- Pray for the Quichua and Cofán Old Testament translation teams. Pray that Daniel can keep up with the translation, but also get the rest he needs as he tries to translate at weird hours.
- Pray for Segundo and Laura as they continue ministering in Pigulca and surrounding areas.
- Pray that we can be a light to the world during this dark time. Pray that God will open doors for us to share the gospel even more.
- Praise God that Anne and Nathan both get to come to Ecuador and spend Christmas with us. Pray for safe travel for them.

Gifts this Christmas



Thank you so much for your faithful giving to this ministry. Without your prayers and support it would be impossible to continue to minister to the Quichua Indians of Ecuador. If you want to partner with us, or give to this ministry, here is how to do it:

To give online click here: <div style="text-align: right; margin-top: 5px;"> </div>	To give by mail: Mission to the World Account #10107 P.O. Box 744165 Atlanta, GA 30374-4165 Memo line: Rick & Betty Aschmann, acct. #10107
Or go to www.mtw.org → Give → Missionaries → Aschmann, Richard & Betty → Give	To give to the Quichua Old Testament translation project: mtw.org/projects/details/ecuador-quechua-translation-training-center



Cultural Closeup

Continuing on our theme of power outages, here are some unique problems you may not have thought of with daily power cuts:

- Traffic is horrible. There are no traffic lights in many parts of the city. Sometimes police are at major intersections directing traffic, but sometimes it's just a free-for-all for vehicles and pedestrians.
- Police are busy directing traffic and are not readily available to help with other crimes. And streetlights are out, so neighborhoods are dark and dangerous at night.
- Many people have digestive problems because local stores and restaurants can't keep the food refrigerated correctly.
- It's hard to find a generator to buy, and those that have them have to guard them carefully because people steal them.
- Diesel fumes from generators fill the air.
- Hardly any rechargeable lamps, electric inverters, or UPSs are still available.
- There are problems with house fires because people leave candles lit.
- Our doorbell doesn't work without electricity. If someone is coming to visit us, we have to watch out the window to see when they arrive.
- The candle aisle in the supermarket is very crowded.
- Shopping malls are making money; small businesses are not. The malls have generators and people hang out there to charge their computers and cell phones while they eat in the food court. Also, I have more confidence that the supermarkets there keep food refrigerated or frozen more consistently.

And a big problem is depression. Tele-counseling is very popular. Many people, especially students, suffer from frustration and lack of proper sleep. They wake up at odd hours or in the middle of the night, when they happen to have electricity, to try to do their homework.



News photos of gridlock with no traffic lights

