

December 14, 2008

Dear Friends,



Christmas greetings from Mexico! A statement made in a Christian greeting card from years past came to mind recently. It urged, "wise men still seek Him." Anyone remember that one??? It may have become somewhat of a cliché, but it is so true! Jesus is the only lasting answer to every need, every problem, every desire. The Lord said in Jeremiah 29:13, "And you will seek Me and find Me, *when you search for Me with all your heart.*" Are you seeking Him with ALL of your heart? If not, maybe this Christmas is a good time to start!! After all, Christmas is a celebration of the provision the Father made for a way back to Him that was lost through sin at the fall of man ... a provision made through the blood of Jesus.

Jesus said, "I AM the way, the truth and the life. No one comes to the Father except through Me" (John 14:6). Each of us is encouraged this Christmas to be wise and seek Him, our *living* Savior whom the Bible calls the King of Kings and Lord of Lords, to whom every knee will ultimately bow. If we ask, the Holy Spirit will guide us in this endeavor, just as the star in the east guided the wise men of old who sought Him! And if we seek with a whole heart, the Lord will reveal Himself to us, speak to our hearts, and transform our lives. The wise men said, "For we have seen His star in the East, *and have come to worship Him*" (Matthew 2:2). They knew He was more than a baby in a manger, more than a human being, more than a good teacher, more than a martyr for the cause. They knew somehow that He was God incarnate, and worthy of their adoration, praise and worship. They came to offer Him their worship. Will we do the same??

### Short News Bites

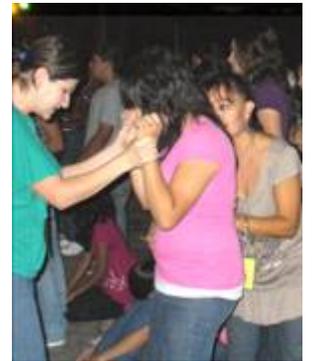
- For the past month, in our regular Monday night intercession for the city, we have been meeting in and targeting the Caliche colonia, praying especially for this community. It is recognized as the area of Guaymas with the most drugs, violence and witchcraft. We were excited this week to be able to share a BIG box of candy, small toys, schools supplies and personal items with some other Christians who are planning to host a Christmas party for all the children in Caliche (while we are in the states). They are expecting 50-100 kids. It was such a blessing that we could help!
- The Lord recently brought a young Satanist across our path who is depressed and unhappy, and ready to leave the kingdom of darkness to live for the Lord instead. We will continue ministry with him when we return to Mexico in early January. *Please keep him in your prayers – he is called Jacobito and he is 15 years old. He comes from a family that has a history of involvement in witchcraft.*
- The campaña sponsored by our local ministerial alliance Nov 6-8 went well with many people coming forward for prayer on the nights of ministry at the Fisherman's Plaza downtown. More campañas are planned by our local alliance for March and April.

- We were able to give a computer, and put Bible study software (E-Sword) on it, to a young evangelist from Guaymas who had no computer.
- About a month ago, the Lord brought an opportunity to meet with a member of the city council to pray for him and for his teenage son, who is deep into drugs and estranged from his family. We learned from him this week that his son has had a big breakthrough and is doing much better. But we know that he still needs much prayer. *This boy, Raul, could use our combined prayers of agreement for his emotional healing, deliverance and salvation.*
- We heard 3 weeks ago that the president of Mexico received Jesus into his heart during a meeting with President Uribe of Columbia some months ago! We learned also that he shared from the Bible at the funeral of a cabinet member killed in a plane crash last month. *We understood that it is the first time in the history of Mexico that a president has shared publicly from the Word of God.* Praise God, the fervent prayers being sown for Mexico are bearing fruit and making a difference!

### *¡Conéctate! Update*



The October event went much more smoothly than the first one in September, and was a tremendous time in the Lord for all who participated! A different Christian band led worship this time, and different kids shared testimonies and words of exhortation. The young people were also blessed to have a local Christian rap group (15 and 16 year olds) from the Amistad fellowship share one song called "Levántate!" (translated "Rise up!"). A young 23 yr. old evangelist named Erick shared a message about the giants in our lives, challenging the youth to renounce and reject the giants in their own lives, and become the ministers that the Lord has called them to be. There was a powerful time of ministry afterwards, and none of the young people wanted to leave and go home!!



The same city councilman whose son was touched through prayer recently asked us to write an article about *¡Conéctate!* for a local newspaper, describing the goals and vision for the event as well as what happened in October. The Lord is doing such a precious work here - we are awed, amazed, touched and humbled, all at the same time!

Meanwhile, on the Church front, we ran into a bit of a roadblock in November. A group of leaders had formed out of the Transformaciones event last winter, the leader being a young pastor from Empalme, our sister city next door. In early November, he decided to schedule a city-wide (Guaymas and Empalme) youth event for the same night as *¡Conéctate!* (Nov 14<sup>th</sup>). It's a long story, but in the end, we decided to cancel *¡Conéctate!* and encourage the kids to go to the other event instead, so that none would be under pressure to choose between them. We also felt we needed to demonstrate "in honor preferring one another". It was a lot of work for us to get the word out about the



cancellation, and we recognize that ¡Conéctate! has probably lost much of the momentum gained in Sept/Oct, but we still feel that it was the godly thing for us to do.



Some parents shared with us not too long ago that their kids cannot wait until the next ¡Conéctate! – that every week they are looking at the calendar to see how long it is before the next youth event! This was a real encouragement to us, as you can well imagine. It is confirmation that we are hearing the Lord accurately and on the right track.



We have a prayer need concerning ¡Conéctate! that we would like to share, for anyone who might be interested. *We have a need for an enclosed 5' x 8' trailer, and 100 metal folding chairs to use in the youth event. The chairs would be transported in this trailer, then stored in it when they are not being used (because we don't have another place to store them). We can also lend them out for campañas and other Christian events, as there is always a huge need for chairs. We have had more than 100 kids coming to ¡Conéctate!, but there are 3 small sets of bleachers at the outdoor municipal gym, which provide some seating, so these are all the chairs we need at this time. We have found borrowing chairs to be difficult, and transporting the borrowed chairs has been an obstacle as well. THANK YOU so much for praying with us about this need. ☺*

## *Monterrey Conference – November*

The marriage conference we taught in the state of Nuevo León (the other side of Mexico) last month went very well, by God's grace. We were able to minister personally to each couple and individual who attended the conference, and are thankful to the Lord for strengthening us to do this! We also preached in three services on Sunday and ministered to as many individuals as we could Sunday night. A precious aspect of our time in Monterrey was renewing our relationship with pastor Sergio Coronado and his wife, Sonia. They have a heart and a vision for this vibrant city of 5 million people, and feel a call to foster unity among the pastors, as well as to come along side to support and enable these men and women of God. *Please continue to keep Sergio and Sonia in your prayers, as well as the church, which is called "Abundant Life". We have talked about some sort of reciprocal mission trip with youth, whereby they bring a group of youth to minister in Guaymas, and we take a group of youth from this city to Monterrey to serve and minister in any way we can. We appreciate your prayers as we all pray about this future possibility.*

## *Youth Center Update*

In early November, we were able to make a huge push forward on the youth center, thanks to some recent donations which gave us the resources to do this. Yippy! New concrete floors were poured in two of the rooms which had very uneven, crumbling concrete (the sala and the big classroom), and even big holes in places! And one very long wall was plastered inside the big classroom. It had never had plaster – the wall was very ancient, crumbling adobe brick – unpaintable and uncleanable. There were also several jogs in the wall which were taken out. Then, when a missions team came in late November, the security grid was welded in the ceiling of the internet café room, two more of the security cages for air conditioners installed, a bathroom door hung, a toilet fixed, sealing of the plaster and new block done, and more exterior painting accomplished. We also received funds in November from a church in Texas, which we believe will finish the work needed at the youth center - sufficiently so that we can finally open the doors! MANY THANKS to those at The Refuge in Arlington, TX who contributed to this need!! Now we just need *time and reliable help* to complete the work!!! *Thanks for your continued prayers for this project.*

## Most Recent Missions Team



In late November, we were blessed to welcome a missions team from Trinity Worship Center in Childress, TX. Accompanying this team was also a couple from New Mexico. We have known most of the members of this team for many years, and several are on our board of directors. They brought down the Christmas shoeboxes and stuffed animals that had been prepared for the children here by folks in churches and Bible studies in New Mexico and Texas. They also helped to distribute the shoeboxes and stuffed animals at an *ejido* in the valley south of Guaymas, loving on the children and



ministering to them through games, music, sharing the biblical Christmas story, and prayer, as well as giving out gifts. This team also ministered in one of the local churches, and helped us a great deal at the youth center with welding, sealing, painting and other things. Their time here included a *carne asada* night at our home with local friends, and participation in a quinceñera for a local pastor's daughter whom we know quite well. It was a joy and a blessing to have this team here! We want to THANK them again so much for their sacrifice in coming to help us and for being a blessing to the people here in Sonora!!

## 2008 Christmas Shoebox Project



A big THANK YOU to everyone from New Mexico and Texas (and Shay in Illinois!) who participated in the Christmas Shoebox Project this year! And a huge THANKS to Glory Christian Fellowship in Albuquerque, NM also, for coordinating the project for us stateside! We received approximately 170 shoeboxes and 35 stuffed animals this year to share with some of the most needy children in this area.

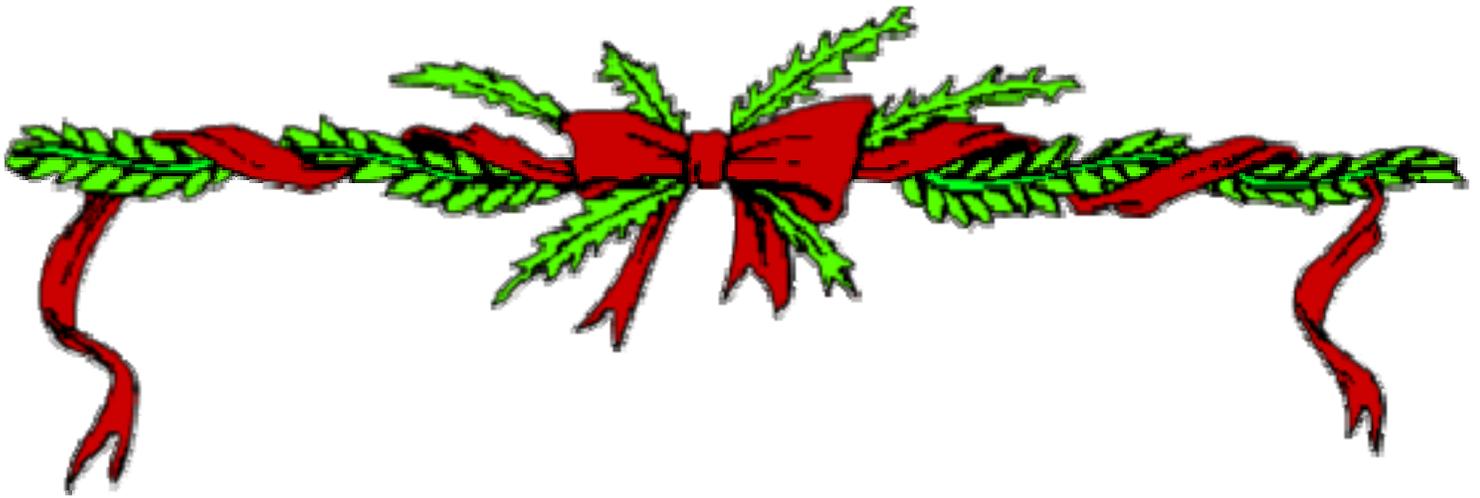


When the missions team was here, we distributed items at the *ejido* (village) of "El Cerrito". We are also planning ministry to children and distribution of boxes in 2 local orphanages, and one other location which is yet to be decided. This will take place after Christmas, however, because we are running out of time before we must leave on Dec. 16<sup>th</sup> for commitments in the states.



We plan to include local Christian young people again this year in ministering to the children in these places, helping them learn to give of themselves to others.





### *A Final Word*

We simply cannot close a newsletter without expressing our deepest appreciation once again for all of you! Thank you for your love and friendship this year, for your prayer support and for the financial gifts which have made possible the work on the youth center, ¡Conéctate!, our other work with young people and the pastors here, leadership training, the Christmas Shoebox Project, the regular intercession, and all the other areas of ministry we are involved in here. We are truly blessed with an amazing God and amazing friends!!

May the Lord continue to pour out abundantly in each of your lives this Christmas with His love, mercy, grace, guidance, strength, divine enablement and His abiding presence. And may this holiday season be one of JOY for each family represented, as we celebrate the birth of Jesus and our awesome God!

**Merry *Christmas* to all,**



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