

DEAR FRIENDS,  
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March 9, 2011  
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As we begin another year in Guaymas, we find ourselves reflecting upon how much has changed since we first arrived here almost six years ago. Because much of our focus for so long has been on intercession for the people, the city and surrounding region, these changes have touched our hearts profoundly. In sharing what God has done here, we hope that you will be encouraged as you pray for your own cities and regions.

## An Overview of Answers to Prayer .....

First, the Church (in general) in Guaymas has changed significantly. When we arrived, youth and children were fundamentally overlooked and given little value in the Body of Christ. Guaymas had the distinction of having the highest suicide rate per capita among youth of any city in Mexico of its size. The pastors were just starting a ministerial alliance (we participated in the first meeting), but there was some skepticism as to whether it would fly or not. Most church leaders were focused on their own ministries as their own small empire, and there was very little concept of something bigger or an interest in the larger Body of Christ. In fact, many denominational churches still forbade their people to associate with anyone outside their denomination! Pastors tended to rely on ministries from the states bringing resources, instead of praying for God to supply their needs. There was little understanding of the need for pastors or churches to pray together to see God move on a citywide level. There was much pride among the leaders, and those who tried to get other leaders to come on board something they were starting, usually did so with the motive that it would make their own ministry look bigger. It was a rather sad state of affairs in many ways.

While there is still a long way to go, the changes here have been tremendous. The churches are actually focusing on their youth now, and, besides *Conéctate*, there seems to be at least one other youth outreach or event going on in the city each month. We see a heart for the children developing also, with a number of outreaches to children taking place throughout the year. One church has

even made the children their main focus! Now Samaritan's Purse has come to Guaymas also, and taken over the Christmas Shoebox project that we started five years ago to minister to the needs of some of these overlooked children. We haven't heard about a single youth suicide in at least a year. The ministerial alliance is thriving, and more and more of the pastors are beginning to think KINGDOM instead of their own ministry, empire or denomination. The pastors and churches have begun praying together monthly for the city and region, recognizing that prayer and



intercession is the true foundation for change. At least one *colonia* has been changed completely already. As the economy in the states dries up the funds coming south, the pastors are getting the revelation that the Lord is their provider, not the Christians to the north. Finally, even the previously most prideful of pastors are now saying things like, "Without real humility and coming together in brokenness before God, we are never going to see real transformation here." What an answer to prayer!!

Secondly, the city is also changing. When we arrived, we observed a city filled with potholes, dirt and filth, graffiti, prostitution, drugs, hopelessness and no infrastructure to handle the growth. The current city government is making great strides to combat the social problems here and improve the infrastructure. Streets are being re-paved, dirt streets are getting paved, water lines fixed, sewer lines are going to *colonias* that previously relied on latrines, etc. There is not nearly as much graffiti as there used to be. And the government is now open to issuing permits to Christian ministries to use the *malicón* (boardwalk along the bay) and basketball courts in the *colonias* for Christian events because they recognize that the Church truly is making a difference!



All of these changes are a direct result of PRAYER. **THANK YOU** for standing with us and the Christians here in Guaymas to pray and intercede for this place and people! We sense that tough times are ahead for the folks of this state as the drug wars increase, and believe that they are much more prepared to stand firm and seek God in the face of adversity than they were before. Similarly, the youth are increasingly sold out to God and ready to lead the Church to a deeper place in Him in the midst of whatever is ahead. Hallelujah!

## More Prayer Appreciated

It's quite typical that, as the Holy Spirit is moving to change things, the kingdom of darkness brings resistance and backlash. While we have always faced challenges here, the challenges have significantly increased of late. Please continue to keep us in your prayers – pray-

ing for discernment, godly wisdom, deeper revelation, more passion, more of His love for people, physical strength and energy, health, favor, open doors in every area, and financial provision. Please pray for the people here also – especially for the unsaved who are searching, for the

pastors and for the youth. These are three key groups of people God is going to use in the future of Guaymas. We believe the Lord wants to do something in this city that will touch the world. Thank you for praying and being a part of bringing it to pass!!

## Youth Center Update

We have gotten much new painting done at the youth center, as well as touching up other areas which had been painted long ago and needed it again (the weather here is very hard on everything). The stands for the café sun umbrellas are welded, the youth center name is now painted on an exterior wall, the gates are painted, and a vinyl banner is ready to hang above the gates for the grand opening. Even though we are very close to ready, we felt after prayerful consideration that we should schedule the grand opening after our April trip to the states and after Easter. **So the grand opening has been set for Monday, April 25<sup>th</sup>.** Yeehaw!!



The youth center continues to get broken into despite razor wire, security lighting and an alarm system. The thieves cut through the razor wire, dismantled our security lights, and have now stolen the alarm system as well. We are considering dispensing with the internet café and using that room for someone who can live there and function as a night watchman. But so far we have not found the right person. Thank you for your prayers concerning this need.

## ¡Conéctate! Update



In December, *Conéctate* was held for the second time “on the road”, in one of the *colonias* of Guaymas. (This is after holding it in the same location for 2+ years.) Dave worked hard over 2 months to weld a frame that could be broken down for travel for the big screen and to build padded travel boxes for the lights. He even made all the handles himself since he was not able to find them here to buy! The leadership team (of youth) worked extremely well together, but we did not get much interest from youth in the *colonia*. It made the team realize that they need to rethink and pray about their approach to holding the youth event

on the road, so that more unsaved kids will be drawn to participate. A week later, we had a Christmas party for the *Conéctate* team and some of their closest friends, which was a lot of fun. We tried the concept of a potluck for the first time and played some fun games. Some of you from England might recognize the game in the photo! In early January, the Lord told us to suspend the youth events for a season in order to give the team opportunity to press into Him and allow Him to infuse new life into them. Our sense is that He wants to do something radical in their midst and help them to think, pray and minister outside the box! And He wants to take *Conéctate* to a new level. We went



ahead with the youth event in January, a very low-key bonfire, but began immediately afterwards to meet with the *Conéctate* team (18+ kids) on a weekly basis, doing some teaching, some activating and a lot of prayer, worship and seeking God together. These times together have been fabulous! We have now started to meet more often, to better accommodate the schedules of those involved. Three of the team have been made youth leaders at their churches in recent months. It seems as though the pastors are beginning to recognize their maturity and anointing!

## Miscellaneous News – a Few Bits and Bytes

► We ministered to one of the bigger youth groups in Guaymas in December when they had a retreat at an *ejido* outside the city. It was great to get to know a new group of kids! Many of them had been coming to *Conéctate* and we never knew who they were!

► Dee has worked in recent months on 3 articles for a Christian magazine published in Hermosillo. It has been intriguing but fun to work with our friend, Eli, to translate them. It is so difficult to find exactly the right shade of meaning when translating!

► Dave was healed of two different large growths as we prayed over them. In just a few weeks/months, they simply disappeared! Such an amazing God we serve!

► We’ve been able to give away many Bibles, T-shirts and school/craft supplies in the past few months, things which were either donated by folks in the states or purchased by us to give away. Bibles, especially, are in great demand.

► 26 pastors/leaders participated in the December ministerial alliance meeting. That’s fabulous for

such a small city! (Guaymas is less than 150,000 people.)

► Dave was talking to one of the pastors in the ministerial alliance one day after the meeting and commented on the fact that we don’t pastor a church here, so we don’t have a congregation. This pastor looked him in the eye and said, “No, here you are a pastor of ALL.” It was quite encouraging in that (1) this pastor is seeing beyond individual churches to the bigger picture and that (2) he has begun to recognize that pastoring is a function in the Body of Christ, not a title.

► One interesting problem we are seeing now is that the Catholics are starting to feel a little threatened by the growth and influence of the evangelical churches in the city. So they have started reserving the civic auditorium for most weeks during the year (no deposit is required), without any plan of using it, simply to keep the evangelicals from being able to use it. This is just something that could use our prayers.

► The Lord turned a bad situation into a real blessing when the transmission went out on the truck as Dee was driving to the border with our young, (very pregnant) British friend, Helen. They were stuck on the side of the highway for 4 hours but were finally rescued by some kind "Green Angels" who helped them limp the truck to Nogales and get it to a good mechanic. Dave and Helen's husband then drove up to Nogales, and Helen and Oscar left for Guaymas while we waited in a motel for the transmission to

be rebuilt. After a couple of days, pastor friends in Guaymas gave us the phone number of a pastor in Nogales who could help us get out of the motel. We then had opportunity to get to know a *precious* brother and sister in the Lord who are new pastors in Nogales. We spent *hours* sharing together all the Lord is showing us and doing in our hearts. It was a truly a divine appointment, and we feel the Lord has established an eternal relationship through our brief time together!

► We were honored to be asked to minister in a baby dedication for the grandson of some pastor



friends here. It was quite an event, the main focus of the service! We prayed over Moises and also gave him some prophetic words about his calling and destiny. It was a very special time and a privilege for us to have a part in it.

► We have the equivalent of \$150 (thank you M & P!!) so far towards a ministry trip to Tanzania (east Africa) that we are praying about, and perhaps also western Kenya. Despite all the obstacles which make it appear an impossibility, we are continuing to lay this before the Lord. While we consistently get invitations from various pastors in Africa, India and Pakistan, we have only felt a divine connection with the pastors in these two places, especially the one in Tanzania. We continue to stay in touch with them both and build relationship by email. They are key figures in their areas and involved in leading their local ministerial alliances. Both are hoping that we can come to offer training to the local pastors.

## Christmas Shoebox Project

This year, our last one for the project, we once again received well over 200 Christmas shoeboxes prepared by individuals and churches in New Mexico and Texas. Also donated were close to 100 stuffed animals collected for the under 4's. THANK YOU to ALL who participated this year!!



The shoeboxes and stuffed animals were brought down by a team from Trinity Worship Center in Childress, TX. MANY THANKS to the team and to Tom Crenshaw, the stateside coordinator, for the help in getting the items together, storing them and then getting them to Mexico in early January. We have done one distribution so far, in conjunction with the Miramar Christian Church, which also had Samaritan's Purse shoeboxes. This was in an *ejido* (agricultural village) in the valley called *Santa Rosalia*. It was a place we had never been before. We are currently planning another distribution later this month to minister to children in another location (yet to be determined) and give away the remaining Christmas shoeboxes and stuffed animals.



## Team from Childress, Texas

The Trinity Worship Center team arrived with the Christmas shoeboxes and stuffed animals, then promptly and enthusiastically got to work on a utility trailer which we use a great deal in our ministry here in Mexico. Because of the climate here, the trailer was rusting to bits! The team brought tools, acid and other supplies to help restore and paint it. What a JOY it was



to have them here!! They worked on it for several days, joined with us at the Conéctate bonfire, prayed for people after a service at the Miramar church and conducted a service at the Maranata church, during which they also washed the pastors' feet and prayed over them. The pastors were so touched! We also gave out Christmas shoeboxes and stuffed animals to the children at the end of the service. What a night of blessing – for everyone! Thanks so much to Ronnie, Sarah and Brett for your sacrifice, and for giving of yourselves to come and be a blessing here!



## Update - Fátima Feeding Center

A team from Medford, Oregon has been planning to come and help a precious pastoral couple from the *colonia* of Fátima build a modest facility to feed underprivileged and undernourished kids. They thought they had a piece of land to use and we had collected funds to help build the facility. In the meantime, the piece of land fell through and, another US ministry stepped in to build a house for the pastors there and a new church building. Now, rather than build a new facility for the feeding project, the pastors have decided that they will use their old church building to feed the kids, and have between 60-100 kids every Saturday morning for Bible lessons and food. But the old building needs repair and a kitchen, and they need funds on a weekly basis to buy food for the kids. We're hoping to continue to help this precious couple continue their life-changing work - as much as we are able.



We are thankful for so much, even in the midst of the challenges we face each day. The Lord has been so incredibly faithful in more ways than we can elucidate in a newsletter. Our precious family, along with our brothers and sisters in the Body of Christ, remain our enthusiastic cheerleaders. Our supporters and intercessors are a tower of strength in the background, as we co-labor together for the kingdom of God. Abundant blessings to each and every one! You have a special place in our hearts and prayers.

We love you dearly,

  
*Dave & Dee* 

Dave and Dee Alei  
Apdo. Postal #815  
Admon. Urbana No. 1  
Guaymas, Sonora  
C.P. 85401 Mexico

Mexico Address

**U.S. tax deductible contributions may be sent to Lifeline Ministries  
clo Stegalls - 2065 Avalon Drive, Las Cruces, NM 88005**

**US Office Phone: 575.644.5076**

**British contributors, please [contact Dave and Dee](#) for details.**

**Email: [lifelinemexico@gmail.com](mailto:lifelinemexico@gmail.com)  
[dndalei@lifeline-ministries.net](mailto:dndalei@lifeline-ministries.net)**

**Mexico Phone: (+52) 622.221.7641**

**Lifeline**  
Ministries

[www.lifeline-ministries.net](http://www.lifeline-ministries.net)