

May 26, 2018

## Dear Friends:

Praise God for His mercy that endures forever! We were once again made aware first hand of how great is His mercy and goodness as we endeavored to drive a rental car around the Dominican Republic. It ranks 12<sup>th</sup> in the world for dangerous driving and traffic fatalities. We soon discovered why. 😊 We prayed at length every time we got in the car, and found His mercy, grace and goodness to be sufficient for our need. That little car got driven HARD, over mountainous dirt roads with washed out areas, even bottoming out a few times. In the large cities, we were in traffic unlike anything we had experienced before (except in Myanmar, but someone else was driving) ... with countless motorbikes zooming around on both sides, disregarding red lights completely, turning left directly in front of us, and cars aggressively pushing in to within *inches* of our own vehicle. We even drove through Santo Domingo, a city of 4 ½ million people, in rush hour traffic ... and got lost! Yet the car was turned in without a bump or scrape, and without having hit any risk-taking pedestrians or crazy motorbikes. We were so thankful to be covered by His mercy and hidden under the shadow of His wing. What an amazing God we serve!

*"Oh, give thanks to the Lord, for He is good! For His mercy endures forever. Oh, give thanks to the God of gods! For His mercy endures forever. Oh, give thanks to the Lord of Lords! For His mercy endures forever" (Psalm 136:1-3).*



Ministering at the CFTA Valentine's Dinner

## Local Ministry

The winter and early spring was spent ministering more locally in connection with the Spanish-speaking Latino church we are a part of in Fort Walton Beach. We

ministered together on healthier marriages for a couples dinner on Valentine's Day, and Dave has preached a number of Sundays including Mother's Day. He was also asked to be a judge of different food dishes during a special ladies' weekend. They made him dress up with an apron and chef's hat so that he looked indisputably official!



Dave - the Food Judge for CFTA

## Helping Out and Receiving Visitors

The winter and early spring were also spent giving and receiving in different ways. We spent about three weeks down in south Florida, helping Justin and Sarah remodel an older home they had just bought. Soon after arriving back home, we were blessed with a succession of visiting friends and family from New Mexico, Tennessee and New York. The friends from New York were folks we had not seen face to face for 28 years! How amazing to just take up where we left off all those years ago!

## Dominican Republic

The ministry trip to the Dominican Republic this month was different than usual. Normally, people on the other end have things booked solid and we are scheduled pretty much from early morning until late night every day of our time there. This trip, we were meeting up with someone Dee met on her trip to the communist island nation last Nov/Dec - a young woman named Julia, who is the North Coast regional director for Young Life (Vida Joven) in the DR.

Both Dee and Julia felt their connection was a divine appointment, and we all felt a tug from the Holy Spirit to meet up in the DR, get to know one another better, and test

the waters a bit. Both of us felt this trip was going to be fluid and that we would need to be flexible ... and that is how it worked out! Julia was delayed in arriving back from another trip to C-b-, so some



**Julia of Vida Joven (Young Life)**

of what she had planned for us had to be changed at the last minute. Meanwhile, a woman in the Latino church in FL who used to live in Puerto Plata wanted us to find and meet some old friends of hers there. So we spent a day with these families, prayed for/with them, learned about their ministry and visited a project quite a distance from the city up in the mountains. There was even time for a few hours of sight-seeing, as we visited the malecón (boardwalk along the coast), a 16<sup>th</sup> century fort, and learned more about the history and spiritual atmosphere of Puerto Plata.

We also had an opportunity for some precious ministry at one of our B & B's, sharing the love of Jesus with surfer millennials from a number of nations. We began to feel a bit like the resident Mom and Dad - lol. They gave us their email addresses and want to stay in touch! So do we!!

During our time with Julia, we helped her on a day she had scheduled with 10 girls who came from the Samaná peninsula for a volleyball/basketball tournament and joint "club" meeting at a gymnasium near Puerto Plata for all the Young Life groups along the north coast. It was a first for Julia and Young Life! These girls rode 4 hours in a gua-gua (public transport pronounced 'wa-wa') to get there. They live in a very violent village that has no running water or church. The week before, a 15 year old girl had murdered two of their other classmates over a love interest. None of these girls have really met the Lord or had an encounter with Him yet. The leader who came with them (mid 20's) is a Christian (a teacher in their school), but Julia told us that she is struggling in her relationship with the Lord because it is such a dead, dry place and there is simply no fellowship. So Dave

helped Julia prepare lunch while Dee talked with and played games with the girls to settle them down. Because most had really different names, they helped Dee come up with nicknames for them that she could remember ... and they thought that was a hoot. 😊 They had never been out of their little area, never met Julia before, and they were terribly shy and nervous!! After lunch, we accompanied them to the gymnasium and rooted for them as they competed in volleyball. During the big club meeting (which was encouraging the kids present to attend the summer Young Life camp in Jarabacoa), we sat with the girls, laughed with them and watched them become more and more comfortable in a big group setting. It was so hard to leave and say good-

bye! We did promise them that on another trip, we would somehow come to their village and visit them there. Please keep these precious girls - Jesse, Lisa, Yanni, Ima,



**Dee leading games with some of the Samaná girls**

Chan, Rosa, Ella, Patricia, Rudi and Nissi (their nicknames) in your prayers - praying for their salvation and for God to guard and keep them in the midst of the environment in which they live. Thank you so much!

Also during our time with Julia, we were able to take a day and visit the national Vida Joven Camp in Jarabacoa. To get there, we drove 3 hours through the mountains on a gravel/dirt road, then through another large city of over a million people, then another hour up into a different range of mountains. (And back, all in one day!) Dave had to drive because the transmission is out on Julia's car. Whew!! But we met all the staff, saw what they do there with the various camps during the year, and were invited to come back next year for 8 weeks and lead missions teams of college students who come before the summer camp to prepare the place ... to kind of parent and pastor them during their time there. They even offered to arrange all the transportation for us so that we would not have to rent a car! (That got our attention. Ha, ha!) It is a real temptation and something we will certainly pray about. The only thing is that we



**Dave with Julia and Emilio at the Vida Joven Camp**

will have only just gotten back from a very long and intensive trip to Tanzania, so we are not sure about doing so much back to back like that. We appreciate your prayers as we seek the Lord for His perfect plan and timing for everything. Thank you!

## The Remainder of 2018

There have been some changes and we are praying into the rest of this year. Our trip to Colombia got postponed because several who wanted to go are DACA or Dreamers and they can't leave the country the way things are. Guaymas (Mexico) is back on the table as a consideration for late Nov/early Dec. but we are not entirely settled about it. And we had tentatively moved southern and western Kenya to January/February as a separate trip from Tanzania (necessary), but we have begun to have less peace about Kenya. The people there desperately want us to come, and are such humble, precious pastors ... but we are just not SURE we are supposed to go there ... definitely needing more clarity. We do appreciate your prayers very much.

## Tanzania Next Year

We have now committed to another ministry trip to Tanzania next April/May. Arthur Mbumbuka, who is the president of the Mbeya region ministerial alliance, has already planned for us to do 5 pastors conferences in different areas, and a one day youth conference in Mbeya Town. Yeehaw! He has given us a list of areas he feels the pastors need teaching and training in, so we will endeavor to serve them in this manner to strengthen and equip these leaders for the work of the ministry.

## A Word from Dave

I usually let Dee write, as she is so much better at written communication, but I felt inspired to add my "two cents worth" after returning from the Dominican Republic. I was struck (again) on this trip by the selflessness of people with very limited resources - people willing to give

what little they have to help transform their communities with the love of the Lord.

There is a capsulated history of Christianity, attributed to Sam Pascoe, which states, "Christianity started out in Palestine as a fellowship, then it moved to Greece and became a philosophy, then it moved to Rome and became an institution, then it moved to Europe and became a culture, then it moved to the rest of the western world and became an enterprise." As I have thought and prayed over this, the hard truth of "Christianity as a business" has become more and more clear.

The guiding principle behind any business (enterprise) is, "maximum profit for minimum investment." Whatever investments considered are only made after risk assessments have shown them likely to be profitable. The thought of giving with no expectation of reward is foreign to the business model. Love and compassion never enter in to the equation. Based on our observation of many American Christians, it appears that this way of thinking has firmly entrenched itself in the modern western Church. "Unless there's something in it for me, I won't invest."

Bear in mind that I am not speaking simply of financial investments. I'm speaking of laying down our lives - investing our time, our talents, our prayers, our testimonies, our finances, our comfort, our goals, and our personal ambitions - for the sake of others. In our international travels, we have encountered, over and over again, people who have been willing to sacrifice virtually everything they have in order to advance the Kingdom of God. The one country in which we find that mindset extremely scarce has been our own. Another way of saying it is, those that have the most to give appear to be the most reluctant to do so.

There are thousands of ways you can help those in impoverished nations. If you'd like to visit some of them personally and pray with them, or stack some block, or run some wiring, or play games with their kids, or help provide clean water, or just lend a hand by doing what is asked of you - whatever you're willing to do to help, you could accompany us on our next trip overseas. Or we can put you directly in contact with some needy people so that you can arrange your own!

## Some Specific Needs to Pray About:

- Arthur has given us a list of financial needs for the pastors conferences next year in TANZANIA. He expects as many as 120 pastors in each of the five conferences. He is hoping we can help him raise \$1,000 to feed all the pastors during their time at these conferences (they come from far away and have no money). He is also hoping that another \$1000 can be raised for Kiswahili Bibles to share with the pastors. There is such a need and they are very expensive! He also said that to travel to all these different locations, another \$800 will be needed for fuel and hotel costs for the three of us. Can you help?

- Najeeb and Monica in PAKISTAN are trying to raise money for coolers to hold potable water, so that the children around them are not drinking out of the filthy rivers. They have been able to buy 23 out of 127 coolers needed so far. Can you help?



Monica with the coolers supplied so far

- Jeremy and Ahcha in MYANMAR (BURMA) are scrambling to take care of 40 orphans, resulting from the civil war going on in the north part of Kachin state. That's in addition to pastoring a church and reaching out to others in need around them. They have very little in the way of resources, but have such BIG hearts! Can you help?
- Roland and Leidi, pastors of a small fellowship in Puerto Plata, DOMINICAN REPUBLIC, are trying to supply a mountain community with street lights and help construct a church building for them. Again, very little in the way of resources themselves but they are willing to attempt the impossible because they have God's heart for the people of this community. Can you help?

These are just some of the indigenous ministries that Lifeline Ministries endeavors to help support around the world. We hope that you will pray and see if the Lord might put one of them on your heart, and perhaps have you give beyond the norm to help meet some of these needs. If you would like to do so, please mark on the memo part of your check how much you would like to designate to any specific thing, place or persons. We will make sure the funds are sent to them on your behalf! Thank you!

## Our Love and Gratitude for You

Again, we are overwhelmed by your love and so grateful for your presence in our lives. THANK YOU for your prayers for us, for our family, and for those the Lord has led us to touch. THANK YOU for your encouragement and support in the many ways it is shown. THANK YOU for every gift sown, no matter how small. We trust the Lord to multiply it, even as He did with the loaves and fishes. THANK YOU for standing with us to release the love of Jesus into a hurting, lost and dying world!!

We love you dearly,

*Dave & Dee*

