



## A Life-Changing Event

It all started when Cindy renewed her commitment to Christ. Since it was the third time she had made a commitment, Crystal encouraged her to immerse herself in the Word. That morning Jeff had mentioned how Bible reading plays a part in victory over temptation. In passing he mentioned the three-month Bible-reading plan that one of his acquaintances had followed. So Crystal suggested the three-month plan to Cindy. Then some of us youth girls, as well as Jeff and Crystal, decided to try this plan ourselves to encourage Cindy. Jeff printed off the plan and we all started reading.

At first it was hard. Really, really hard. Just try going from reading three or four chapters daily to approximately thirteen to sixteen! But the best part was that everyone else in the house was reading by the same plan. We had great discussions about the law of Moses. Bible stories that we hadn't noticed before produced comments. Mealtime discussions were exciting. Since we were all reading in different versions, "What does your Bible say?" was a frequent question. Even the genealogies came alive when Melody realized that the Prophet Samuel was a descendant of Korah! If one had to wait for meals, one tried to read another chapter. We kept asking each other, "Where are you at in the Bible?" And woe to you if you fell behind! If fifteen chapters a day is difficult, just try twenty-five or thirty.

Originally, I had thought that by reading so much Scripture in a day I would retain much less than I would by reading slowly. But, no! Now verses that I haven't even read recently come to mind quickly when I need them. And by reading the stories through so quickly, I find that I understand the whole story better and am also able to understand how it relates to the rest of the Bible. When you read through the minor prophets one week and the next week start through the Gospels, the prophecies that are being fulfilled in your reading are just

amazing. And I never realized before how much the New Testament quotes the Old.

Then something started happening that I never expected. One of my friends had heard about our Bible-reading plan through another friend and had started reading through the whole Bible for the first time. Another friend told me that after hearing about our challenge she had started reading large amounts of the Word daily, and was richly blessed by it. One of the youth from the Santa Rosita church is determined to read through the whole Bible in a month!

We started on the 1st of November. According to the plan we should be done the end of this week. We're already talking about what Bible-reading plan we will choose next. Some of us want to read through the Bible chronologically this time, but at least one is going to read it through again in three months.

And what about Cindy? Today Jeff encouraged us to pray for Cindy because she has "fallen" as we say it in Spanish. But there's a verse that gives hope for her (as well as for the rest of us).

*"So shall my word be that goeth forth out of my mouth: it shall not return unto me void, but it shall accomplish that which I please, and it shall prosper in the thing whereto I sent it." Isaiah 55:11*

God's Word will not return unto Him "empty" (direct translation from Spanish).

*Two months later . . .*

Cindy was in church for prayer meeting today. She returned to Sta. Rosita after her relationship fell apart with her boyfriend in El Naranjo a week or two ago. Crystal has some contact with her and we will keep praying for her.

May God get the victory!

~Yolanda Miller

# Touched by a Good Samaritan

## *A History of Touching Lives . . .*

A ministry of mercy started years ago on the back porch of the mission house in El Chal. Norma Gingerich assisted her neighbors with medical needs, and as trust grew between the mission and the local people, so did opportunities to share the truth and love of Jesus Christ! This “back-porch” medical evangelism was the beginning of a clinic which has changed locations three times in the past sixteen years, to grow with the patient numbers.

Compassionate nurses came and went, dedicating years of service and love to the native people. Anne (Martin) Miller, Katie Jantzi, Ruth (Groff) Mejia, Rachel (Graybill) Musser, Charlotte (Gingerich) Kropf, Holly (Long) Martin, Brenda Gingerich, Laurel Kreider, Ashley (Beck) Munoz, Kristina (Good) Vasquez, Benjamin Martin, Dorcas Miller, Judith Hoover, Maria Metzler, Abigail Gingerich, and many other short-term missionaries have worked in the clinic. Elizabeth Mejia, current charge nurse in El Chal, has been working in the clinic for fifteen years. Julia King, Tiana Kennedy, Kendra Martin, and Priscila Munoz are the current nursing staff in El Chal.

In 2011, we saw almost 10,000 patients. 10,000 opportunities to touch lives in the name of Christ! Pray for our team, that God would give us wisdom in treating patients’ physical and spiritual needs, and that we would reflect the love of Jesus in our words and actions. Pray that God would use the *Antorchas* (Bible pamphlets) and tracts sent home with patients for His glory. And please pray that God would help us through upcoming staff changes, as Priscila Munoz, Tiana Kennedy, and Kendra Martin are currently in training.



**The El Chal Clinic Building**

## *Put God's Word in Their hands . . .*

It was a normal, busy Tuesday morning. The porch was full of diabetic and hypertensive patients waiting for their monthly consults, and tired-looking mothers reassuring their frightened, fevered children. I pulled the next “to be seen” patient chart from the stack and looked at it. Hmm. She was a first-time local patient in her thirties. I called the name and a modern looking “Jezebel” sauntered through the door. She had an extreme makeover that gave her the appearance of a glittery butterfly with sharp contrasting designs around her eyes and mouth. Her manners matched her makeup as she constantly shifted from one position to another in her chair. She never made eye contact, and got right to the point. She had come for an HIV test.

I tried to ask some general questions but didn’t get anywhere. I did the test and again tried to make conversation. She was nervous but stubborn. Not knowing what else to do, I asked if I could pray with her. I prayed aloud as she nervously coughed and shifted in her chair. I told her to come back in two days just to visit. She was gone, and I distractedly pulled the next chart.

Thursday morning I got to the clinic around 7:15 to unlock. To my astonishment there was one patient waiting at the gate . . . my friend from Tuesday. This time she talked. She told me that while very young, she married an abusive husband involved in drugs. She pulled away her blouse and sleeves to show me scars where he had almost killed her twice. Fourteen years ago he was killed. Since that time she had been working as a prostitute in a local bar, 24 hours a day, with one day off every two weeks. Her face was hard and she showed little emotion as she said all this. She complained of feeling tired and depressed.

I reaffirmed how miserable her life must be and how trapped and low she must feel in her heart. We talked about Jesus for about five minutes, and then prayed again. This time she was quiet and her makeup was wet when we finished. There was a stack of charts to be seen, so I told her to meet me again at noon and come to the mission house for lunch.

I was again surprised when she showed up at noon. It was perhaps a new experience to have a prostitute at the mission house lunch table. She stayed for about two hours afterwards and I read passages to her from John and Romans. I addressed her as a sinner on her way to Hell. She wrote out John 3:16 on a paper and nervously started decorating it with stickers and markers. She was a thirty-year-old fighting to be “cool,” but I could see

that she was upset. She finally looked me in the face and said, "I can't change." We read the verse on her paper together about 10 times. Then I prayed again. I walked her back to the bar where she lives and told her that anytime she wants to talk, to please come back to the clinic.

She has stopped by the clinic a few times since and talks to me on the street. Every time she

reminds me of her paper with John 3:16 and the stickers. She says that she has it hanging on the wall in her room and that someday soon she's going to get right with God. I don't know how close her heart is to accepting Jesus and being washed clean of all her sin and pain . . . but I will pray and hope that it is soon.  
~Maria Metzler

## Project Spotlight

Thanks to your support, the projects that were listed in the previous issue for the El Naranjo girls' house have been completed. There are a few small projects remaining, but the girls have been able to move in and set up house.

We also covet your prayers as we struggle to make funds reach to cover our basic operating expenses.



Inside the completed girls' house in El Naranjo.

## Pastor of the Month



Daniel Ticas, a deacon at Lirio de los Valles

**Daniel Ticas** and Lucinda Aguirre became acquainted in the mid-1980's, and were married in January of 1991. Daniel had been a member of Central American Mission Church, one of the more fundamental evangelical churches in Central America. Lucinda grew up in a well-to-do, worldly home, and when her family began attending services, someone commented that they would probably not become Christians, since they were "upper-crust," and judged as being proud. But Lucinda saw her need, and without hesitation, committed her life to Christ.

After their marriage, Daniel began to attend services at the "Lirio de los Valles" congregation in Guatemala City. After a time he applied for membership, and has been a faithful member ever since.

Daniel was commissioned as deacon for the "Lirio de los Valles" congregation in the year 2000. He was ordained for the same office in 2003. He is a man of faith and takes his faith seriously. When he shares from the pulpit, whether a message or a meditation, the listeners are inspired and encouraged in their walk with the Lord.

Daniel and Lucinda have had setbacks and difficulties in many different ways. They had a difficulty having children. After a child was born, it would live only a short time, and then die. After about three such disappointments, God blessed their home with Josué, an adopted son. (At this time of writing, he is at the age of accountability, and has not yet given his heart to the Lord. Please pray for him.) Finally, the Lord blessed them with a healthy little girl, whom they named Estefani.

Another difficulty for them has been financial. For a time they were

able to eke out a living with a store. Now they sell cream and cheese at a market close to the mission. They still are not able to afford their own living quarters, and currently live at the Institute facilities, in part of a remodeled chicken house.

A third hardship for them has been Daniel's health. He has had much pain because of herniated discs in his vertebrae. He has undergone two surgeries during the last year, one on his neck, and another on his lower back. Before these took place, he asked for an anointing service, which took place in their home.

In spite of these hardships and difficulties, one rarely hears them complain. They will share their circumstances when asked, but not to bemoan their fate.

Prayers are being answered, and we are seeing a marked improvement in Daniel's health, for which we praise the Lord.

We ask a continued interest in your prayers for Daniel, Lucinda, and family; for spiritual growth and blessing, as well as God's grace for their trials. He is always faithful, as we and they call upon Him.

~Mark Gingerich

# Personnel News

**Laresa Good** from Estacada, Oregon, joined our team in May. She has committed for 2½ years at Headquarters. Her job description here is domestics, and she is also in charge of the Mercy Room along with Miriam Biehn. She has been assisting with the Saturday morning children's classes in the park.



**Laresa Good**

**Lee Burkholder** comes from Lancaster County, PA, and his home church is Pleasant Valley Mennonite. Plans are for him to spend most of his time at Headquarters.



**Lee Burkholder**

**Lanet Sara Martin** was born January 9, 2012, to Benjamin and Holly Martin, and was also welcomed by her brother and sister Ben and Sue. "We are very thankful for the prayers that were sent up on our behalf; we have a healthy, happy baby girl." (Holly Martin)



**Lanet Martin**

**Henry and Miriam Eby** have returned for six more months of houseparent work after a 2-week visit home.

**Wendell Deim** is back after a 3-month visit home and a term at SMBI. Currently his term is indefinite.

We were all sad to see **Brian Yoder's** family leave, but we are glad they are able to take a break from their responsibilities here for a time. Thank you, Brian & Janelle and family, for your 12 years of service and for filling the responsibilities of field director and pastor!



**Wendell Deifenbacher was baptized June 5 at the Santa Rosita congregation.**

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