



MENNONITE *Air* MISSIONS

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Jesús es el Camino

San Sur is a predominately Catholic town with few evangelical Christians who give testimony of life through Jesus Christ. In the late 1980s Jacinto and Ismelda returned to their home community in San Sur. During their time in El Chal, they had transferred their membership from the kingdom of darkness to the kingdom of light, and they carried that light back to San Sur. Their time in El Chal had also acquainted them with the Mennonites, who aided them in the founding of an evangelical Mennonite church, Jesús es el Camino (Jesus is the Way), in San Sur.

Over the years various North American missionaries served in San Sur and fed the flame that Jacinto and Ismelda started. Church leadership included both North American pastors—Duane and Sharon Eby, Daryl Gehman, Wesley and Alice King, Levi and Judy Martin, David and Christine Horst, and Kevin and Sara Martin—and Guatemalan deacons—Pio Franco, Chico Veliz and Jacinto Toc.

Levi and Judy Martin served from 1994 until 2004. It was during their time of service that the church reached a climax. During a series of revival meetings,

the brethren joined together with intense prayer and fasting. They saw God at work as specific prayers were answered and souls were saved. One brother asked that God would give them thirty souls that week, and another pleaded for four specific people. The last night came, the final message was preached, and the service was ended. But afterwards, one more person desired to make things right with God. This last soul was God's answer to both requests made during the week—he was both the thirtieth and the fourth. An instruction class of 35 or 40 believers was started, and church membership was around 60.

Satan was not happy, and he worked hard to dampen the fire. Some nights, missionaries heard an eerie knocking work its way up the valley until it tapped on the very walls of their house. Not long after those revival meetings tensions began to build, disagreements sprang up, bitterness took root, brethren turned against each other, and some even feared for their lives. The instruction class dwindled in size and in the end, only six or eight followed through with baptism and church membership.

In 2006, Brother Donaldo Álvarez, supported by his wife Angelica, was commissioned to pastor the struggling church. He had previously worked beside some of the North American missionaries. Two weeks after his commissioning, their eight-month-old son became deathly ill with an intestinal infection. For several weeks he lay between life and death, but was miraculously healed. Today he serves as a clear reminder to his parents of God's love. Life is not easy for the young couple and their five children. It is easy to become discouraged and to dwell on the things that they lack: youth in the church, fellowship with other churches, and financial resources.

Today there are only ten
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The San Sur congregation



EDITORIAL

Wes King

Where Are the Laborers?

Jesus spent three years ministering to individual people—sick, alone, sinful, and lost. They were sheep without a shepherd. Jesus prayed all night, got up early to pray, and asked His disciples to pray. He cast out demons, gave sight to the blind, raised the dead, and made the lame walk. He spent day after day helping them, feeding them, and teaching them.

One day “when he saw the multitudes, he was moved with compassion on them” (Matthew 9:36). He stopped what He was doing, got a good look at the many people, and asked His disciples to pray. He said, “The harvest truly is plenteous, but the labourers are few; Pray ye therefore the Lord of the harvest, that he will send forth labourers into his harvest.”

Why did Jesus ask His disciples to pray? Because He saw the people—fainting, scattered, with no one to direct them. He had compassion on them. He loved them.

Jesus was also shackled with a human body. He could only be at one place at a time. The task was immense: the crowds were large, the needs were great, and the time was short. In a few short years He would leave this world, and the people needed help now.

Jesus suffered, died, and rose from the dead, victorious over death, hell, and the grave. He gave His all for those multitudes and for the many multitudes that would be born. Then He returned to His Father—the Father who sent His Son for the multitudes. Just before Jesus returned to the Father, He met with His disciples—those imperfect, impulsive, timid disciples—chosen to take the message of salvation to the world. He said, “Go, teach, baptize, make disciples, be witnesses everywhere, all the time.”

The task was greater than the disciples could ever imagine. It would require suffering, rejection, imprisonment, and for most a martyr’s death. How could they do this great task? They needed help. Jesus told them to “wait for the promise of the Father.” They needed the Holy Spirit to empower them for the great work they were called to do. And so they went—consecrated, dedicated, and sold out for their Saviour.

One day the prophet Isaiah saw the Lord in all His holiness. He also saw himself, undone and unclean. He said, “Woe is me, for mine eyes have seen the King, the LORD of hosts.” He then experienced cleansing with a live coal from the altar. His iniquity was taken away and his sin purged. What a blessing Isaiah experienced at that moment! He was free from sin, and now he could be in the presence of God.

But then he heard the voice of the Lord in the form of a question: “Whom shall I send, and who will go for us?” Isaiah knew there was only one correct response. He answered, “Here am I, send me.” What a response!

Today the needs across the world are very great. In our communities are multitudes. In towns and cities around us are multitudes. In foreign fields multitudes abound. Around the world today, multitudes are fainting and scattered, as sheep with no shepherd. Today we have means of travel, technology, and finances that the disciples never could have dreamed of. Yet the multitudes wait and wait and wait. Where are the laborers?

It seems that we have lost the pilgrim and stranger concept of living in this world. Are we looking for a city whose builder and maker is God? Do we feel too much at home on this earth? Hebrews says the heroes of faith desired a heavenly country, wherefore God was not ashamed to be called their God. What would He say about us today?

It seems like the demands of jobs, businesses, and financial commitments often divert the energy from mission efforts. While the need for financial donations is great, and many give much to the kingdom of Jesus Christ, there is a lack of personnel dedicated to long-term efforts.

Short-term mission trips, street meetings, and disaster relief projects are often well staffed—some even have waiting lists. Interest in such projects is appreciated, but where are the laborers for long-term efforts, both foreign and domestic?

Christ has given us enough to fulfill the Great Commission. The Holy Spirit is still alive and well. The ability to travel and communicate has advanced dramatically in the last 50 years. But where are the laborers?

We must conclude that the problem lies with us, the church of today. When we look at the life of Christ, His disciples, and Isaiah, we see a number of important things that are lacking in our mission emphasis.

Jesus said, “PRAY.” “Pray ye therefore the Lord of the harvest, that he will send forth labourers into his harvest.” We lack effectual, fervent prayer. Personal prayer, congregational prayer, and prayer and fasting for souls are feeble, at best. How much time do we spend in prayer in our average worship services? How well attended are our prayer meetings?

Jesus had compassion on the multitudes and loved the people. Compassion is pity and sympathy for

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Jesús es el Camino . . . continued

members in the church, but among them are those who continue faithfully. Irma faithfully comes to church, though her husband lashes out at her at times. Francisco recently lost his wife, a faithful companion and servant of the Lord.

Donaldo and Angelica press on, letting their lights shine. They have a deep burden for their neighbors and the suffering that arises from hatred and bitterness. As they bring that burden to the throne of grace, they acknowledge the only One who is able to pierce through the darkness, break the bonds of sin and hatred, and bring true life. They plead for His continuing work in their own hearts and in the lives of those around them.

Will you join them in prayer? Pray that Donaldo and Angelica might be victorious over the temptations and attacks of Satan. Pray that they might be a faithful

light in their dark community. Pray against the sin, the darkness, the hatred, and the bitterness that has entangled many in the community. Pray that the Spirit of God would revive the flame and that people would be freed to serve Him who alone is worthy of honor and glory.

Sara Breneman



Donaldo and Angelica (center) after church.

Marriage of Ángel and Lidia

The highlands of Tecpán smiled under the bright sun on the morning of June 27, 2015. Ángel Sen and Lidia Tubucal and their families scurried about to finalize the details of the big day.

Ángel grew up in the mountains of Quiché in San Bartolomé. Lidia was born in the Kaqchikel *pueblo* of Tecpán. Ángel worked as a tailor, while Lidia kept the bakery ovens full. They met at a youth institute in Sumpango and began a courtship. Eight months later, they walked down the aisle, surrounded by family and friends. They settled in Tecpán. On Sunday morning, you will find them at Lirio de Los Valles or Saragoza.

Judy Lehman



Ángel and Lydia

Where Are the Laborers? . . . continued

others with a strong desire to help them. Compassion motivated the Good Samaritan, the father of the prodigal son, and Jesus Himself to help those in need. The love of Christ looked beyond the ugly to what people could be, with a willingness to put that love in action. Where is our compassion and love?

The Holy Spirit enabled the disciples to do what they could not do by themselves. The Comforter and Guide empowered them for the great task before them. With the Spirit controlling their lives, they were dedicated, consecrated, and sold out for the Saviour. Does the precious Holy Spirit affect our lives that way?

Isaiah recognized his condition and need. He was humble enough to realize, when he saw God, that he was not fit to be in His presence. When he recognized his need, he was ready for cleansing. When he was

cleansed, he was ready for service wherever he would be sent. Are we humble enough to recognize our need? Are we willing to accept deep, complete cleansing?

Isaiah was also willing. When he heard the question “Who will go?” he responded, “Here am I, send me.” God’s work in his heart and life made Isaiah willing to do whatever, wherever, for however long. Are we willing?

I believe Jesus is still asking us to pray that the Lord of harvest would send forth laborers into His harvest. So let us pray!

I believe the potential laborers are among us. Some need to be converted, some need to be revived, and some need to be encouraged. Are you willing to help convert, to be an instrument of revival, to encourage, or to go yourself? When we pray for laborers, we must be willing to be an answer to our prayer.

Where are the laborers?

Staff Changes

Lydia Zook returned to the States in June. She served in Guatemala for nearly four years, working as a personal worker in El Chal and the surrounding areas, teaching English, holding children's classes, organizing Bible school, and helping out in many different ways. Her presence and energy will be missed. We wish her the Lord's blessing as she serves Him in the north.

Jacinda Good served as a nurse in El Chal. She came in April of last year and terminated her time with MAM on August 11. Thanks, Jacinda, for what you did in Guatemala.

Steve and Melissa Miller, from the Mt. Moriah congregation in Crossville, Tennessee, arrived in mid-August to begin a term of service. Steve spent four teenage years with his family in Mexico among the Tarahumara, and he comes to Guatemala with a good supply of Spanish. Melissa grew up near North Fork, West Virginia. They plan to live in El Naranjo and serve with Daniel and Dora Eby, supporting the clinic, church, and outreach work.



Steve and Melissa Miller, with daughters Brooklyn and Leticia, arrived in August for a 2 1/2 year term.

Water Team

As my time in Guatemala comes to an end and I reflect over the past five weeks, I realize how blessed and encouraged I have been by being here.

I was privileged to see and experience many parts of Guatemala: Pasaco in the south, Santa Rosita in the north, and Guatemala City, Oratorio, El Mango, and El Chal in between.

Some of the highlights in those different places were driving four hours into the jungle, helping in a clinic, passing out care packages in a hospital and a children's home, climbing a volcano, observing schools, living in native homes, fertilizing many rows of field corn by hand, and learning to know many new people.

My impression of the Guatemalans I met was that they are very happy people. Though we could not always understand each other, we could smile, make some hand motions, or try each other's language, which usually ended in a good laugh.

It was good for me to see how little some people have, yet remain happy. God has blessed me with so many resources. Am I as content as they are with so few things?

I was greatly encouraged to see people in a different culture and with a different language serve the same God as I do.

Kayla Hartman



WATER 2015: Joanne Raber, Kayla Hartman, Eunice Overholt, Wanda Hoover, Delores Schmidt, and Caitlin Snyder.

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