

Baptism and Commission Services . . continued

easy to “go against the current.” In fact, one young lady who completed instruction class did not follow through and join the church. Yet God patiently



Heidy, Elvis, Daily

continues to work, even using serious illness to get people’s attention.

On Saturday afternoon, March 26, the Mixco-lajá congregation held a commissioning service. Brother Isaías Muñoz shared a meaningful message of encouragement and instruction. Brother Wesley



Justin and Lynnae Zimmerman at Justin’s commissioning service.

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King commissioned Justin Zimmerman to a two-year term as lay minister. The service was well-attended, with about a dozen from the city and from Oratorio, most of the San Bartolomé congregation, and brother Ismael Quiñonez from San Andres. Please continue to pray for the leaders of the churches in Guatemala.

Staff Needs

We continue to seek more personnel for the work in Guatemala. We need a couple to serve as houseparents at headquarters in Guatemala City as soon as possible. We would like a family to live in Los Achiotos to help with the work there. We especially need single fellows to serve in the following locations: headquarters, Oratorio (to help with the building project), San Cristobal, and El Porvenir. In 2023, we will need a Business Administrator at headquarters.

Recommendations or inquiries can be directed to Brian Yoder at 276-266-5807 or yoder4@gmail.com.

Prayer and Praise Items

Pray for more workers to enter the Guatemala mission field.

Pray for daily wisdom as missionaries face puzzling situations, burnout, needy neighbors, and spiritual opposition.

Praise God for new believers and restored members!

Praise God for faithful church leaders.



Commissioning in Santa Rosita

Through the winding, mountainous roads and on to the flatter “cattle land” of the Peten they come. Bumping over *túmulos* and swerving to avoid potholes, they finally reach the little town of Santa Rosita. Here among the coconut palms stands a little church, “Iglesia Rio de Agua Viva.”

The tired travelers fill the big mission house and our house (the old clinic), and spill into the school-room. They are Larry and Laresa Martin, Isaías and Domitila Muñoz, and some girls from Oratorio. From the city are Lester and Martha Burkholder, Nathan and Delores Graybill, Victor Ovalle, and some young people. There is plenty of food and fellowship to enjoy!

Friday afternoon, March 11, finds us all gathered in the warm church house to support Dean and Jodi and their family. The church youth girls who work away from Santa Rosita have returned for the service, and the El Mango congregation also joins us. We’re glad to see the benches well filled with around fifty people.

“¡Bienvenido! ¡Bienvenido!” fills the air as the chorister leads us in singing. Lester gives a devotional,

Victor Ovalle shares the evening message, and then Isaías Muñoz, assisted by Victor, gives the charge to Dean. After a testimony from Larry, the youth sing some beautiful Spanish songs to complete the service. A fellowship supper follows, and everyone enjoys each other’s company.

Saturday finds many of the travelers on the long trip home, while Isaías and his family stay for the weekend. We enjoy a fish fry with them (cooking compliments go to Domitila) and more enjoyable conversations.

On Sunday, we commemorate Christ’s suffering and death as a church with Communion and feet washing. The weather seems to be in the mood as well, so we don sweaters and run between the raindrops to the service. Afterward we enjoy a meal and fellowship together in the cooler temperatures.

Please pray for Dean and Jodi with their responsibilities as well as the other church members. Pray for faithfulness, perseverance, and love as each one reaches out.

Sheryl Bear



Victor Ovalle and Isaías Muñoz with Dean and Jodi Boll.

Please make donations payable to “Mennonite Air Missions” and send to Mennonite Air Missions, c/o Amos Hurst, 116 Rothsville Station Rd., Lititz, PA 17543. Inquiries about service opportunities may be directed to Brian Yoder at yoder4@gmail.com or 590 Dusty Rock Rd., Riner, VA 24149

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EDITORIAL

Quinton Burkholder

Communication

We spend a lot of time listening to what’s going on around us, as we use our God-given senses to observe our surroundings. We hear words and perceive some of what others are thinking. We hear birds and know there are birds in the trees—maybe even what kind of birds they are. When we want to explain something, we use our mouths to say words that others understand. Sometimes we make hand motions to demonstrate how something works or which direction to go.

The language barrier that began at Babel complicates communication. Communicating in a new language that one is learning can be a lot of work. Thankfully, there are ways other than words to help us communicate. Hand motions are very helpful. A friendly smile communicates effectively, no matter what language the other person uses.

Listening is very important in communication. If no one listens, nothing gets communicated. It just gets said. It helps if the person talking to you can tell that you are listening and that you care about them and what they have to say. If two people met weekly and talked a lot but neither paid attention to what the other was saying, they would not learn very much. They would both enjoy their time more with a friend who cared about them.

It is very important to pay attention to what God has to say to us. And although God already knows everything about our lives and what goes on around us, He wants us to communicate with Him in prayer. God answers when we pray in faith.

We hear from God in different ways, and it is important to discern God’s voice. One definite way to discern is by checking if the Bible backs it up, like the Bereans who “received the word with all readiness of mind, and searched the scriptures daily, whether those things were so” (Acts 17:11). God communicates His presence and His power through the things He created. When Elijah felt that he was serving God all alone, God sent a strong wind, an earthquake, and a fire to remind Elijah that He was more powerful than his enemies (1 Kings 19). God then spoke in a gentle voice to give Elijah instructions.

It is also important to say things that build God’s kingdom and bless others, not things that tear others down or damage God’s kingdom. We should give compliments and encouragement to those around us. Sometimes it is right to give someone admonition, but it must be for their good. If others sense that we feel superior, our admonition will be harder to take. Some of us like to “give each other a hard time” and may even enjoy getting picked on. But we need to think about how things sound from the other person’s perspective. They don’t want to be the only one not laughing. While we don’t want to say things that will make people angry, sometimes people can tell what we really think by the tone of our voice or our facial expression.

We can’t solve all problems by not saying the wrong thing though. Sometimes people want information, and it would be rude not to tell them the truth. One of those times is when someone asks us a question. If we ignore them, they may decide that we don’t care about them. They won’t get the information they need.

We should think about the information people might need when they are unfamiliar with something. If someone communicates, it can make things much easier. It is difficult for two people to work together if neither knows what the other is planning to do. A simple example is volleyball. If the ball is coming between two people and no one calls it, there’s a good possibility that neither will hit it or that both will collide.

The most important thing to talk about is Jesus and how to have a relationship with Him. Everyone around us needs to hear that. When God’s name is used as a curse word, it works against God’s kingdom. This is an example of how good words may be used for bad purposes. We want to use good words for good purposes.

Advertisers pay for the right place or time to communicate. Obviously, they think it is important. We have a responsibility to communicate the love of Jesus to those around us. Let us make good use of the opportunities we have.

Baptism and Commissioning Services

We thought she had died. A handful of us stood by her at the end of the airstrip and waited anxiously for the plane. This very sick young lady was the firstborn daughter of our native deacon, Belisario (Chalo) Natareno. She had been part of the church but had drifted away and hardened her heart. But when a certain virus (known the world over) swept through the area, Lorena was one of the few locally who became gravely ill. She struggled to breathe and weakened physically.

But far worse than her illness was her spiritual torment. Her family had been praying that God would get her attention, and now they prayed fervently for Him to spare her life. She finally surrendered to God and began confessing and making things right with various extended family members as they stopped by to visit her bedside. Her eyes were filled with peace instead of their former hardness. Her cousin Ester became a Christian as she witnessed Lorena’s transformation. Another cousin who had drifted away from the church rededicated her life and began wearing a head veiling again. Yet another cousin surrendered his life to God.

Lorena was now “cured” spiritually, but physically she still was very sick. Her family felt helpless and overwhelmed trying to care for her, especially with the constant stream of family and friends coming to visit. So we arranged a flight to a private hospital.

As we waited anxiously at the airstrip, Lorena had another “attack,” hyperventilated, and just before passing out gasped, “Lord, receive me!” Her father attempted chest compressions while everyone prayed desperately. A long minute later, she gradually began breathing again, and a minute or two after that, the airplane arrived with a couple of nurses. Lorena’s vitals were fine, and she even

walked with assistance to the airplane! She spent several days at the hospital before returning home somewhat stronger, but it was several months until she fully recovered.

In the weeks that followed, God worked in others’ lives, including an elderly woman named Ancelma who also was quite sick for a time. She finally followed through on her promise from several years before to become a Christian. Her granddaughter Aleyda decided to follow Jesus over this same time. Shortly after, another girl dedicated her life to God. Kreylin, like many other young people, spends a lot of time in Chalo’s house visiting with “Aunt” Alicia and is like another daughter. Lorena’s experience impacted her greatly. Very soon after, yet another young lady unexpectedly decided to become a Christian. Ámaly’s father was the only Christian in her family but is unfortunately living in the United States right now.

On Saturday evening, March 26, 2022, the congregation in Mixcolajá welcomed Yezmin Lorena Natareno back as an active member of the church. Wesley King directed the baptism service of Elva Ester de León, Ilaria Ancelma Reyes, Yeimelin Aleyda Reyes, Gléydin (“Kreylin”) Lisayda Reyes, and Ámaly Alihaib Marroquín on that same day. After observing the Communion and feet washing service in Mixcolajá the next morning, Brother Wesley baptized Elvis Mux and his sister Daily in San Andres. Their oldest sister Heidy (Lorena’s cousin who had rededicated her life) was also restored as an active member of the Mennonite church and welcomed as a part of the San Andrés congregation.

Please pray for these dear souls, that they may grow in the faith and be faithful until death. It is not
(continued on page 4)



Kreylin, Aleyda, Amaly, Lorena, Ester, Ancelma