

Carmen's Update

October - December 2009



Children's Ministry in Boyeros

On Saturday, November 7, with the help of five people from Texcoco Bible Church, the children's ministry in Boyeros, Texcoco, began. Sixty excited three to twelve-year-old boys and girls attended that day. The two-hour program consisted of games, singing, puppet presentation, memorization of Bible verses, group competition, craft making and snacks. That day and the succeeding four Saturdays, the Gospel was presented using puppets and on December 5, an invitation to accept Jesus as Saviour was given. As a result, seventeen kids prayed to receive Jesus into their hearts as Saviour! I praise God for giving us an opportunity to minister to these children and for using us to bring children to His saving grace.

Kimberly, 11 years old, said when asked why she likes to attend the Kids' Club, "It is fun and we can play without fighting and hurting each other. I learn about God, too. I learned that God sent His Son, Jesus Christ, to die for me to save me from my sins." Kimberly accepted Jesus as her Saviour when the invitation was given.

Berenice, another girl who accepted Jesus into her heart said she likes to attend the Club because she learns a lot about God. "When we fight, tell lies, take things that don't belong to us, disobey our parents, we sin against God."

I have included a few pictures of the ministry, taken during the past seven weeks.

As you have noticed, the ministry is being held in a combination basketball court and soccer field. When we did the initial ministry preparations in October, we asked permission to use the Boyeros Community Center but because we did not have all the requirements the community leaders asked, the permission was not granted. We may try to solicit permission again the beginning of 2010 or look for a place to rent. If it is God's direction for us to continue the ministry, I believe it will be easier to hold the program in an enclosed place. Games can be done outdoors and Bible classes indoors to avoid distractions.



The Boyeros children's program begins with games



Welcome and announcements



Rolland and Jo Ann Smith, Texcoco Bible Church founders, explain the plan of salvation

Where do I Go From Here?

Now, you probably are wondering if the Boyeros children's ministry is the ministry I have decided to do. I'm sure you will remember that in my last prayer letter I listed three ministries I was considering. Children's ministry in Boyeros was one of them. Well, I have not really made a final decision yet whether this is the ministry I will pursue. I am, however, getting more and more involved in the ministry and the church I am partnering with. The 17 kids who accepted Jesus need to be followed up so they will grow in their walk with God. I am planning to do either Bible studies or discipleship classes with them. Soon, we need to plan a visitation program in order to see the kids in their homes and meet their parents. There is also a need to train leaders for the ministry. Right now, I am not able to leave because there is no one to lead it. Texcoco Bible Church also asked me to consider organizing their Sunday school and train teachers for the different classes. I need to make a decision soon, as they want me to start the beginning of 2010. Please pray with me as I make a decision. Thanks.

I knew there was a reason for my move to Texcoco but I doubted that when my teammates moved to Puebla, another Mexican state, and I was left on my own. God led me to explore other avenues for ministry and I found that there are many needs. Deciding which one to choose is difficult.

My attendance at Texcoco Bible Church was merely on a temporary basis in the beginning. It was not recommended that I attend this church because its missionary leaders were turning over the leadership of the church to the nationals and they did not want another missionary joining them. I was, however, introduced to the leaders and was welcomed at the church with the arrangement that I would only attend there until a new church was found. Little did I know that the time would come when the church would invite me to work with them and start a ministry in Boyeros. The plan to work with my teammates in Chimalhuacan failed. Perhaps because God had another plan in mind. Could this be the reason why God brought me to Texcoco? *In his heart a man plans his course, but the Lord determines his steps* (Proverbs 16:9, NIV). *Many are the plans in a man's heart, but it is the Lord's purpose that prevails* (Proverbs 19:21, NIV). A quotation by Smith in one of the daily devotions in the *Daily Bread* in December reads, *I know who holds the future, and I know who holds my hand; with God things don't just happen—everything by Him is planned.*" What a comfort!

More ministry pictures, cont.



Bible verse memorization and explanation



Figuring out how to piece together the Romans 3:23 puzzle



Craft time



Learning about God's love and mercy from puppets

Am I still planning to take another trip to work in the Sierra Madre mountains of Chihuahua with the Tarahumaran Indians? The truth is I am not sure. I may or may not, depending on the development of the ministry in Boyeros and my acceptance of the ministry at the church. Over the past months, as I reflected on the difficulties of traveling to visit the communities in the mountains, the extreme temperatures, etc. I have concerns about my health. I don't know if I will be able to do the job. I will see how God leads.

What about Puebla? This does not seem to be an option anymore, as the Hendersons, my teammates who moved to this place have people from their church helping them. They also plan to start a children's ministry and through it introduce community health evangelism principles among the parents of the children who will be involved in the program and other members of the communities.

From the looks of it all, it seems that God is leading me to work full time in Texcoco with Texcoco Bible Church. Please continue to pray with me over the next three months for God's confirmation of this leading. Thank you very much.

Praises:

1. For the children's ministry started in Boyeros, Texcoco, and for the seventeen kids who accepted Jesus into their hearts.
2. For God's continued leading in the ministry.
3. For God enabling me to direct the children's choir and Christmas play at the church on December 20.

Prayer Requests:

1. For the confirmation of God's leading to pursue the ministry in Texcoco—children's ministry and Sunday school work.
2. Follow up of the seventeen kids who accepted Jesus on December 5. Pray as we start Bible studies and discipleship classes with them. For the kids interest and their parents permission to do it.
3. For permission to use the community center. Financial provision for an apartment or house rental if the permission is not granted.
4. For my spiritual and physical health. That I may be sensitive to God's leading in my

life. For wisdom and strength to be able to continue in the ministry.

5. For my mother, Maria. Her Alzheimer's is getting worse. In November the woman taking care of her left. Please pray for strength and patience for my sister, Sally, as she takes care of my mother now. Pray that a new helper can be found soon.
6. For God to raise up new supporters to give to the work. Because of the financial crisis going on around the world a few of my supporters are not able to give on a regular basis and a few have reduced their giving. I praise God, however, that in spite of the problem I have not lacked anything. God is great!

Scenes from the Christmas Program



Singing "Hoy es Navidad (today is Christmas)"

“Navidad” Acrostic



The “shepherds” visit the baby Jesus



The “wise men” offer gifts to the boy Jesus

I hope you had a blessed Christmas celebration and that each one of you was able to reflect on the real reason why Jesus came to earth. May 2010 be a year full of peace, hope and love and may we continue to serve our God in our own special ways. God bless you.

Sincerely in Christ,

Carmen

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