



Serving Latin America & Praying for Rain The Gomez Family

June 4, 2009

Dear Friends,

What you see above is what the mountains behind our house should look like now. They did have some snowy spots on Sunday, thanks to Saturday's wet weather, but it has all melted away as a result of unseasonably warm daytime weather here in Santiago.

Our rainy season normally begins in late April and reaches its peak during the month of June however, it has only rained twice in 2009. Santiago and the surrounding area count on the fall/winter rains and the snow melt runoff in the spring to provide for the water needs throughout the year. If we don't get the rain and snow now we are almost guaranteed a drought next summer. Therefore, we find ourselves praying for rain regularly.

Will you join us in praying for rain? We are praying for rain not just in Santiago, but we are praying for the Lord's rain at Comunidad Cristiana Casa Grande, we are praying for rain in Santiago, Chile, Latin America, and throughout the world. We pray that the Spirit of God will rain down upon this dry and thirsty world and quench it with the Living Water that comes only from a personal relationship with Jesus Christ.

Checking the Rain Gage

And Praying for Rain at Casa Grande

Alpha continues to be the focus of our ministry at *Casa Grande* right now. Saturday will be our 7th week.

The good news is that we have 12 adults and 8 children who are faithfully attending. Some weeks there are more (we gave away 16 Mother's Day roses - some of the recipients are pictured below) but these 20 people are the foundation upon which the church will someday stand and so we are working hard to teach and disciple them. Yet, if the new church is a rain gauge, there is room for many more and so we continue to pray for spiritual rain at Casa Grande so that the gauge may be filled with new people. Based upon the size and needs of the neighborhood, there is a potential for flooding - God willing. Please keep praying with us!



Witnessing the Rain Drops

Teaching Free Methodist History and Polity

18 students and 2 auditors completed the 10 week study two weeks ago with a celebratory dinner and student presentations. Students ranged from pastors (5), to pastoras (2), to teenagers (2) and all levels of church members.

Two of the student presentations particularly captured our attention. Carmen, an active leader within her church, has been a Christian for 17 years. She testified that when she accepted Christ she was illiterate. Pastor Pablo taught her to read and write using the Bible as her textbook. She was delighted to have accepted the challenge of taking this class and learning so much in the process.



Hector is an elderly, brand-new Christian from another church. At the urging of his pastor, he decided to attend the class. Every Wednesday night for 10 weeks his wife asked him where he was going. When he told her that he was going to a theology class she did not believe him. He said, "In this class I've learned about men and women who lived holy lives; people like Martin Luther, John Wesley, and B.T. Roberts. I've seen how they changed the world because of their faith and I want to change my family in the same way."

He went on to tell the class that for the final class he was in charge of bringing drinks. On the way to class he stopped in a very crowded store and picked up the soft-drinks then waited in a very long line to pay for them. As he walked out of the store, he realized that just 3 months ago he would have just stolen the drinks. "Why did I pay for those drinks?," he asked himself. Then he realized, "Christ has changed my life and He changed my lifestyle as evidence."

Please pray that each raindrop like Hector and Carmen are evidence of the coming rainstorm that will water the earth so that every knee shall bow and every tongue proclaim that Jesus Christ is Lord.

Getting to Know the Reservoirs & Readjusting My Vision Once Again

"Why can't people just call me *Beth* (or at least some derivation of that if they can't quite pronounce the "th" sound)? Why does everyone insist on calling me only *Pastora* just because I am married to *Pastor Ricardo*?"

Perhaps you remember that last month I began "seeing" the city with new eyes? The same thing happened to me at *Chile's Retreat for Free Methodist Pastoras* last weekend. Before, I believed that the term *Pastora* carried heavy baggage and false expectations for someone like me - and all of the other pastor's wives in Chile. When I think of *Pastoras*, I think of people like Jan Mills, Sabra Dyas, or Deb Somerville. They are qualified, full-time, ordained *Pastoras* of local churches in the Great Plains Conference.

After meeting 21 of the 28 so-called *Pastoras* in Chile, I began to see them (and more specifically the term that defined them) through new eyes. I now believe that *Pastora* has dual meanings. The first is defined above. The second meaning defines

a woman who works in partnership with her husband, who is a pastor. After all, marriage is supposed to be a partnership and the women that I met last week demonstrated their deep belief in that partnership relationship. They are deeply committed to sharing Christ with others and are active participants (and in many cases the entire support system) of the local churches that their husbands serve. Reservoirs of Living Water stir within them, ready to spill over upon those with great thirst.

While I don't want to diminish Pastoras Deb, Jan and Sabra in their roles, I also believe it is fair to acknowledge that these Chilean women are partners in ministry and therefore deserving of the endearing title, *Pastora*. As for me, I still prefer to be called Beth but am deeply appreciative of the opportunity to serve Christ in

partnership with the Rev.
Dr. Ricardo Gomez.



Again, we thank you for making our ministry here possible. Despite the

sunny skies we are putting up the umbrellas in expectation of the rainstorms that will come as a result of your prayers. Feel free to cut out the Prayer Corner below to help focus your prayers for our ministry this month.

Watching and Preparing for Rain,

Ricardo, Beth, Juliana and Jonathan Gomez

Change Update

You may remember reading our May Newsletter that we were going to have to move this month. We praise God for the blessing of allowing us to stay in this home after the landlord changed his plans to move back into it. You will not need to update your address books for at least another year. Yahoo!

Reality Check

Did you know that most Chilean pastors work at least two jobs and still make \$6,000 or less per year to raise their families? In Santiago alone we have construction workers, janitors, taxi drivers and more preaching the Good News. As I met and listened to the Chilean Pastora's stories at the recent retreat, my heart was touched by their deep devotion despite their desperate needs.

This stark reality in Chile, pastors living well below the poverty line, is repeated in most other countries throughout Latin America. It is probably repeated throughout the world.

The Chilean Conference has decided to give Christmas baskets of non-perishable food items to every Chilean pastoral family this year. You can help alleviate needs as well by contributing to Country Shares for Chile or any other country.

If you are a Free Methodist and you, or your church, have made a commitment to help support Free Methodist World Mission's Country Shares, then we encourage you fulfill those commitments. If you haven't made a commitment and you can feel led to do so, then please contact us for more information.

Photo Box

Ricardo is both pastor and waiter during Alpha at Casa Grande.



Juliana enjoys participating in Alpha for Children (shown here with Kay Stotts Godoy).



Jonathan - goofing off as usual.



Fall scenery in Chile, those are vineyards in the foreground of the Andes.



Celebrating the first anniversary of another Free Methodist Church - Alvarez de Toledo.



Beth stops for a photo-op in front of the fountains in Ovalle, Chile.



Prayer Corner

As you join us in praying for rain this month, we ask that you remember the following concerns...

Continued spiritual and physical growth at Casa Grande and other churches in Santiago and Chile and Latin America.

Lives will continue to be permanently changed through the practical application of theological truths.

Full funding missionaries and national pastors and leaders in Latin America.

Wisdom and Flexibility to do God's will.

Good health despite the approaching winter weather.

Travel safety.

Our June Calendar

June 6: Santiago Pastor's Breakfast

June 13: Santiago Pastora's Breakfast

June 17: Ricardo teaches first Wesleyan Theology Class at Casa Grande as part of the Chile Seminary Extension Program. This class will meet every Wednesday for 10 weeks.

June 19: Father's Day celebration at Casa Grande

June 24-28: Ricardo teaches in Costa Rica

Every Thursday: Alpha for Children Planning Meeting

Every Saturday: Church service at Casa Grande

**Thank you for faithfully praying for activities and specific needs of the Gomez Family.
Serving Latin America through Free Methodist World Missions.**

Contact Us

Mailing Address:

Parque Quilin
La Hijuela Norte 5924
Penalolen
Santiago, Chile

US Telephone Number:

1-859-559-0628

Email:

bethandricardo@yahoo.com