

# “ESPERANZA ETERNA”

*Bringing Hope for Eternity to Latin America and Beyond*



## Mission Newsletter

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### March-April 2011: Guatemala

We spent the last week of March and the first two weeks of April in Guatemala. We were not able to do all we had hoped or planned to do, but along the way we had some unique opportunities we did not plan. We attended the Milpas Altas church two Sundays while we were in Guatemala. Raul Tercero (a Baxter graduate) and his wife, Abi, attend this church; his parents also attend there, having moved to Milpas Altas from Guatemala City. The first Sunday we were there, Hilario and Teresita invited us to their house for lunch after worship. We enjoyed a great meal and a leisurely afternoon of visiting. Later we walked to the apartment of Raul and Abi and spent some more time together before we took the bus back to Antigua.

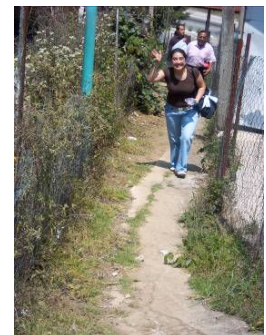
One unique thing about being in Guatemala during the time immediately before Semana Santa (Holy Week) is the opportunity to see the processions and alfombras (rugs or carpets, pictured above at right) on the weekends. Raul and Abi's apartment overlooked the town square and Catholic Church so we were able to see the different alfombras as we walked to their apartment and we also had a clear view of the procession.



On Thursday evening we attended Bible study at the Antigua church. I introduced us simply as Bob and Jan. After the study, we were asked again, “What are your names?” I said, “I am Brother Bob and this is my wife, Jan.” One of the young ladies there asked, “THE Brother Bob, from Baxter?” Yes! The young lady was Faustina, wife of Esteban Marroquin, a brother I met at a Baxter Seminario the previous year. Esteban was ill on Thursday, but we connected on Saturday morning for breakfast (picture, left), and we spent the day together, visiting with Esteban and Faustina in their home in San Juan del

Obispo, and also visiting their shop in the artisan's market. Esteban is a leatherworker and makes and sells various leather goods. They wanted to give us something—I chose a belt and Jan a pair of sandals.

The second Sunday at Milpas Altas, I was asked to preach. Afterward we were invited to have lunch at the home of Amanecer (Erandi). We took a bus across town, then changed buses to go to San Bartolo, got off the bus and walked about a third of a kilometer to where a mountainside path left the roadway. We walked up the path for about 10 minutes and arrived at Erandi's house. (Picture at right is Erandi, who was behind me as we walked upward.) We shared a delightful afternoon of visiting, getting back to Antigua just before dark.



We Christians take our fellowship for granted and do not recognize the uniqueness of such times together. On Monday after our first visit to Milpas Altas, Jan's language teacher asked her about her weekend activities. (Many of those who study in Antigua's language schools spend the weekend at the beach, at the lake, or in other tourist activities.) Jan said that we

had attended church and then ate lunch with a family and spent the afternoon visiting in their home, and then visited in the apartment of another family. Her teacher asked, “Why would people invite you to their home? Why would you go to their house?” Of course, we consider it normal.

After the second weekend—visiting with Esteban and Faustina in their home on Saturday and having Sunday lunch at Erandi’s house, Jan’s teacher was again astonished, both that these Guatemalans would invite us to their homes and that we as North Americans would be willing to spend the time. We were reminded of how unique is our fellowship in Christ—something we take for granted, and something beyond the normal experience of many others.

The last few days in Guatemala were spent in Guatemala City. We went to the city on Thursday with Roberto Alvarez. I taught at BICA on Friday, presenting a six-hour leadership seminar (picture, right).



I presented a seminar at the Zone 8 church (picture, left), “The Importance of the Family of the Christian Leader.” There were about 125-150 present from 14 congregations. The seminar was well received and concluded with a lively question and answer session. On Sunday I preached at the Pinares church and that afternoon spoke at the dedication of an alcoholic and drug treatment center, El Sembrador (the Sower).

We enjoyed our time with the brothers and sisters in Christ, and also the opportunity to study and practice our Spanish. We had an interesting Bible study with two Canadian ladies we met—in Spanish, since their primary language was French. The time flew by and was filled with many varied activities. Unfortunately, we were not able to visit the San Lorenzo church as we had originally planned.

## **May 2011: Honduras**

On May 9, the day after Mother’s Day, we flew to Honduras. (On May 8, I preached at the Kiowa church. This church has a great interest in mission work and we were pleased to have the opportunity to spend time with them.) We arrived in Honduras in time to finalize preparations for Seminario Baxter where I taught a class (picture, left). We enjoyed renewing friendships in Christ and making new friends. On campus we also enjoyed hosting Erik Tryggestad from the “Christian Chronicle” as he visited campus to work on a feature story about Baxter.



On Sunday evening, May 15, I spoke on the national television program sponsored by the churches of Christ in Honduras. Thursday evening I preached at Los Pinos and the following Sunday I preached at the Guanacaste church. Along the way we enjoyed time with Bob and Bonnie Hooper (Bob was the keynote speaker). We also enjoyed our time with Howard

and Jane Norton, although Howard was in the US during our last week in Honduras. We saw him at the airport through the glass divider as he was arriving in Honduras and we were leaving.



## **Thank You for your Prayers and Support**

*I would be happy to share our mission story or the Baxter story with your congregation.* We are thankful for your support and for the opportunity to be involved in spreading the gospel in Latin America. We appreciate your prayers on behalf of the work we share.

*Que Dios le bendiga (may God bless you),*

**Bob and Jan Young**

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