



... Partnering with the Holy Spirit to empower Mexican people to grasp all of God's full purpose

Dennis and Lucy Smith, missionaries to Mexico

www.ManosdeDios.org

January 2009 Newsletter

Newsletter includes:

Mission trip to Huachinera, Sonora with Compañerismo Cristiano church of Puerto Peñasco to undergird a new church and missionaries. Read more about....

- Home visits to build relationships
- Jesus shared with women, men and children
- Music, dramas and Gospel bracelets shared with the children
- Hearts touched and numbers added to the new church in Huachinera.

Praises and prayer requests



This month's main project was not in Puerto Peñasco. We traveled to the community of Huachinera in the Sierra Madre Mountains in eastern part of the state Sonora to work with a young missionary couple, Heidi and Conrad. While attending Peñasco Christian Fellowship Church (Compañerismo Crisitano) in Puerto Peñasco they received a calling from God to be missionaries in the community of Huachinera and they responded last year to that call. Lucy and I drove down from Tucson and a group of 20 folks from Peñasco Christian Fellowship, under the leadership of Pastor Stan Tedrow, drove over from Peñasco. We met in Huachinera for a week of missions activities, directed by Heidi and Conrad. For a narration of the trip see article "...as told by Dennis".

Jesus shared through home visits in Huachinera

Missionaries Heidi and Conrad had planned for our mission team's visit to Huachinera. They felt they were led by the Holy Spirit to plan home visits with women and men in the community. They pray fully selected some families and went to talk with them before our arrival. They asked each woman if a pair of women could come spend a morning with them...doing whatever they would be doing that day. They said we would be willing to help clean, cook or with any other tasks. They asked each man if a pair of men could come spend a morning with them...working alongside them. After pray fully preparing ourselves, we set out to go on our home visits. I was paired with Daisy, Heidi's younger sister. She is bilingual, so she could help me if I got stuck (understanding or expressing myself in Spanish). We walked to Margarita's home. She welcomed us into her small home. She was preparing burritos on her wood burning stove. She wanted us to sit and visit with her. We shared about our families and got to know each other. She then needed to walk to the local elementary school to take lunch (the burritos) to her two younger sons. We enjoyed the brisk walk through the hilly

community. We greeted her neighbors and I'm sure we were noticed by all who saw us walking with Margarita. When we returned to her home, we offered to clean up her front yard. She was embarrassed, but we assured her our yards were not perfect in Peñasco. We picked up trash and raked. We then joined Margarita in her tiny kitchen again. We had an opportunity to share parts of our testimony with her and she shared some of her experience with the church. She was 'born Catholic', but doesn't attend mass often. The three hour visit passed quickly. We asked her if we could pray for her and her family of three sons and husband. She

appreciated our prayers and we left feeling we had given her encouragement and shared woman to woman. Daisy and I prayed for Margarita more that day and evening. The next morning our entire missions team walked to each house that we had made home visits the previous day. We took a gift of **dispensas** (bags of



praying to accept Jesus



rice, beans, canned food, blankets and other necessities) to each family. Daisy and I knocked on Margarita's door. Her sister was visiting (she has 2 sisters and a brother, plus their families living in Huachinera) and they both came out front. They were a little self conscious when they saw the large group out front of her house. Daisy and I hugged her in a greeting and felt a continued close repore from the previous day. We had a beautiful, hand embroidered pillow to give her. The design included the colors of the Gospel message. We asked her if we could share the meaning of the colors embroidered on the pillow. She

was delighted with the beautiful gift and she and her sister listened as Daisy, Heidi and I shared the Gospel message. When it came time to ask her if she understood and if she would like to pray to accept Jesus into her heart, she quietly said 'Yes'. We prayed with her and then shared the last two colors. We tearfully hugged and gave her the pillow. The group then took then **dispensas** into her home and we walked on to the next family's home.

EVERY family that had been visited the day before prayed to accept Jesus into their heart upon the return visit from their new friends! Wow! We were impacted with the power of personal relationships. Simply sharing life together, showing people they are cared for, and telling them about God's love for them.



Dennis and Lolo deliver dispensas

These families make up the start of the Temple Belen church family. Some attended the worship service Wednesday evening and we pray they will continue to grow in their faith and become a part of this new Christian fellowship.

Thank you, Lord, for drawing these precious ones into Your Kingdom!

What a privilege to be used by God to show His love to these men and women. This was my first experience of leading a woman and a child to Jesus in Spanish!

“You are awesome and worthy of Praise, Lord Jesus!”

....Lucy

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Trip to Huachinera...as told by Dennis

We crossed the border at Douglas, purchased the personal and vehicle permits and were on our way through uncharted territory into the high Sierra Madres. The first six hours of driving through desert and ascending rolling hills were uneventful except for one stop at an army check point. The military personnel were polite and we passed without any problem. We had been following Conrad's parents from Benson and they suggested we stop in Moctezuma for lunch. We were take a break from driving and hoped that may be the group from Peñasco would just happen to pass by and we could all caravan together from there. Just as we were getting ready to leave the restaurant, the group from Peñasco passed by and we were able to hook up with them for the remainder of the trip. What a blessing, as there is always safety in numbers (in Mexico, especially)!

As we started up the mountains the terrain turned to high desert and cedar trees. An hour into the last four hours of the drive the road got real interesting. There were many curves (253 curves in a 35 mile stretch and 49 within four miles – I counted them on the way down); narrow pavement; no guard rails; steep drop offs; horses, cows, and



burros on the road grazing; and many steep inclines only to drop down into a hidden valleys and then back up again. Now I know how bandits and Indians could hide out in the mountains and never be found.

We arrived in the town of Huachinera (population 1000) just before sunset, had dinner and then started right in sorting and cleaning pinto beans from their farm (we had to clean enough frijoles to feed our group of 32 people for a week, for dinner to feed the entire town and to give in *dispensas* later in the week!).

At nine thirty we were ready for bed!

The hotel (all 7 rooms) was nothing fancy. I was so glad I followed Lucy's advice and brought along a heater and extra blanket and heavy comforter. Their little oil heater was not up to keeping the room warm when it



got down to 23 degrees and you could see thru the cracks in the door! But I was just glad I had a room and was not sleeping on the ground!

The week went wonderfully. We had perfect weather and three big, hearty meals a day. They butchered a cow the day before we arrived so we had beef. So much beef that by the end of the week I was praying for chicken, and I love beef! Heidi had things so organized we were like a well oiled machine. She even had people lined up for us to visit, work with and to do chores with.

I did say we were on a mission trip so I guess I better get to what we were there for. Both days and evenings were busy. During the morning the women went to homes in the community and assisted the women with whatever they needed (Lucy will tell you that part). Men helped men: some of us helped in a tire shop, some made adobe bricks, some cut wood and some just visited. Afternoons were spent; going to the community of Tamichopa about 30 miles away to visit, share testimonies, invite the people to Huachinera for a children's outreach, movie night and to pick up clothing donations, and to deliver 2



Templo Belen, new Church in Huachinera

pounds of barbacoa (BEEF) to each home. Tamichopa is an American Indian community of about 10 houses and 60 people. They are from the Kickapoo tribe out of the Oklahoma/Kansas area. In the 1800's they decided to go to Mexico rather than go on a reservation in the United States. It was a beautiful community but not very modern as you can imagine. We also passed out 200+ flyers inviting the community of Huachinera to a fiesta (food and fun for the children) to be held Tuesday evening and to the dedication service of the first Evangelical Church, Templo Belen (Bethlehem) in Huachinera. And one afternoon we went to the community plaza to distribute clothing to people living in the surrounding areas.



Clothing distribution

Evening activities were different. Tuesday night we opened the doors of the Community **Salon de Eventos** (Community Event Center ...every community has one) and served a free meal to the community. A short message was presented and many of our team shared their testimonies (including Lucy). Wednesday night was the dedication of the new church and the official introduction of the pastors. There was also a short message with praise and worship, healing service and time of prayer. Thursday night was a road trip. We headed up the mountain to the town of Aribabi. We were all



children of Aribabi enjoy balloons & learn Bible songs from clowns

dressed as clowns, except me. I was dressed as a mime (as I don't speak much Spanish...yet!) As we drove into town and down the main street we blew our horns and waved balloons to the people of the community, all 250 of them. As we pulled up to the **Salon de Eventos** we were followed by many children. This program was for the kids! We made animals and swords out of balloons, there was bubble making, clowning around and we played games. There were also fun messages of Noah's Ark, Zackeas, Queen Ester, and David and Goliath with me as a mime getting the children to read the story out loud for me.

Friday, the last night, we were again dressed as clowns and returned to the **Salon de Eventos** in Huachinera. This event was a family event. Along with all the games, messages and fun activities we included face painting and sack races. The songs and dramas shared the message of God's love. The gospel message bracelets communicated the complete Gospel message to the children. Many children came forward to pray to accept Jesus into their heart. Praise God! At the end of the activities we cleaned up the salon and sat up chairs and prepared to re-invite the community back in to see a family movie called "The Road to Redemption."

In my eyes I think the week was a successful one.

There were no major problems, the team worked well together, we were able to talk to and minister to many different people with food, blankets, clothing, and wood for their stoves. But, most importantly we were able to share Jesus with the community. How He loves us, forgives us, and accepts us into His family...upon our asking. With that in mind, I think He also thinks the trip was a success.

Dios te bendiga,

Dennis Dennis@ManosdeDios.org



Home visit Snapshot

Heidi and I were going to pick up some of our group after the home visits. At one particular house, I could smell the odor from the wood burning stove as we approached. The mesquite wood was the first thing I detected. As we got near I could smell the sweetness of sugar, then the familiar scent of fresh tortillas. I also heard the sound of laughter and joyful talking coming from the house. As we entered, we were overcome by the love of Jesus that had taken over this small building. We entered this 2 room home and were surrounded by laughter, smiles, welcoming gestures and an invitation to be a part of this celebration. As we laughed and talked I could

detect the smell of flour and cinnamon, and I knew there must be fresh cookies around somewhere. I was right! As we visited, the lady of the house took a fresh batch of sugar cookies from her wood burning oven/stove. They looked and tasted delicious.

Later I found out that the owner of the house had been very depressed and had little reason to continue on. Our ladies showed her the love of Jesus and this was just what she needed...when she needed it.

Praise you Lord for your perfect timing and the gift of encouragement!....Dennis

Gospel message colors (as used on the embroidered pillow and beaded bracelet)

Yellow: Represents Heaven. Do you believe in God? Do you believe in Heaven? God is there even if we can't see Him.

Black: We are 'dirty' due to our bad choices. We are separated from God.

Red: The only thing that can wash us clean is God's love represented by Jesus' blood. No one is holy. That is why God had to send someone special to die for us. It was Jesus, God's Son. It is His blood that washes us clean. He loves you and me.

White: If we want to be clean, we need to ask Jesus personally to wash us with His blood...to wash our souls clean, like this white color. We can pray right now and He will hear our prayer. Would you like to pray with me now?

"Thank you God, for sending Jesus for me. Thank you, Jesus, for dying on the cross for me. I have done many bad things. Please forgive me and cleanse my heart with Your blood. I want go to Heaven and to live forever with you, Lord. It is not because I have been good, but because You, Jesus, have washed away all the bad things for me right now. Thank You, Jesus. Please come into my heart and stay with me forever. I pray this in your name, Jesus. Amen."

Blue: Thank you for praying! The blue color represents the Holy Spirit. When you asked Jesus to cleanse your soul, God gave you the Holy Spirit to stay live of you, from now on and forever. He will communicate how much Jesus loves you and guide your life if you ask him to.

Green: The green means 'growing in Jesus'. Going to church and getting to know more about God is very important. Talk with God often and share your life with Him. He is going to bless you! Now share the meaning of this pillow (or bracelet with a friend).

Reference: John 3:16

**child who prayed to accept
Christ with her Gospel message bracelet!**



Thank you for your generous donations!

January 2009 trip to Huachinera: Donations to missionaries, the community and their church

25 soccer balls and soccer bag
12 ball caps
4,000 pencils
225 pencil sharpeners
225 scissors
3 dry erasers
15 pair kids shoes
5 adult shoes
50 kids school gift boxes
110 beanie babies
2 pillows
60 towels
50 blankets
50 sheets
\$35.00 in cash donations

Donations taken to Puerto Peñasco

7 sheet sets
4 blankets
2 pair shoes (men prison mission)
Spanish/English study work books (men prison ministry)
Women's feminine supplies (women's prison ministry)

We are blessed to be a blessing!

Day Trip Snapshot

Friday morning and afternoon was set aside to relax and see some of the surrounding communities. So we took a road trip (who cares that the next day we were going to have a 12 hour road trip back to Peñasco?) As we drove further north and east we visited the communities of Bavspe and Bacerca. They are typical small Mexican pueblos with the town square and a Catholic Church at each center. What I found interesting was that no matter how small the community was, they all had paved streets!



Friday lunch, we were treated to a barbecue (beef, of course) on the banks of a river that actually flows north to Aqua Prieta and then makes a U-turn and heads back south. Figure that one out!

Along with the carne asada, we had beans, tortillas, and salsa. What a relaxing time to enjoy the water, fellowship and rest up for the evenings activities. ...Dennis

Peñasco

Lucy and I spent the next five days in Peñasco doing our prison ministry, visiting and talking to people and attended a few meetings. We also visited a few people that desperately need a home and discussed their circumstances. We have teams lined up to build and repair homes and we are meeting families to consider for these blessings. We are praying for God's perfect purpose and plan.

Lord, what are you teaching me?

"The kingdom of heaven is like treasure hidden in a field. When a man found it, he hid it again, and then in his joy went and sold all he had and bought that field." Matthew 13:44

I want to focus on the joy that is found in my God. I am asking, "What is important in your eyes, Lord?" "Teach me to see with your eyes, Christ."

AMEN

....Lucy

Manos de Dios' Praises and Prayer Requests:

- Thank you, Lord, for this opportunity to travel to Huachinera and all you taught us through this experience.
- Please bless and protect Heidi and Conrad Quiroz' mission work and family. (Their mission name is Mission Impossible. For more information check out their website: www.ImpossibleMinistries.com)
- Please guide us as we plan for future Manos de Dios house building projects.
- Give us wisdom and direction as we seek to encourage pastors and their evangelical churches in northern Sonora.
- Please provide for the many men (and woman) in Puerto Peñasco who cannot find work.
- Please raise up leaders both inside and outside of the prison for our prison ministry program.
- Thank you for the team that will be coming from Medicine Lodge, Kansas to build a parsonage home with Manos de Dios for Pastor Ruben and his family in Desemboque. Guide them, protect them, and provide for them as they prepare to travel in March.
- Bless the SO MANY donors that support God's work in Sonora by donating to Manos de Dios.



**Heidi and son,
Max**

Manos de Dios encourages and equips families, pastors, prisoners and communities in Sonora, Mexico. We are trusting in God totally to provide for our needs and the needs of those we reach out to. Please consider partnering with

Manos de Dios, a 501 c 3 not-for-profit corporation. Your tax-deductible donations will have ETERNAL value as they impact lives for Christ in Sonora, Mexico!

Donations can be made on our website www.ManosdeDios.org or with checks made payable to Manos de Dios, NFP. Contact us for our mailing address and/or online banking donation information.

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