



# Manos de Dios, Hands of God Ministries

## September 2015 Newsletter

*Sharing the message of Jesus with indigenous people in northern Arizona and Mexico*



### Struggles of Moms! ...by Lucy

Motherhood is a blessing! ***“See, children are a gift from the Lord. The children born to us are our special reward.”*** Psalm 127:3

Yet, moms all over the world have struggles. From the challenges of pregnancy all the way through child-raising and then even parenting “adult” children. Through contact with the clients at the Living Hope Center and the mothers and host moms of “our girls” going to school in Tucson, I am constantly encountering the deep struggles mothers face.

- A young woman wrestles with the decision whether to make a plan for adoption for the baby she is carrying. She is barely able to provide for the other two little girls she has, especially when one has health problems. But, pressure from her family and the family of the father of her baby influences her decision to keep and parent the child because her ultra sound shows that he is a boy.
- A single mom of two children and a new baby shares her prayer request for housing for her family. She lives with her parents and two adult sisters who are deeply addicted to alcohol. She so wants to protect her young children from these negative effects but is told that the waiting list for a house from the tribal housing authority is 4 years!
- A mom misses her daughters terribly while they are away for school. She depends on them for so much and in some ways “parentifies” the girls, telling them they are her strength and emotional stability.
- A godly mom hurts as her teenage daughter becomes pregnant and then on her 18th birthday moves in with her 16-year-old boyfriend and his mom. She prays her daughter will return to God and choose to live righteously.

***“O Lord, You created families and know all the challenges mothers face. So often I don’t know how to pray and what to say to encourage these women. Please, Holy Spirit, pray and move on behalf of these precious women and their children. I pray that You work Your justice, truth and wise counsel in their lives! Rain down on these women with Your love, grace and peace, I ask in Your most powerful Name, Jesus! Amen!”***



**Naomi with daughter Taydra holding niece Aubrey**

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## Sad Consequences....by Dennis

It is with extreme sadness that we report that one of our girls, Jacy, had to leave Desert Christian School and return to the Reservation to go to school.

It is not important for us to tell you the reason why this happened, however, we will say that the infraction that caused her return to the Reservation was serious enough that the host family was not willing to house her and be responsible for her anymore.

This return was a devastating blow to many people and there were many questions and “what if’s” asked. The bottom line is that Jacy had to return to the Rez for a number of reasons. Foremost, she violated the trust of her host family and she ignored one of the conditions of coming to Tucson to go to school. Also, we had no other host family to take Jacy into their home. It is hard enough to find host families, but finding a home for a student who has made poor choices is doubly hard.



**Jacy is now attending Alchesay High School on the Reservation**

As you can imagine, the other four girls are deeply impacted by this occurrence. They know beyond a shadow of doubt that Dennis and Lucy are serious about the requirements stated to be able to come to and stay at Desert Christian Schools. We have discussed this with each girl (and their host parents) and affirmed that they are not at risk of having to leave unless they break a very serious rule, also AND their host family indicates that they may not stay with them any longer. Each of the girls is praying for Jacy (such sweet prayers!) and concerned about her future on the Rez.

### **We ask that you pray for Jacy. Please pray:**

- that Jacy will come to a place of repentance and seek help in turning from her sin
- that Jacy would run back into Jesus’ forgiving arms and choose again to live for Him
- that Jacy not get caught up in the many violent and sinful activities that are so prevalent among the students at her new school and on the Reservation
- and that God would use this event in her life for good

We don’t know how, but we trust that God will be glorified in this and that it will be a turning point in Jacy’s life. Thank you!

Lucy is staying in touch with Jacy and her mom. Thankfully, Jacy is getting involved in a Johns Hopkins Entrepreneurship Education Program at her high school. They currently have a small business (Arrowhead Café and Gift Shop at Ft. Apache) for the students to work in. They also provide weekend and holiday activities to develop healthy relationships and learn leadership and business skills for the future.

***“Watch and pray that you may not enter into temptation. The spirit indeed is willing, but the flesh is weak.”***

***Mark 14:38***

## Life in Tucson and at Desert Christian Middle School! ...by Lucy



**Thearsa plays volleyball on the Desert Christian Middle School team**

Middle school is tough! Add living far away from your mom and siblings and your 'Native' culture in a host family home. Thearsa (7th grade) and Naomi (6th grade) are working hard at being successful. Academics are still tough as they continue to work to 'catch up' with their classmates. Dennis and I experienced first hand what a week in the life of Desert Christian Middle School students is like when we filled in for Thearsa and Naomi's host parents for eight days!

Middle School homework that week included reading and book reports, math, memorizing spelling words and their weekly Bible verse, putting together a timeline of Jesus' life (using PowerPoint!), and writing poetry plus formatting it on the computer. Add to this practices and games for volleyball (Thearsa) AND flag football (Naomi) and we had a very full week!

The girls have a good attitude even though their weekday schedules are very hectic. We did make time for fun including swimming\*, going to a movie ("War Room"...excellent movie about the power of prayer!), and a school party at Peter Piper Pizza\*\*. Our daily schedule included morning devotions and night-time prayers. We had precious time to listen to the girls' hearts and pray with them about their concerns.



Thank you for your prayerful and financial support that makes possible this Biblical education opportunity for these two precious lives! We don't know what the future holds, but trust God for His good plan for Thearsa and Naomi.

*"For I know the plans I have for you, declares the LORD, plans for welfare and not for evil, to give you a future and a hope. Then you will call upon Me and come and pray to Me, and I will hear you. You will seek Me and find Me, when you seek Me with all your heart."* **Jeremiah 29:11-13**

**(above) \*\* Thearsa and Naomi and school friends enjoy a ride at the the school party/fundraiser at Peter Piper Pizza.**

**(right) \*Naomi, Thearsa and Riscilla cool off in our daughter, Megan's pool in Tucson over Labor Day weekend.**

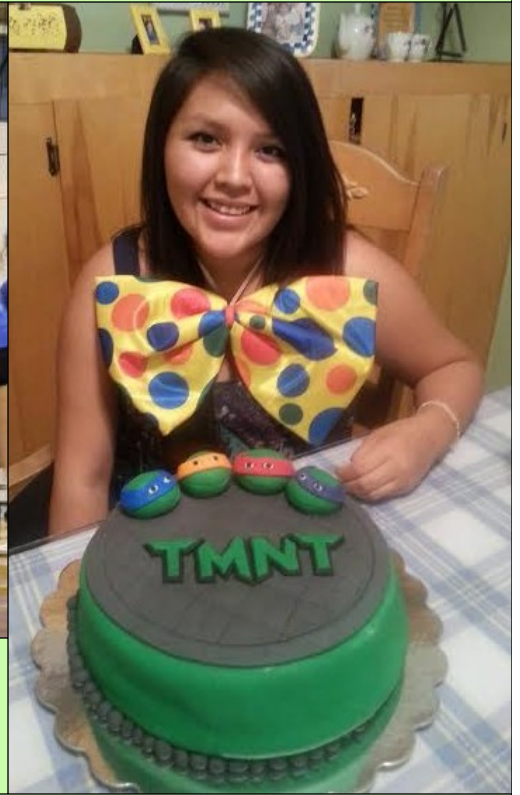




# Life at Desert Christian High School



*Riscilla, #6, starts on the  
Desert Christian High School volleyball team*



*Celebrating Drelyn's 15th birthday:  
(above) Drelyn with her  
requested "Teenage Mutant Ninja  
Turtle" cake (created by her host  
mom, Darla).*

*Last year's host family, the  
Smith's, hosted the fun party  
(below) for an entire sophomore  
class of teenagers!*

*Thank you for blessing Drelyn!*

**Riscilla and Drelyn are thriving at Desert Christian High School. We are so proud of them as they maintain good grades while participating in extra-curricular activities: Riscilla starting on the JV volleyball team and Drelyn working on the set-crew for the upcoming school musical.**

**They are both adjusting to their new host families and participating in church activities.**

*"Thank you, Abba Father, for providing this awesome Christian education for these precious girls.*

*Please, Lord, continue to strengthen them by the power of Your Holy Spirit to stay pure, to choose good friends, and to stay focused on their school work.*

*Please bless their host families and give them patience and wisdom as they blend these young ladies from the White Mountain Apache Reservation with their household.*

*I ask that You comfort and give peace to their mom and brother in Whiteriver as they miss Riscilla and Drelyn. Encourage them with Your promise of a future and a hope for these beautiful young ladies.*

*In Jesus' name we pray. Amen!"*





## Respite care at Hope House Maternity House...by Lucy



Another ministry of Living Hope Centers is a maternity home for expectant and new mothers needing a safe, supportive environment that they are not finding elsewhere. It is another way that this ministry fulfills its mission to *“remove obstacles, build strong families and honor life”*. We have referred clients from our Whiteriver center to this loving home. When the house parents travel out of town there is a need for others to fill in, providing “respite care.” I have had the privilege of loving on these moms and children two different weekends in the past month. Dennis even helps out in the evenings: loving on the babies/toddlers and driving us all to church in the extra-long van the home provides. What a powerful ministry to offer to women who find themselves in un-planned pregnancies! It is another way to encourage pregnant women to choose life for their babies...and themselves!

*Let's all take every opportunity to speak out for the lives of the unborn!!*



**Taydra, Naomi's daughter,  
with her new-born daughter,  
Kinsley  
(not living at the  
Hope House)**



**Dennis holds 2-week old  
Adalyn at the  
Hope House**

## Being “Salt and Light”!

Pastor Ernie of The Church in Pinetop focused on verses from Matthew 5. At the conclusion of his message he reminded us of Jesus’ instructions to His disciples (and to us!)

**“You are the salt of the earth...You are the light of the world. A city set on a hill cannot be hidden.”** Matthew 5:13-14

One of the characteristics of salt is that it is a preservative. Pastor Ernie admonished us to be preservatives in the lives around us. “Keep good things from going bad!”, he encouraged.

This message deeply impacted us.

*“Yes, Lord,” we prayed, “help us keep good things from going bad around us....marriages, teenagers, children, mommies, daddies. Show us how to be the ‘preservative’ you have called us to be at the Living Hope Center, at the Hope House Maternity Home, and among our girls in Tucson , their host families and their families on the Rez.”*

Pastor Ernie continued. “Cities in the old days were built on a high place so they could be seen and located (before the days of GPS!) They were strategically placed...to show the way. Just as you, as a Christ-follower, are strategically placed among the people God has you rubbing shoulders with to show them The Way.”

*“Father God, You have placed us right where You want us. Help us to be that LIGHT, showing the way to You! Give us boldness, wisdom and insight as we talk with clients, girls, parents, neighbors, and friends to share You as the ANSWER! Fill us with love for You and those we rub shoulders with everyday!”*

Mathew 5 concludes with verse 16: **“In the same way, let your light shine before others, so that they may see your good works and give glory to your Father who is in heaven.”**

**Amen! And may all we do bring**

**GLORY to our Father, Jesus and Holy Spirit!!**

*In humility and gratitude, Dennis and Lucy Smith*

## CONTACT US!

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*Tax-deductible contributions may be sent to:*

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or made on our website:

[ManosdeDios.org](http://ManosdeDios.org)



**Naomi and Thearsa enjoy a hike on Mt. Lemmon with their host parents.**