

We hope the following highlights will help you find and read what interests you.

Main Topics

Main Points

Prayer Requests/Praises

Dear Friend, Encourager, Partner-in-Mission,

***“His name is the Lord – and rejoice before Him. A father to the fatherless...
...and from Your bounty, O God, you provided for the poor.” Psalm 68: 4,5,10***



In early January, we had met 5-yr old Antony who, last October, lost his father, his 6-month old baby sister and mother (who was a firefighter) in a fatal car accident. Corporal Edison and 5 of his firefighter friends had invited us to visit Antony and to minister to his grandmother (who is mentally-ill) and an aunt, neither of whom have the resources to care for him. Edison and his friends had collected money to give to Antony's aunt to temporarily ease their financial burden. San Luis, the small village in which they live, lacks the professional resources to help this family-in-need. When we left that day, we assured them that “With God's help, we are 'here to stay' to help take care of Antony.”

The day of our visit, we observed that this 5-yr old did not speak a word but would only smile and laugh nervously in our presence. We discussed our observations with various Ecuadorians who explained that this is a sign of deep emotional pain and distress. At this point, we have great concern and believe that Antony needs counseling and special care to help him get through this difficult time in his very young and tender life.

Three months later, we are still trying to find a way to get Antony the help that he needs! (Things in Latin America often proceed more slowly than one would like them to.)

The next step is for Edison, Darrell and I to visit a Christian children's home and orphanage in Conocoto, where Darrell and I have sponsored 3 children in the past 9 years. Edison would like to tour the facility, talk with the director and other staff face-to-face, and then discuss whether to present the idea to the family to have Antony live there.

Please pray that we are able to schedule this meeting soon, that the meeting would go well, and that if it is the Lord's will, that Antony's grandmother, aunt, or perhaps a social worker, would agree to have Antony be cared for in this wonderful place where he would come to know the deep, caring, endless love of His Heavenly Father!



We had been praying about how to transport more natural medicines and supplements from the U.S. to Ecuador. When we arrived here last August 11th, we were able to bring a 6-month supply, but by February 11th we would run out of the things we needed. In August we had emailed the Bible Camp Director at the orphanage because we were told that he might know someone who could transport more of our belongings from the U.S. to Ecuador. It had been several months that we did not hear from him. But one day, after feeling quite distressed about how these things would be transported, the Lord reminded us saying “When have I failed you?” We then asked for forgiveness for doubting His provision. That very afternoon, in early February, Mr. Brock contacted us and told us that in 3 days he would be flying to the U.S. and would then return to Ecuador 5 days later! We hurriedly contacted our Natural Physician in Idaho and ordered an additional 3-month supply (the quantity that he was able to transport). Our Dr. shipped them from Idaho to California where Mr. Brock was attending a board meeting. February 11th, exactly 6 months past our arrival, the items we needed arrived!

* * *

We had desired to wait until after language school to find our own apartment and appliances, but despite OUR plans, the Lord had something else in mind! The HCJB/RB director of International Medical Missions, Sheila, would be soon moving to Spain for at least 6 months and needed to rent out her house and downsize her belongings so that another missionary family could move in. Sheila sold us her refrigerator and washer at a great price. This was not only advantageous for us but also for our Ecuadorian family who could now have their refrigerator back for themselves - - - what a blessing for everyone! She also gave us some of her smaller household items and loaned us some of her furniture until her return!

Then at the end of February Darrell noticed a small hand-written ad displayed in a shop window for a 2-bedroom apartment. We had not planned on looking for apartments until we were finished with school but he strongly felt that we should look at it. Although he did not know why the Lord was prompting him to do this at this time, we discovered that this apartment was 3 blocks from the Carcelen Fire Dept , it was extremely inexpensive, and was located in a nicer part of our neighborhood with various trees and parks nearby! We still hesitated about moving in the middle of the semester so we looked at 4 other apartments in this price range and discovered that the Lord WAS offering us a wonderful place to live. So, we took a leap of faith and within 2 days, signed a 2-year contract (with the help of our professor)! Then in the Lord's goodness, our language school director and professor agreed to give us one week off from school to move into our new home (which we can make up at the end of the semester)!

Then just before our move on March 3, a missionary family contacted us to let us know that they were selling some tools. Darrell was able to purchase a number of used tools for less than ½ of what we would expect to pay for them. God's timing is absolutely awesome because during our move and with some minor repairs that were needed in our apartment, Darrell was able to put these tools to very good use! He will also be able to continue ministering to our Ecuadorian family who often needs things repaired around the house!

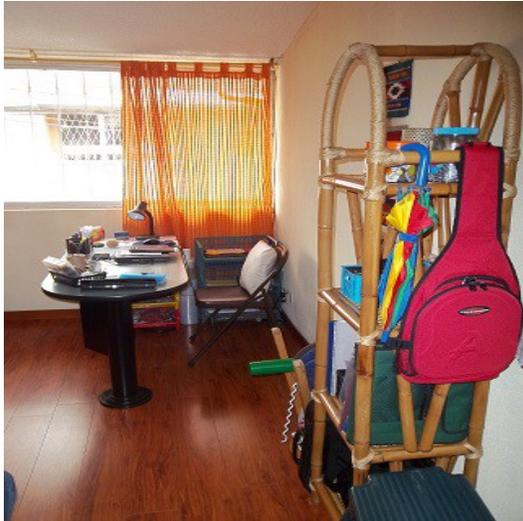
Our new landlady is awesome and our apartment is very secure. But one particular concern we had was the fact that we would be moving some "very nice and expensive-looking" furniture into our place that was loaned to us by Sheila and this might attract certain "dishonest individuals". I had imagined that a perfect situation might be to have the firefighters move us in, using one of the smaller red firetrucks, and that they would be dressed in their uniforms. Darrell just laughed and said "That would be great but that would just never happen". Because the Fire Chief had provided us with a driver and truck (his friend) to hire to move our furniture in the past Darrell knew that we could hire the same fellow again. But this time, the Chief insisted that he, and not his friend, would move us on one of the days when he was at work. When Darrell walked to the Department to let the Chief know we were ready, the Chief looked at 4 of the on-duty, young rookie firefighters and told them "go get the small red firetruck ready and move Mr. Holden!" You should have seen the look on the faces of the people in the neighborhood when we were moving in! Our Lord graciously provided us the answer to our "dream" and safely moved us into our new neighborhood!



Firefighters and Darrell on moving day.



Our long, narrow apt is above the sign. We enter the building through a small door within the white garage door.



This room faces the street and serves as our den, Sondra's office, and our future guest bedroom. It has a large picture window (with bars).



This room sits behind the den and serves as our living area and Darrell's office space. This room has no windows.



Our kitchen sits behind our living area. It has 2 sets of small obscure windows high up on the walls (with bars).



Our bedroom is beyond the glass kitchen door. It is 5 steps lower than the rest of our apartment. We are blessed to have 2 skylights in our bedroom! (But, also with bars!)

Despite having but only one window in our apartment through which to view of the outdoors (the view is only of a storefront and an alleyway), the vista from our rooftop brings us much pleasure. From there we can see the nearby mountains which our God has created and listen to the sounds of children playing in the nearby parks.

Living in a city of more than 2.5 million people can be dirty, crowded and noisy. But here we can enjoy His creation and we praise Him for this!



Living in our other home with 8 other people, 6 of whom did not speak English, and 4 of whom ranged from the ages of 3 to 16 years old, had been both challenging and exciting. We love our special Ecuadorian family. We have learned so much from them and they have greatly helped us to feel loved and accepted here.

Yet the Lord, in His perfect timing, has given us the opportunity not only to live independently but to continue building our relationship with our family by giving us a home in a nearby neighborhood!

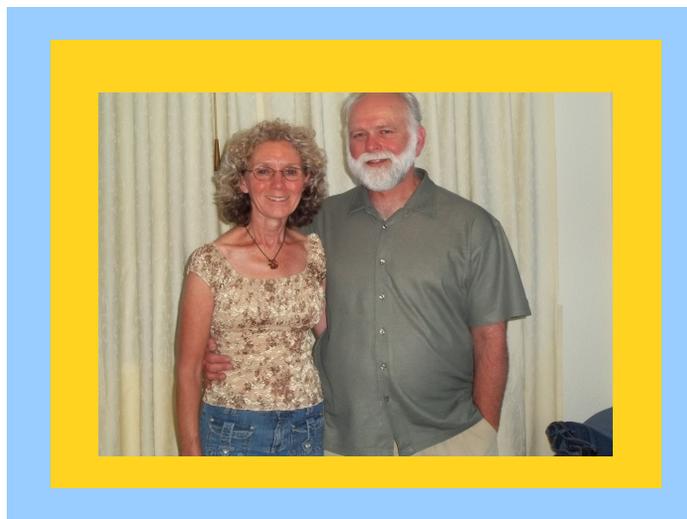
We now have independence, a tranquil habitation, and now have new opportunities to build relationships with other Ecuadorian people! We are excited to be living on our own and look forward to being able to invite people into our "home"! Please pray for opportunities to show hospitality to our neighbors and church family!

Thank you for your financial support, your encouragement, and your steadfast prayers!



Darrell and Sondra Holden

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