**BIANNUAL REPORT TO MENNONITE MISSION NETWORK**

by Cesar Moya and Patricia Ureuna August 1, 2013

We are thankful to God and all the people who work right along with us for the opportunity to serve as pastors of the Quito church and as national coordinators of the different ministries in Ecuador. The main part of our work during the first half of 2013 is as follows:

1. **Formation and follow-up of family groups** in Voz Andes, Calderon, Jardines del Inca and la Luz. We wish to thank Jeremias, Tatiana, Alba and Oswaldo, and Daniela for coordinating these groups. The groups have served as encouragement in the faith, creating friendship and commitment to the work of the Lord as well as attracting others to the Gospel.
2. **Beginning and continuing with the new work in Calderon.** The worship services in Calderon began March 18, 2013, in the refugee house. Several Colombian refugee families and other Ecuadorian women that live in the area were at that first service. Some of the delegates of the Partnership meeting attended that day, too. We are most grateful to Tatiana Jahyya for her self-sacrificing work as coordinating pastor of the new work. In October 2013, Caleb Yoder will be coming to give half-time pastoral support to the work in Calderon.
3. **Continuation of PROPAZ.** The program of Bible and theological studies for peace (PROPAZ) began in October 2012. So far, five congregational-level classes have been given to eighteen students. Two university-level classes have been given to twenty students. We are doing an evaluation of the program with the university-level students in order to improve some aspects of the program. We expect Caleb to arrive in October in order to work part-time in the PROPAZ program. We want to thank Mennonite Mission Network for your support of $325.00 given for PROPAZ.
4. Guidance and accompaniment to the congregation in drawing up **official statutes of the Ecuador Mennonite Anabaptist Christian Church (ICAME)**. We made a first-draft from which came a discussion leading to the final draft of the statute of the Ecuador Mennonite Anabaptist Christian Church (ICAME). We made the official announcement about the meetings for the discussion of the statue and took care of obtaining signatures and identification documents of the members to present to the Ministry of Justice. We are grateful to our sisters Gladys Montaluisa and Patricia Miranda, professional attorneys and members of our church for their legal advice during the discussions of the statute. We are grateful to Patricia Miranda for representing us before the Ministry of Justice until we are granted legal status.
5. Planning and taking care of the logistics of the **Anabaptist retreat** in May 2013 at the La Merced Baptist camp. We are indebted to Alba, David, and Tatiana for their help in preparations. Fifty-two people attended from Quito and Calderon and ten from Riobamba. We are grateful to Tim and Carol Detweiler for their presentations concerning the theme of “pastoral care among brothers and sisters of the church”. The retreat had a spirit of brother-sisterhood with interaction between the different age groups among those who attended. This took place during Bible studies, workshops and evening socialization. We want to thank the Mennonite Mission Network for giving $857 for the retreat. Of this $400 were used to pay for the people from Riobamba and $457 for those from Quito and Calderon. This retreat was taken care of with savings of the Quito church. The total cost of the retreat was $3000.
6. **Emotional and logistic support of people living in the refugee house** and where the new work at Calderon takes place. This became a need when they were evicted by the police through a complaint of next-door neighbors against Alexandra, the lady who rented us the property without being the owner. Due to this situation we have rented a new house located in the area of “Zabala” still within the same parish of Calderon.
7. **Planning and arranging for visitors** from Colombia and the United States in March for the Partnership Meeting.
8. **Visit to Colombia.** From March 18 to April 6 we were in Colombia with the delegates of the Quito church for the Partnership meeting, Colombia Mennonite Church assembly, and a pastoral actualization seminar. In the pastors’ seminar we were the presenters among more than seventy pastors and leaders of the Colombian churches. We also taught two intensive courses of the Colombian Mennonite Seminary. Patricia taught in Bogota and Cesar in Barranquilla.
9. For more than three months Cesar has been giving **guitar classes** to eight people from Calderon and Jardines de Inca. They are held each Wednesday at the Calderon church building with the purpose of improving music in the churches.
10. We took part in **CLAI workshops** concerning ”sexual and reproductive rights” in March and about “psychological support based in the community” in April. David, Alba and Alyssa also took part in these workshops.
11. **Relationships with the pastors and church at Riobamba**. May 17, we had a talk with the Riobamba pastor, William Valencia, in order to clarify concerns about our work and relationship with him and his wife and with the Riobamba church, which is a part of our role as National Coordinators (See the annex for the statement of agreement.). Because of health issues Luz Marina could not attend this dialogue. We have been following the state of Luz Marina’s health through telephone calls, emails and a visit to the Valencia home in Riobamba where we prayed for them and we expressed our solidarity at that time
12. **Beginning and following-up the Youth Life project.** The purpose of this project is to prevent early pregnancy in girls under the age of fourteen. We had meetings with the president, the board of directors and an assembly of the inhabitants of the area. We have also visited other institutions that have similar programs in order to learn from them. We have taken a survey with the help of the youth group from our church and the group, Youth Venture. We appreciate Alyssa’s willingness to coordinate the project and the support of the Quito Church youth.
13. **Beginning worship services in Jardines de Inca.** Opening services in Jardines de Inca was approved after several meetings of discernment with members of the church that live in that sector of town, with the Quito church council and with the entire Quito church group. July 28, 2013, was the first worship service with an attendance of thirty-five people. The Youth Venture group provided accompaniment and presented two special numbers. Oswaldo Moina, Alba Silva and Alyssa Rodriguez were installed as the brother and sisters in charge of the work.
14. Accompaniment of the church council, the congregation, and the commission of pastoral matters of the Quito Mennonite Church in the **transition of our leaving.** It isscheduled for April 2014. The church has understood our reasons for leaving and has a positive view about getting a new man or woman as pastor. The commission sent a request to the Mennonite Network for economic assistance for a new pastor.
15. **Preparation of new members**. For several Sundays we have been meeting to talk with people interested in becoming members of the Quito church. Last month eight of them were received into the fellowship through affirmation of faith. Another eight will be baptized in August.

Inspiring Story

March 18, 2013, we began services in Calderon with a spirit of happiness and enthusiasm on the part of those present. However, that happiness lasted only a few days. April 26, at 9:00 a.m. a judge from Quito came to the refugee house accompanied by thirty-five policemen with an order for immediate eviction. The families living there called us to explain the situation. Since David, Patricia and Alba were involved in a CLAI taller, within a few minutes as a pastor I went to be with Arcadio, Yuri, Leider, John and Darwin. When I arrived, I found a tumult of neighbors. The Colombian people that had been living in the house were in a state of despair, pain and tears. The families asked questions: Where can we go? Where can we find another house? Where can we put our things? What will we do with the children?

We asked the judge and the police to give us a few hours to find a place to store the things. Of course, for the authorities it was more important to carry out the order to completion than to listen to the lament of the refugees. In light of this, I encouraged the refugees to be non-resistant and to let the police take all the things out of the house and put it in the street. In spite of the rage they felt through what was happening to them and the new trauma of another eviction although this was not in their native land, they did what I suggested. And in a few moments the men dressed in green had places everything in the street, even to the last brick.

And now, what do we do? It was about noon. We decided that Yuri and the rest would stay there guarding the things in the street with the heat of the midsummer sun beating down on them and that Arcadio and I would go to hunt a place to store the things. “And, if we don’t find a place, where are we going to sleep?” Arcadio asked.

I tried to encourage Arcadio telling him that would not be a problem. That is what his house and the houses of the other brothers and sisters of the church were for. This gave Arcadio hope.

As the hours passed hop of finding other housing for the refugees faded. A lady named Mecedes rented a room, but it was very small to get everything into. So we asked her if she knew of another house and she showed us a small, abandoned, unpainted one, which she planned to fix up to rent in the coming weeks. We asked her to please let us see it. It could be an appropriate solution to the problem. In spite of it being abandoned for some time, we asked her if she would rent it to us and we could fix it. She agreed to that. Arcadio’s eyes shone with emotion and he gave thanks to God over and over again, saying, ”God is incredible!”

After several hours of anguish, at last there was a smile on his face.

After paying the rent to Mercedes, the landlady, Arcadio and my next job was to find a truck to move the things that were in the street. But that was not an easy job. For the two of us it was unbelievable that in one large area of the open market place where there were so many people there was not one truck available. After a long time the owner of one of the trucks appeared and we negotiated a price for the moving job. When we arrived to pick up the things, the faces of the refugees changed, because they imagined that they had a place to sleep that night. With an optimistic attitude, we began to put the things on the truck that had been in the street for several hours. Around 3:00 p.m. we arrived at the new house and we thanked God for this provision.

**Conclusions and recommendations**

The work in Quito continues to grow as well as the spirit and commitment of the brothers and sisters of the Incan church, and the new work in Calderon and Jardines del Inca. This has unleashed the use of many gifts in the churches with new people coming to church and new members. Due to that it is important to help Quito in searching for a new man or woman pastor who will follow up and accompany the different processes and projects when we leave.

The creation of the Ecuador Mennonite Anabaptist Christian Church (ICAME) will bring new structural and organizational challenges: naming national church authorities, drawing up internal regulations about different matters, presentation of the financial status to Ecuador government, choosing pastors, abiding by labor laws, creation of a national assembly, etc. For this phase a great deal of accompaniment and consultation will be required.