

Dear friends,

Thank you for your support of the work of the church in Ecuador. A lot has happened over the last number of months which gives me more to tell for this letter. I continue working in two main areas: pastoral ministry with the church plant in Calderon that meets at my house and coordination of the ProPaz theological education program.

The church in Calderón continues with an additional family and two young men that have moved here. We are glad to still have Nicolas and Victoria worshipping with us. They are an elderly Ecuadorian couple that are active in the church in spite of aches and pains. We continue with worship services on Sundays and a Bible study or small-group meeting on Thursdays (at this point we are still one “small-group”). As Colombians seeking refuge in Ecuador, Many of the families still live with precarious situations, and it is their trust in God that gives them strength. They are eager to share their gifts and ideas and have vibrant faith.

For at least four months I will have the support of María Helena López. María Helena arrived toward the end of July at the time of a visit from César and Patricia. She is a retired pastor and nursing home director from Bogotá, Colombia and is sharing leadership with me in Calderón. This will be of major help to me and will allow me to focus more energies in ProPaz. While the church is small, we try to have a close accompaniment with the families in their many needs.

The ProPaz program continues with workshops and courses. Luis Tapia, pastor at the Quito



*María Helena with the youngest participant in the church.*

church led the most recent workshop was on Communicating the Word of God (which includes but is not limited to preaching). Luis also finished a course on theology in Anabaptist perspective course in June and I just began a course called Biblical and Theological Path to Nonviolence. This course will maintain a focus on a commitment to nonviolence throughout, looking at the Old Testament, the life of Jesus, the early church, the early Anabaptists, contemporary forms of violence, and a spirituality of peace. I enjoy teaching and preparing for class, even if it is a challenge to find the time I would like to dedicate to preparation.

There have been many other happenings over the last couple of months. At the end of June, I had a needed break with the visit of my girlfriend Beth. She was able to participate in a Sunday service in Calderon and a Thursday small-group meeting, as well as spend time with Luis and his wife Jennifer. Of course we were also able to get away and do sight-seeing. I also accompany the events we have with the young people. We had an outing a couple of weeks ago to a Christian campground in the valley southeast of Quito that had a pool. In July the whole church celebrated with David Shenk and Eliana Tejedor in their marriage. David has worked in Ecuador with MMN for almost four years.

I am glad for the ways that God is present in the many activities of the church, always teaching us new things, and I am glad for the support and prayers that I receive here and abroad.

Prayer requests:

- Pray for the discernment and wisdom in the work that Maria Helena and I do in the Calderon church. Pray that God might bring more Ecuadorean participants to the church.
- Pray for persons seeking refuge in Ecuador and eventual resettlement due to being threatened by the violence in Colombia or elsewhere. Pray for their health, emotional strength, and steady employment here in Ecuador.
- Pray for the leadership and future of the Ecuadorian Anabaptist Mennonite Christian Church (ICAME) soon to receive official legal status in Ecuador.
- Pray that God will call those in the church with gifts for ministry to greater leadership within the churches.