

Porch de Salomon

Panajachel, Guatemala

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*Short-term mission teams
in Guatemala

*Humanitarian relief for
indigenous families and others

*Solomon's Porch
Café ministry

*Live music outreach

* Helping transform churches
and individuals



PorchTalk

Volume 121

August 2015

A LITTLE CHAOS

by Lloyd

We had a great and impactful July in Panajachel. We completed eight straight weeks of hosting large short-term teams who served, and worked alongside, our indigenous brothers and sisters. That, in and of itself, invites a little chaos; folks --aged 7 to 75, from all walks of life, hoping to have one of the best weeks of their lives--are going to keep it interesting.

Melanie and recently enjoyed a movie entitled "A Little Chaos." The lead character is a 17th century female landscape designer whose slightly chaotic, but more interesting, garden designs allowed her to build some of the famous gardens at Versailles.

Part of Porch's ministry "DNA" is our willingness to allow Jesus to shine through a bit of disorder and unpredictability; we take chances and we take chances on folks. Jesus did both (e.g. overturning moneychangers' tables in the temple). As per our team guidelines: *Sometimes it's complicated and even messy but we believe God often works best in "messes."* Without oxen a stable stays clean, but you need a strong ox for a large harvest. Proverbs 14:4

This past month also included: the Dirty Feet Mission interns living in the Deeds' house, while the Deeds lived in our house (as they prepare to move back to Indiana), while Melanie and I moved into our uncompleted new house/ packed worship gatherings with folks sitting on the floor/head lice/a wedding/ a friend's voluntary admission to drug rehab/Linda falling through a footbridge/Melanie dislocating a finger in a separate fall/taking out a mortgage to help Noe buy a house for his family/the death of one of "our" SESAN malnourished children (May God rest Dilia's soul and grant her family peace), among other things.

Fear not--all is well. The work and outreach and testimony are going very well! Thank you for resourcing this year-round work (which continues when we have no teams) and for your partnership and prayers. *Gracias a Dios y Adelante!*

It gets a little crazy when rain hits our works sites!



Below Left:
Wacissa UMC
team member
Randy wowed
the locals with
his masonry
skills

Below: Maxwell
St. Presbyterian
Youth (KY)
carry rebar for
foundations in
Chuiquel



"For the lost, the least, and the last"

(Below) Our Sharon Church/Hope for the Helpless team completely refurbished, sanded/painted, outfitted, and provisioned Maria and Alex Alberto's food cart. This was one of their afternoon/after house-building projects. They also received beds and a table.

Alex had wrecked his family life on a recent drunken bender, including selling their beds and furniture. He has been sober for months now. The food cart is working well and helping this family rebuild after a chaotic time in their lives.



Our friend and faithful mission partner Jim Thompson (wading, black shirt) used his engineering skills to shore up and rebuild the footbridge that Linda Lopez fell through. The Maxwell St. Presbyterian Youth (KY) were willing helpers.

UPDATE ON SAMUEL PAR

By Jayne Mittan, P.A.

Samuel is still out of touch with reality. He seems to have stopped his violent episodes, and allows his family to bathe him and change his clothes. He is not using the toilet yet.

His family seems encouraged by this little bit of improvement, but neighbors have approached them asking why they don't just poison him and be done with it? NOT!

We plan to increase his anti-psychotic meds and we expect continued improvement. The photo below shows me examining him July 24. Please join me in praying for him and his family.



(Above) Nurse Donna worked in Team Killearn UMC's free village medical clinics.
(Below) Team Sharon Church/HFH also provided beds and an Ecoplancha woodstove for Santa's family



PLEASE HELP US help Samuel and his family continue to improve with a tax-deductible donation to fund one month of his medicine: currently at \$125 monthly. *Gracias!*





ORDER FROM CHAOS

Building Antonia's family house (*left*) is our latest project. This 33 year-old single mother and seamstress earns \$50 monthly. Their leaky, cold, dirt-floor shack had no running water, electricity, or bathroom. Her alcoholic, abusive husband abandoned them two years ago. One example of the chaos of their lives is the oldest daughter's inability to attend school and possible PTSD.

In contrast, Vilma and her family's lives (which in many ways mirrored Antonia's family) will be more predictable and orderly since they moved into their new concrete block home last month (Porch's seventh for 2015!). We thank our teams and their supporters who funded and built this house.

Through generous donors, we are also helping them with milk for the twins, food for the family, school, and a sustainability plan. *Gracias a todos!*



MORGAN VAN HORN writes.....

I've never been welcomed into a home and extended "family" such as Porch de Salomon's. I now feel as if I have a family and a home of my own in Guatemala. Ofelia especially touched my heart; this little indigenous *nina*, and this trip, have become important stepping stones in my life. Here are three more of these "stones":

1. *We all smile in the same language.*

Guatemalans are generous with their ear-to-ear smiles, and I can feel God here. The people are simple, the gestures are simple. Their land, crops, and families are clearly important to them. I feel as if I can move mountains. We worked hard to help build Ofelia's family house; digging a ten-foot septic tank, hand mixing concrete, moving cinder blocks, or carrying water. There were endless laughs... along with daily "blood, sweat, and tears" as our team strived to make a difference. We were told to make our own connections with the children and families. Team leader "Flower Nancy" said they would steal our heart. I can assure you my heart was stolen but I'm not ready to take it back. I am okay with this.

2. *God is a home.*

It's as simple as that; God is a home and we helped build homes. I am 20 years young and God is moving through Porch de Salomon in ways I can't account for.

3. *Remember everything you saw.*

I keep repeating this to myself. It was all so very real; dirt and tin, tarps and cardboard walls, a hole in the earth for a toilet, a *Wall Street Journal* being utilized as a mat, famished children, cornfields, volcanoes, beautiful smiles, toothless smiles, gold tooth smiles. *We all smile in the same language!*

Porch--*muchas gracias*. I will never be able to repay you for what you have done for me and our team. God Bless.

Editor: Morgan (20) attends college in Tallahassee FL, works at a homeless shelter, and is described by her team leader as being "an artist, old soul, highly intelligent and extremely sensitive." In Morgan's words, she is the product of an "unstable, but interesting, childhood and youth."

Morgan (second from right) and her hard working "Team Flower/Vantage/Digisi" mates in their septic tank hole





Team Killearn UMC spent four hours on the road, each day, traveling to remote clinic locations; the more remote, the greater the need for medical care.

(Above): One patient, Deysi (2) presented as chronically malnourished and swollen with terrible skin lesions.

PLEASE HELP US help Deysi, and others like her, with a \$60 donation (monthly or one-time) for milk, food, vitamins and recovery medical care.

PLEASE PRAY FOR:

- * Long term impact on, and from, our summer teams, their supporters, and churches
- * Each person mentioned in this newsletter, and especially that Deysi can recover from her chronic malnutrition
- * Each giving opportunity presented in this issue, especially (Samuel's meds and funding our help for malnourished infants)
- * The Deeds family as they move to Indianapolis, (IN) August 12 to begin work at Castleton UMC. Thank you Will and Amber; we'll miss you! Visit www.deedsville.org for more details.

- * Joe and Laura's new married life together!
- * Melanie and Lloyd's summer furlough/promo stateside (August 4-October 8). Their current August schedule is:

- August 16; Miccosukee UMC (FL)
- August 21-23: St. Francis ITF Episcopal (KY)
- August 30; New Providence Presbyterian (TN)
- August 31; Christ the Shepherd Lutheran (GA)

...and we at Porch de Salomon pray that God will continue to move folks, like you, to support our multi-faceted work!

OSCAR'S NEW ARMS are fitted and in use! Big thanks to Sardis UMC (FL) for funding all three sets of these arms. Sardis monthly support also helps feed his family—he's outgrowing them quicker!



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and on 

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