

⌘ PorchTalk

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Porch de Salomon

Panajachel, Guatemala

porchdesalomon.org

and on 

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GOOD NEWS, POOR, BLIND: YEAR OF FAVOR

by Lloyd

The Spirit of the Lord is upon me, because he has anointed me to bring good news to the poor. He has sent me to proclaim release to the captives and recovery of sight to the blind, to let the oppressed go free, to proclaim the year of the Lord's favor.

Jesus, at Luke 4:18-19 (NRSV)



I've had the privilege of preparing Porch's first annual *PorchTalk* newsletter 14 times now. Many of these included humble indigenous families, in dire straits. I have never been more humbled and pleased to share a family's story than that of Florencio and Juana's family.

Three of this Panyebar indigenous family's children are blind, afflicted with retinitis pigmentosa.

The father, Florencio, earns \$160 monthly as a farm hand and selling toys and candy in the street when there is no farm work. Juana is a dedicated homemaker and attends to Evelio (17), Ana Maria (13), and Juana's (11) special needs and medical appointments. The family lives with Florencio's mother in her make-do house; boards, blocks, tin roofing, tin kitchen, and outhouse. The blind children bear scars from falls or cuts suffered in or around the house.

Please give this two-minute video a look:

https://www.dropbox.com/s/6m7y5z560fmb5v7/Florencio_Northstar--video_Generic.mp4?dl=0

God willing, Porch will build them a good new house with special features to help the blind children avoid falls and cuts. Our February teams will enjoy a trans-lake, sleep-over adventure working there. We thank them and all our mission partners and supporters. Please let me know if you'd like to contribute toward the \$13,000 needed to build the house.

Thank you for helping Porch bring tangible good news to the poor, in Jesus' name.

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

- *Short-term mission teams in Guatemala
- *Humanitarian relief for indigenous families and others
- *Café Hotel California/Solomon's Porch ministry
- *Live music outreach
- * Helping transform churches and individuals



Porch de Salomon just launched our inaugural 2019 house-build in *Panca de Solola*. Agustín and Marcela's humble, indigenous family lives in a shack-like, dirt-floor structure; rain water penetrates the walls as well as wind and cold. They use plastic sheeting to mitigate this infiltration. Agustín labors in a plant nursery and earns \$6.50 per day. The mother sews *tipico* clothing and earns only \$25 per month.

Team Outtatown/Canadian Mennonite Un. (shown below), our first 2019 short-term team, began the project by toting in building material up a steep trail. Our incoming teams will pitch in as well. We appreciate these teams and our mission partners who keep Porch "in the field," bringing tangible, life-changing relief to such families.



We dedicated our 11th completed house of 2018 on the year's shortest day. Rosa Tzay and her children celebrated Christmas in their safe home in Panajachel's *Barrio Norte*; this is Porch's 111th house.

Rosa courageously fled her indigenous village, about two years ago, to escape an alcoholic, abusive husband and seek a better life for her children.

As she said, we believed in her when few did. Porch is funding a micro-business for her.

(far right) Our Hilda led the house dedication ceremony.

(right) This small freezer will be at the heart of the family's new micro-business: making and selling street snacks.





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Porch de Salomon joyfully dedicated our tenth completed family house of 2018, on December 20, up in *Las Canoas Bajas*. The quality of life for Lucrecia and Arsenio's indigenous family will be markedly better. Little Danilo, with his one good eye, can take pride in their abode. Hilda reported he was running all around the house that day! We will stay connected to Danilo and the family. Big thanks to our fall short-term teams, project donors, mission partners, Porch staff, contract builders, and the divine one who chose to make a humble appearance, long ago, in Bethlehem.



Update on 2019 BECA SCHOOL SCHOLARSHIPS

In Guatemala, over 50% of indigenous teenagers have not completed third grade. Indigenous Guatemalan women average only 3.5 years of school. Grinding poverty is the predominant cause of this problem; families simply cannot afford school as they struggle to put food on the table each day.

Each year since 2006, Porch de Salomon has provided school scholarships through the generosity of our *beca*

donors. In 2019, we aim to fund 165 scholarships! *(Above left)* We are proud of our 2018 high school graduates. There's still time to donate for the 2019 school year (which runs from January to October). These annual scholarships cost \$240 each. Hilda will match donors with a recipient! Please consider funding one or more of these life-changing gifts. Contact us directly with your "Yes" or your questions; hilda.son03@gmail.com, dloydmonroe@gmail.com or 850.688.2076. *Gracias!*



Here are two of our 2019 scholarship candidates who do not yet have a funding sponsor:

(left) Celia (15), the oldest of seven siblings, wants to start seventh grade. She plans to help her family by working during the week, and going to school on the weekend. She quit school three years ago to help support her family and her youngest sister, afflicted with Down's Syndrome.

(right) Luisa is seven years old and wants to begin kindergarten. Her alcoholic father infected her mother with a disease, then abandoned the family. Porch is trying to find a village which will truly accept Luisa's family.





We thank our generous year-end donors who helped Porch close 2018 in good fashion. *Mil gracias*, and “Thank you, thank you, thank you!” (Gomer Pyle). We also appreciate faithful, year-round donor/partners who help keep the work going in Guatemala’s Lake Atitlan Basin. Everyone else: please contact Lloyd if you’d like to be a 2019 donor or have questions. We can help you set up a painless monthly auto-donation; they add up nicely. *Gracias a Dios. Adelante juntos!*



(Above) Kudos to 13 year-old Allie Blay Roper whose tasty holiday baking efforts yielded over \$450 (for five *Ecofiltro* water filter units).

(Above right) General fund donations help us continue our long-term relationship with Edwin. He’s shown with his mother and his new Christmas clothes.

(Right) Team Moza rookie Sarah Brown Brandon tries out her new sound-making *futbol* with little Juana in Panyebar.



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