

# Santiago Update

## August-October 2009

### news from the Emery family

Greetings from Chile and a belated ¡Feliz Dieciocho! (Happy Chilean Independence Day—Sept 18). We look forward to visiting with many of you during our upcoming furlough, December 2009-February 2010, but in the meantime, here's an update of the latest news from Santiago.



## Recent Baptisms



**Marcelo and Sonia** came to our church through Marriage Encounter. Borrowing Sonia's words on the day of their baptism (Sept 13), "When we came home from Marriage Encounter [they attended the retreat in May 2009], Jesus came home with us, and he has never left." Following the encounter, they immediately became regular attendees at church and accepted an invitation to study the Bible with our teammate Kelley Grant and church member Claudio Zalaquett (pictured here baptizing Sonia).



**Carolina** is the sister-in-law of church member Francisco Lerma (pictured here praying before her baptism Oct. 11). Francisco is responsible for bringing his brother, Claudio (far left) and his family to our church almost a year ago. When Claudio and Carolina attended Marriage Encounter last May, they made the surprising announcement at the end of the weekend that they wanted to get married! Little did we know, although they had been living together for many years and had two children, they were not

legally married! Francisco himself preached their wedding in July, and we are thrilled to count Claudio and Carolina among the committed members of our church family. Carolina is pregnant with their third child, a daughter who is due any day now!



**Herna** is one of several women who meet at the church on Monday nights to pray together. This relatively new prayer ministry was begun by long-time church member Any Hernández, who studied the Bible with Herna prior to her decision to give her life to the Lord.

## Discipleship update

Our year of discipleship training with the 10 church couples who made this commitment last October is drawing to a close. The past couple of months we've enjoyed hosting the couples for dinners in our home, two couples at a time and no two from the same group so as to help them deepen relationships. Not only have all 10 couples remained faithful to their commitment to discipleship, as we mentioned in our last report, but in a recent meeting all 10 made the additional commitment to become disciple-makers themselves in the coming year. Thus the final weeks of our current groups will center on equipping our brothers and sisters to go and disciple what they have referred to as "the next generation". We are greatly encouraged to see just how many recognize discipleship as a new way of life rather than a church program!

## Ongoing discipleship studies

As we wrap up the year of study with our group, Patricio & Alicia Navarro and Christian & Diana Moore, Holly also continues to meet weekly with Claudia Valenzuela and Susana Oudkerk, using the same curriculum as the rest of the groups, while Scott is involved in several studies using various other materials: individual studies with Jorge Montecinos, Julio Benítez and José Pablo Vidal; and a relatively new group that includes three young men he has worked with before, though not together: David Vera, Christian Moore (from our original discipleship group) and Jean Franco Martínez.

## Marriage Encounter #10: New hope for marriages in crisis

The first weekend in September marked our church's tenth *Encuentro Matrimonial*. After having served for four encounters in a row as members or supervisors of the behind-the-scenes work group, this time we had a relatively light workload—almost no work at all, in fact, as our job this past encounter was to shadow Kelley and Julie Grant in their role as coordinators and emcees of the weekend. After the Grants leave the mission field in January, we will take turns with Zane and Tae Perkins filling their shoes while our very capable Chilean brothers and sisters continue to run the operational aspects of the encounter.



Kelley and Julie Grant, coordinators of Agape #10



Holly sang in a quartet for the retreat's closing service

By far the greatest blessing we experienced during this encounter was sponsoring some close friends, a married couple who have suffered serious difficulties in their relationship for some time. We have counseled with them, together and individually, many times but were afraid that all hope might be lost; prior to Marriage Encounter they had separated and had not even spoken for two months. We decided to invite them anyway, however, and to our great surprise, they accepted. During the weekend God continued to shower down miracles, and by the end of the retreat they had recommitted to a lifetime together. Since then, with the help of new communication tools they learned at the encounter, their relationship has continued to grow. The wife is now pregnant, and they are house-hunting with plans to move back in together and reconstruct their family with Christ as the center. Please join us in praising God for what only he could have done in their hearts.

### Follow-up *Grupos de Crecimiento*



An additional role we have assumed since *Encuentro Matrimonial* #10 is that of leaders of one of the five *grupos de crecimiento*, "growth groups" composed of couples who attended the encounter. We asked Nicolas and Toyita, one of our church's 10 discipleship couples (in the center of the picture), to co-lead this group with us, both to train them and also to facilitate the group's continuation once we leave for furlough in early December. Please pray for our hosts, Jaime and Mireya (far right), who, despite the serious marital problems they are working through, graciously open their

home to us each week. Two weeks ago we saw a breakthrough as they shared with us the details of the main struggle they face. Not only have they been attending our church with some regularity since the encounter, but they have accepted our invitation to go on the annual church-wide retreat this coming weekend.

## Marriage Encounter fundraiser: *Cena Pro-fondos*



On October 16 the Marriage Encounter ministry organized its first fundraising event: a romantic dinner designed not only to help cover the cost of the twice-yearly retreats but also to bring together couples who have experienced the retreat and others we hope to invite in the future. The dinner was organized and carried out entirely by our Chilean church members.



On a personal note, the kids' babysitters for this past Marriage Encounter weekend were...their grandparents! Scott's folks, Gary and Linda, flew down to keep Savannah and Haydn and spend part of the kids' spring break with us. We enjoyed a couple of days at the beach during their brief visit.

## *Dieciocho* and a farewell retreat

On September 18, known by Chileans simply as *Dieciocho* (their national independence day), we were honored to accept the invitation of our close friends and church members, Francisco & Dragana Lerma, to celebrate with Francisco's parents and his brother and sister-in-law, Claudio and Carolina (you'll remember their story from our recent baptisms above). Other invited guests were Kelley and Julie Grant and Claudio and Pamela Zalaquett, another of our discipleship couples. God blessed us with a warm and windy day, perfect for a Chilean *asado* (BBQ) and the traditional activity of kite-flying.





In keeping with team tradition, the week after *Dieciocho*, while kids were out of school for their spring break, the team headed out of a town for a retreat—our last with the Grant family before they leave the field in January.

Our kids will dearly miss Duncan, Abby, Victoria and Konner, as we will miss Kelley & Julie.

We hope you've enjoyed this report. As always, we appreciate your support and prayers.

Love,  
Scott, Holly, Savannah & Haydn Emery