

Santiago Update: June 2010

News from the Emery family



Church celebrates 10th anniversary

Join us in celebrating what the Lord has done over the last 10 years in Santiago! As you may recall, our team arrived 11 years ago, inaugurating a new congregation of the *Iglesia de Cristo* in March 2000 after a year of language study and cultural adaptation. Because of the earthquake that hit Chile February 27, no one felt much like celebrating on our actual anniversary, so we postponed the celebration a couple of months. Two Sundays ago, May 30, we praised God together for blessing us with a decade as a family in Christ. There to help us commemorate the important occasion was a chorus from Harding University, whose exceptional performance entertained and encouraged our members and visitors.



Earthquake Relief

Since the earthquake that rocked Chile in late February, our church has organized two relief trips so far to cities further south. Within a week of the quake, our church had become a collection center for donations of food, clothing and toiletries, and on March 9-10 Scott and several other men from the church delivered these donations during a whirlwind trip to Concepción and surrounding cities. A little over a month later, all four Emerys traveled south with a group of 16 from our church who with the help of the local congregation in Chiguayante, a community within Concepción, distributed groceries to the local neighborhood where homes had been damaged and unemployment had risen sharply due to local employers closing their damaged facilities. In the evening we put on a hot dog supper with activities and prizes for the local children. We also delivered cooking sets to a “tent city” filled with people who had lost their homes in the coastal town of Talcahuano. These efforts are only the beginning of our church’s plans to aid those hit hardest by the earthquake. In the months to come we expect to see many more groups set out, not only to deliver needed items but to begin rebuilding homes destroyed both by the earthquake and the resulting tsunami.



Collection center at the church building



100 tents composed this “tent city” in Talcahuano



Haydn delivers a set of pots and pans



group shot from earthquake relief trip April 2010

Discipleship: The next step

Of the 10 couples that committed to a year of intensive discipleship alongside our team couples (late 2008-late 2009), five couples have risen to the top by virtue of their increased commitment to Christ and to our church family in the areas of attendance, participation in ministries, evangelism, and discipleship (many have begun their own discipleship groups!). On May 21 our team invited these five couples to a lunch at the church building in order to honor them by recognizing the tremendous spiritual growth they have demonstrated as well as challenge them to look to the future—a future of a truly Chilean-led congregation.



During this activity the Chileans wrote words of encouragement to one another.



The team gathered around one couple at a time and read a letter of blessing and encouragement we had written.

Current Bible/discipleship studies

We continue in weekly studies with several of our church members. Scott is still meeting regularly with Julio (our church's architect), with a group of three young men from the university group (Christian, Sergio and Angelo) and with a new group of three men (Nicolas, Jorge and Jean Franco). Holly continues to meet with her discipleship group (Susana and Claudia) and is also just finishing an evangelistic Bible study with Nanny, the woman who cuts her hair, assisted by a woman from our church named Isabel. Nanny has decided to be baptized, and following her baptism Isabel will continue to study with her.

Marriage Encounter

We finally reached our goal of 25 couples at our eleventh Marriage Encounter (May 14-16). Up to this point we had typically hosted between 15 and 20 couples, but this time we actually had to turn people away! We sponsored Omar and Andrea, a couple from the kids' school who won a spot in our encounter weekend in the Redland School Raffle! They enjoyed the weekend, and during a brief testimony at the end of the encounter Andrea stated her plan to become a member of our church! We look forward to see what God will do with this couple. In the meantime, we are leading a Growth Group (for post-Encounter follow-up) and have already begun preparations with the *Grupo de Apoyo* (support team) for Marriage Encounter #12, in which we will serve as supervisors.

We hope you've enjoyed these highlights from the past few months.

Love from Chile,
Scott, Holly, Savannah & Haydn Emery