

## Santiago Update: October-November 2010

### News from the Emery family

#### Chilean women blessed through equipping conference in Mexico

You may remember from our last report that Holly was headed to Mexico in October with three women from our church: Verónica Muñoz, Pamela Moroni and Sandra Salazar. These four spent Oct 12-17 in what turned out to be an incredible time of study and fellowship with sisters from Mexico and the US. Led by Karen Alexander, director of the Come before Winter ministry, the group spent 7-8 hours a day in intense study of the gospel of Mark. These study blocks, which included both individual study as well as teaching and group-discussion times led by Karen (and translated by Holly, from English into Spanish for the seminar participants and back-and-forth during group discussions), served to provide the women with new tools for deeper Bible study that they could in turn use to teach others.



left to right: Sandra, Verónica and Pamela

Here are some comments from the Chilean women:

**Verónica:**

*It was a wonderful experience to disconnect from my daily routine and share with other women. I found that the physical and mental break allowed God's spirit to work in my life. I brought tremendous blessings home in my suitcase, and now I want to share them with other women.*



**Sandra:**

*I learned to love my new sisters in Christ during the days we spent together with Mark. I will always remember them in my prayers.*



**Pamela (center in pic):**

*Our study of Mark helped me understand so many things and taught me to study the Bible in a new and better way. I look forward to sharing this method with those I am working with.*



**A fundraising update: We are still lacking \$1,200 to pay for this trip.** Thanks again to those who responded so quickly and generously to our last report! At that time we were trying to raise a total of \$2,400, and we're so very thankful for the half that came in immediately. We're also greatly indebted (literally) to the Come before Winter ministry, who advanced Holly the funds lacking to purchase the three women's airline tickets. **We are now fundraising to pay back CbW and want to do so as soon as possible,** as this ministry displayed extraordinary generosity on our behalf—for a conference they typically cover all participant costs *except* airfare. In addition to repaying CbW, we also had to use \$800 in personal working funds leaving our working fund account nearly depleted, so if we are successful in raising the CbW funds and there are still folks interested in helping, donations to our working funds would also be greatly appreciated. If you'd like to help us pay back CbW (in the very near future, as they need these funds to finance future conferences) or our depleted working funds (so we can continue to make these conferences when invited), please reply to our email address ([emerys@vtr.net](mailto:emerys@vtr.net)) and we will gladly let you know how you can easily make a tax-deductible donation by either sending a check or even using a debit or credit card. Thanks very, very much!

### More pics from the Mexico conference photo gallery:



The group comprised 12 from Mexico, the US and Chile.



The gospel of Mark was our text for the week.



The last day, women shared the gospel's application to their lives.



The Chile group with Karen Alexander (center), director of Come before Winter, who led our conference

**Mexico follow-up:** Since the group's return, Holly has been leading them in a continuing study of the gospel of Mark to reinforce skills gained during the conference and further equip them to teach what they have learned to other women.



As if October weren't busy enough for Scott as he held down the fort in Holly's absence, he also spent the month preaching a sermon series. His topic was conflict and its biblical resolution within a church family. The great reception of the sermon series by the congregation has led to his offering a follow-up class for a group of 10 on Sunday mornings.

Also keeping Scott busy in October was the planning of our church retreat...

## What if God wrote you a letter?

This question was the theme of our recent church retreat, Oct 31-Nov 1. Scott headed up the retreat, delegating much of the workload to a team of Chilean brothers and sisters who took charge of logistics, kitchen duties and kids' activities. The retreat centered on our church family's core values. As a church we are committed to:

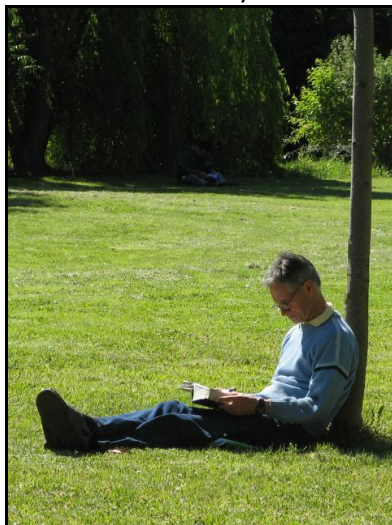
- Loving God above all things
- Obeying the word of God
- Following in the footsteps of Christ every day
- Loving our church family unconditionally
- Serving our neighbor proactively
- Proclaiming the good news of Jesus at every occasion



The retreat was organized in blocks, one for each of these six values. Each block began with a time of praise followed by a devotional led by one of the guys (five of six were Chileans). Then the participants were given some time alone to consider how they were doing in each of these areas by writing themselves a letter as if it were from God. The letters they wrote were modeled after those written to the churches in Revelation, the idea being that in their letters God was congratulating for doing well in some areas while calling their attention to areas that needed improvement and challenging them to make changes for the better. Following the personal reflection time, they were put into groups of three and sent out together to walk and share about what they had written.



Devo talk (speaker: new member David Pinto)



Gonzalo writes himself a letter



Groups of three walk and share

Because the groups were different each time, church members got to form new bonds as well as strengthen already established relationships. Perhaps the best part of the retreat was that of the 75 or so in attendance, the vast majority

were families: All five of our discipleship families attended, as well as several other couples who are rising in leadership right behind them, and even a couple of families that have only recently begun to visit our church (including two families who had just participated in Marriage Encounter). God truly blessed our time together.

### More retreat photos:



Another group shares insights from their times of reflection.



Lunch on the lawn



Kids' activities included an "Amazing Race": this event required teams to depict The Flood using only spaghetti, shredded coconut and glue!



A homemade "Slip 'N Slide" and tons of water balloons made Saturday's free time especially memorable.



More free-time recreation



Tradition calls for a bonfire on the last night of the retreat.

That's it for the highlights of the last couple of months. May God bless you! Love, the Emerys