

From: Steve Henry <shenry@christscovenant.org>
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Comings and Goings

Since our last Update at the end of July we've traveled more than 6,500 miles and seen many of you in churches that we've visited along the way. We've visited churches and friends in Texas, Illinois, Michigan, Indiana, Virginia, Pennsylvania, New Jersey, and Oklahoma. It's been a great blessing for us to share with many of you firsthand what is happening in La Poza. We want to thank all of you for your hospitality and kindness that you showed us.

We're anxious to return to La Poza and resume a somewhat more normal life with a routine that we've grown to love. Life really is different in La Poza. Oh, there are the obvious differences: different language, no flush toilets, salsa that actually has some kick to it and doesn't taste like ketchup, etc. But there are other differences that may not be as obvious. One of the big differences is simply 'pace' of life. As we travel in the U.S. and ask folks, "How are you doing?" we'll get a variety of responses but usually somewhere in the response will be a direct statement or at least an allusion to the busyness of life. "Oh, I'm just so busy." "Tell you the truth, I'm burning the candle at both ends." "I'm just so tired." "I've got so much to do I don't know how I'm going to ever get it all done." By contrast, we don't recall ever hearing a Mexican talk about how busy they are. That's not to say that they are lazy or don't have things that need to be done. They are hard workers and extremely industrious. Community is important. We've grown to appreciate that aspect of the culture. Another of life's little differences is the abundance of choices that we have in the U.S. Don't believe us? Go to the cereal aisle of your favorite grocery store. Cereal aisles in Mexican stores have Corn Flakes, Frosted Flakes, and a few other choices, but that's it. Some restaurants we ate in while we were in the States had menus that can take you a half hour to read. The choices are endless!

Most of you know that while we live in La Poza, we still own a home on the border in Brownsville, TX. When we returned to Brownsville after 6 weeks of traveling up north, we had a bit of a surprise before we ever went into the house. We had a utility trailer that we use in Mexico and when we have teams come from the States to La Poza. We normally leave the trailer in La Poza but because our visas had expired just before we went north, we had to leave the trailer in Brownsville. We had thought that leaving a trailer in our driveway might be a temptation to thieves but reasoned because a Brownsville city policeman lives right across the street (and his police van often sits in front of the house) and a Cameron county deputy sheriff lives about 4 doors down (and his police cruiser often sits in front of his house), everything would be fine. We were wrong. Sometime during our time away someone stole it. One of our neighbors told us he went to bed one night and the trailer was there and he got up the next morning and it wasn't there. We're thankful that there was nothing else taken and no damage to the house itself. Incidents like this are vivid reminders of 2 things: 1) we live in a fallen world; 2) the 'stuff' that we have is all temporal. It may rust out. It may wear out. Or someone else may take it. It's only stuff but there are things of eternal value. That is where our focus should be. Jesus put it this way, "Do not lay up for yourselves treasures on earth, where moth and rust destroy and where thieves break in and steal, but lay up for yourselves treasure in heaven, where neither moth nor rust destroys and where thieves do not break in and steal. For where your treasure is, there our heart will be also."

Praises and Prayer

We'll be resuming Bible studies when we return to La Poza this week. We will soon be finishing a year long chronological study of the Bible in our Sunday afternoon Bible study. We'll be starting another topic soon — possibly a study on what is the church? Pray for wisdom in teaching these important matters and that the people would be open and responsive to the truths of God's Word.

A believing Brother in Christ recently moved to La Poza. Before we left in August, we spoke with him about our desire to train nationals for leadership in any church that God might raise up in La Poza. He seemed very interested in what we were saying. Pray that we'll be able to begin discipleship/leadership training with Tony.

In just a few weeks we will celebrate 3 years of actually living in La Poza. We have seen God answer many prayers during that time. We've had many opportunities to share the Gospel and have seen several folks come to faith in Christ. Our Sovereign Lord deserves all the glory for what has been done, what is being done, and what He will do in the future. We're thankful for the opportunity to represent the King in this part of Mexico. And we're thankful for the team of faithful prayer and financial supporters who have stood with us during these years. May God bless and use each one of you for His glory.

Anchored to the Rock,

Steve & Robin