

Thanks for everything

A few Sundays ago was a homecoming day for us. Pastor Samuel Rangel invited us to minister in the morning service at *Templo Fuente de Amor* (Fountain of Love Church), located next door to the Las Mananitas Good Shepherd School. Pastor Samuel and Mirtha were pastoring this church when we arrived to Panama nearly 19 years ago. Several teams invested in the junior and senior high building at the Las Mananitas school from 1998 through 2002. The school has grown from around 500 then to nearly 800 today.

After service, many came to greet us. So many expressed their appreciation and thanks for our investment in the children and school. One of those was **Anthony**. We have a picture of Anthony with Sherry displayed in a photo collage at our office that was taken around 1999. Anthony was the very first LACC sponsored child at the Las Mananitas school. He began as a kindergartner and graduated in 2000. It was so special to catch up with him after all these years. He and his wife are expecting their first child in a couple of months. As we said good-bye Anthony said, "Thanks for everything."

We are blessed to be able to see God's faithfulness first-hand! So many of you are investing in the lives of children and youth in Panama but don't have the opportunity to see the results. If they had the opportunity, those young people that you've helped would personally tell you, "Thanks for everything".

Sunday's homecoming experience reinforced to us that we can trust God's plans for our lives and the lives of those we serve. Anthony was the last of a few such reminders these last few weeks. Following are a few more stories.

In December, we attended the Las Mananitas Good Shepherd School graduations for two groups – the 9th and 12th graders. Several young people shared testimonies of God's intervening grace and goodness. We were proud to hear the number of graduates that had received scholarships from the different universities in Panama.

Janeth's mother was there. Janeth is the little girl that we sponsored for 11 years, from 2nd grade until she graduated! Janeth's mother continues to work as a secretary for the secondary section of the school. She caught us up on how God is working in their lives. Truly, God has used and continues to use the Las Mananitas Good Shepherd School to impact hundreds of children and youth each year.

The following day we attended the Catedral de Vida Good Shepherd School 9th grade graduation. Catedral de Vida was the first Assemblies of God church started in Panama in the late 1960s. And they opened the first Good Shepherd School in Panama in 1979. Now, 35 years later, we were reminded of the thousands of children and youth that have attended the school, impacted by the ministry of loving teachers who have discipled them over the years.

We were privileged to share some words of encouragement from Psalm 139 to the three groups, reminding both young people and parents alike: "O Lord, you have examined my heart and know everything about me... You saw me before I was born. Every day of my life was recorded in your book. Every moment was laid out before a single day had passed" (v. 1, 16 NLT). We must seek God, learn his plan and take advantage of the special years of youth to

There's more on the reverse side... Thanks for everything continued



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Thanks for everything continued

do so. We believe this message had a very special significance to one of the Catedral de Vida graduates, a young man who had earned first academic position among the graduates, sitting in the first row in a wheelchair.

Aziel, that young man, lost his father to leukemia in 2006. His mother requested help from LACC so Aziel could continue in school. A family from one of our supporting churches responded to this special need

and started sponsoring Aziel. We ask new LACC children some questions to help sponsors to get to know them. One question is "what do you want to be when you grow up?" Back then Aziel's dream was to become a doctor. It must have been very difficult for him to watch his father die. He must have thought that if he could become a doctor, he could help find a cure for those suffering from debilitating diseases like leukemia.

Several months ago, Aziel was also diagnosed with leukemia. His body thinned and weakened during the school year in 2013. He ended up in a wheelchair. Today,



the prognosis is not good. Still, we were able to remind him that there are people, like his LACC sponsor, who are praying every day for his healing and recovery. On behalf of that sponsor and the greater LACC family, we were able to present him with a New Living Translation Bible in Spanish.

Cenit is a petite Panamanian young adult with lots of energy! When we can, we try to attend the Panama International Church, a newer church directed to the large international community in Panama City. It is a bilingual church with both English and Spanish frequently spoken. A couple of years ago

the church brought Cenit on as children's pastor. When we met her the first time she said, "I know you! I look at your picture every day in my room. You were the ones who gave me my diploma when I graduated from the 6th grade many years ago at the Canaan Good Shepherd School!" We never would have imagined that this skinny 6th grader would one day be one of our pastors! She is and she's good.

What do Anthony, Janeth, Aziel and Cenit have in common? Each one had a loving LACC sponsor (still has in the case of Aziel). Each one exemplifies the touch of the Master's hand on his or her life. We say thank you to all those who sponsor an LACC child or young person. For those that aren't, we have more than 300 children and youth waiting for a sponsor. You



can choose a Panamanian child or young person at www.LACC4Hope.org!

We join these grateful young people in saying to you "Thanks for everything!" We are privileged to stand in for you and are grateful for your prayer and financial support that makes it possible.

Rod and Sherry

PRAYER NEEDS & PRAISE REPORTS

- Praise the Lord for a large offering for the Latin America Resource and Training Center! Construction will begin soon!
- Please pray favor and provision as work begins on site preparation and building for the Latin America Resource and Training Center.
- Praise the Lord for the Shoreline Community Church team that began construction at the Pedregal Getsemani Good Shepherd School.
- Please pray for Randy and Lynne Forsyth as they work with several teams in school construction and development.
- Please pray for the more than 300 children who need an LACC sponsor. If you can one of these, please visit: www.Panama.LACC4Hope.org.
- Please pray for preparations for the Little Davey Project computer team that will be building 75 computers for six schools in Panama in May.
- Praise the Lord for the nearly 500 that attended the 2014 Educators Summit in San Salvador.
- Please pray for the planning of the Educators Summits coming up in Uruguay in Sept. 2014. Also, please pray for preliminary planning for 2015 Summits in Mexico and the Dominican Republic.