

Sweet Times



Praises:

- The Lord brought our babies and returned them safely. It was a super special time with the four of them!
- Our team continues to grow with more people, grow together and grow in unity. It is beautiful.
- It's amazing that everytime we think we need something, the Lord provides it or the person.
- The center is more organized and put together. The team is praying over expanding for more kids.
- We had an in house Christmas party. The Lord provided donors for large food boxes for the families and each kids got a toy, sweatshirt, new shoes and socks. We are so thankful.
- Church has been online since just after Christmas (again) but we have been meeting in our house and having potluck afterward. The fellowship has been wonderful.
- The Lord has given Dan a few extra opportunities. He preached one Sunday at the church and fills in for the Chinese Bible Study when needed. I am excited – we will be hosting a Chinese New Year party on Feb. 1st.
- We have great neighbors.
- We are learning to balance life better.

Prayer Requests:

- Direction on how to add more kids and space to reach more kids in the love of Jesus. Our waiting list has more kids on it than we have in the center.
- Discernment with two particular families in the center.
- Travel mercies has we are making a quick 3 week trip to Texas to move my parents to Mississippi. Travel is not easy right now.
- We all continue to grow in Christ and we listen carefully.
- The Lord receives all glory due His powerful and majestic name! JESUS!



The picture above that says “Jesu nos ama” with a heart above the words. It means Jesus loves us. Spelling is off but for graffiti in the bathroom I will take it. The kids and staff tease that the bathroom is my office. Well they are not wrong, I often go sit in the stall for some alone time with the Lord. They usually leave me alone there. One day, I sat to pray out of total frustration and this is what I see right at eye level made out of playdough. I had to laugh and praise the Lord! The kids are getting it. JESUS LOVES US! I actually left it there and told the staff to not remove it. I am thankful for His reminders no matter where they are.



Our babies came and went. We had such a wonderful time with them! I am so thankful for all the sacrifices they made to be here. Victoria and Isaac got to serve at the center one day. It was so fun serving with them and sharing that part of our life with them. Zachary’s flight was a day late so he only had 4 days with us. But, we had a really fun time during those days. I love seeing our kids grow and thankful for every minute we get with them.



Samantha’s Corner

Samantha enjoyed having siblings here for a while. She is so excited because she is almost the same height as Victoria, but not quite. As part of Christmas, we got a trampoline for her and the neighborhood kids. It has been a fun place to gather. Samantha is so thankful for our new neighbors. They have become good friends.

We had a foam fight on New Year’s Day. It is a fun tradition done here on New Year’s and during carnival. We figured since we didn’t stay up, we would do something during the day. It was a fun family day! Happy New Year’s!



Speaking of the new neighbors. Pictured above is Yvonne the mom of our new neighbors. She also happens to be an occupational therapist. She has started volunteering at the center on Fridays. She is working with a couple of kids with OT issues and others with dyslexia training. I am so thankful for her help in these areas and her friendship.

The other picture is church on Sunday morning. We average about 20 people. The man on the TV preaching that week happens to be my best friend in the whole world. I am always so proud of him. This group is really a blessing when most people are not meeting because of covid being rampant; we have sweet fellowship with worship, the word and food.



Covid cases have been on the rise here as they are every where. We had one staff member and 2 kids that came down with covid. We closed the center for a week to try to stop the spread there and many of us were sick, anyway. I had a throat infection and Samantha had something, too. The praise is that everyone has recovered well. We got caught up on some much needed sleep and work. This was the first week back after the closing. The staff is celebrating two of their birthdays. Feliz cumpleaños mis queridos. We can not even explain how wonderful this staff is. We are thankful for our chef Rigo, who is also a drug and alcohol counselor who is now coming on full time to start helping us with the parents. Most of our problems right now are the parents, so Rigo is going to start some classes and counseling with them. We are thankful for all he brings to the team.



I know we often spotlight our police officer friends but I can't tell you how much security and help they bring to our lives here. They are actually at our house ordering Amazon items for us to bring back for them but it is a small gift we can give them for all they do for us. We have 2 in particular that help us often. One of them even transferred to the sector close to us. He is investigating the police in the foundation's area to find out which ones we can trust. We also have an appointment this week to set up a panic button in the center for the police can come right away if needed. He is also setting up classes on bullying for the kids, along with confronting one of the dads. Some coffee and letting them order from Amazon go a very long way. Thank you, Jesus!



Christmas time with the kids was fun. We are trying to teach them that treats can taste good and be healthy for you too. We were prepping for one of the movie nights. This young lady in the middle picture does not have a healthy male figure in her household or in her life outside the center. She has been latching on to Dan lately. He has been teaching her about healthy boundaries. Pray she seeks Jesus first and not just a boy. I don't know if you see the smile on this mom's face on the right; I and a few staff members were painting with the kids. She has 5 kids and rarely gets a break. I took the little one and let her paint without any worries for a few minutes. Her joy actually made me cry. She is 29 years old and has become like an adopted daughter to me. Pray for her because life is rough.



These are most but not all the kids. One wanted a picture with me and well before it was over it was a photo shoot. They are so precious and I have come to love each of them so much and I'm thankful that most return that love. But it reminds me, no matter if we chose to love Jesus or not or how we treat Him with the utmost respect or not, He loves us just the same. He loves us just for who we are and how He made us. We all have flaws and none of us are perfect but when we forgive, He forgives. When we love, we get to see just a little more of God's presence and it changes us. I am

thankful for how these kids have changed me. Tomorrow, I will probably break up a fist fight or have someone cuss at me, but I hope I respond with something that will help them see Jesus.

This is my scripture to memorize this week in my devotional called Daily Success. May it be true in our lives.

“Let your light shine before men, that they may see your good works, and glorify your Father which is in heaven.”
Matthew 5:16.

Many blessings,

Dan, Gina and Samantha