

Broken and Healed



Praises:

- So many praises that cannot even be all listed.
- Lots of family time which refreshed our souls.
- Lots of love and support by so many.
- Safe travels with well over 6,000 miles logged in the car and 2 flights in addition.
- Victoria is a RN – graduated and passed her NCLEX.
- The team in Ecuador did fabulous, better than any other time we've been gone from the Foundation.
- The kids in the foundation are finishing up their first year of school with us.
- All the kids we have right now are able to read. (not great but can)
- June 1st marked one year of having the building for Light in the Darkness.
- Samantha got to spend a lot of time outdoors and fishing with her grandpa.
- Dan and I got 5 days alone which was the first time to have that much time since our 20th anniversary. (our 31st in is a couple of months)
- We are safe and have all that we need.

Prayer requests:

- Always plenty of these.
- The Lord is honored and glorified in all that we do.
- The protests in Ecuador end soon.
- The families of the foundation stay safe and have food.
- Our family stays in a healthy state of mind.
- The tax ID number comes in soon for the foundation.
- Caroline, a volunteer from the States, that she can make it back to the States when it is time.
- We continue to take everything before the Lord and leave it at His feet instead of carrying it ourselves.
- Wisdom and discernment as we make decisions each day.



Samantha's Corner

Samantha was not excited about going to the States. She really wanted to stay home. But she ended up having a fabulous time! She fished with her grandfather quite a bit and caught lots of fish but the big mouth bass was the best. She loved the Library of Congress, the Archives Building and the Natural History Museum. She really enjoyed the aquarium in Gatlinburg – (thanks Orphanos). She enjoyed being with her sister and flying with her brother-in-law. She loved church in Meadows of Dan and hanging out on the McCauley's land. Time in Patty's pool hit the list, also. I am sure there was more but those are the things that came flying out of her mouth when I asked her about the trip. It turned out to be a fabulous time for her. I am so thankful for all those that took the extra time to love on her. She really needed it.

We left Ecuador April 26th with very heavy hearts and a bit broken. The Spring in Quito was heavier than we had even realized. We learned about a lot of abuse and some very hard circumstances for the kids of the center. We also had a few family difficulties that we had to take care of. We are so thankful for those who really helped us walk through these times. I can't thank everyone because each person we saw had a part but there are a few I feel I need to mention. Kirstin at Madison Drugs worked on all of us. Always thankful for her specialties. Joann, my counselor, is a blessing. Dan's prayer partner Dan and my prayer partner Shelly – we just can't do this without yall. You two keep both of us grounded every week. My cuz Michelle for blessing us with a peaceful place to stay alone and setting us up to see family. The Hillchase Bible study ladies – yall will never know how much yall lifted off my shoulders with all the prayer and love. All the people who hosted us and listened but especially the Weeks that put up with us in and out of their house over the whole time. Hugging my parents and our adult kids – well there is nothing like it. I always cherish those moments which are such gifts to our hearts. Proverbs 17:22 "A cheerful heart is good medicine, but a crushed spirit dries up the bones." Thank you to everyone for loving on us. We so needed it!



The Dands!



Shelly, her mom and I celebrating our b-days.



Weeks grans that loved on us the whole time.



Us enjoying the warmth and freedom.

As Dan and I were enjoying the warmth and freedom, I fully relaxed. Living in Quito, we are on high alert most of the time. We have to be careful stopping at stop lights because there are many muggings at lights. We work in an area that is rough, so we are always looking over our shoulders. And if you know me, you know I like the heat. In the summer in North America, when getting in the car; I always say, "it as a hug from God". So, living in temperatures that are always in the 60's during the day and 40's at night (ideal for most people) is a little taxing for this heat loving woman.

A few other enormous blessings which all made me cry with thankfulness. We attended our daughter Victoria's graduation from Liberty University. After homeschooling all the way through and being told by "experts" that she would never read, it was a super emotional time. I praise the Lord for all He has done in her life. My parents and son were there from Mississippi. Victoria's wonderful husband and in-laws were there, also. I love all those people!



We so enjoyed wonderful fellowship with Ann and finally meeting her in person. And had a wonderful, fun worship time at Mt. View United Methodist Church in Meadows of Dan with the congregation and the McCauleys. What a sweet church in a picturesque place. At New Life Baptist Church, sweet little 5 year old Megan (the tiny blond held by her mom below) came up to me and told me she prays for us every night by name. The prayers of a child can change the world. The Cummings family from MBC is always a blessing to be with and also brings me to tears. Their hearts are so huge and loving. I wish I could include everyone in the newsletter but these ones brought me to tears and I have pictures of.



As we traveled from New Orleans to Huntsville to Washington DC to Alabama to North Carolina to Michigan to Virginia to Alabama and back to southern Mississippi and places in between visiting wonderful churches and people, the foundation continued to function like it should. Our staff did a fantastic job! The everyday of Bible time, school, food and activities happened. Parenting classes and counseling continued. They had park days and movie nights. All the kids had their eyes checked and the ones that needed glasses got them. The staff wanted to bless the moms of the foundation for Mother's Day. They coordinated with a cosmetology school to come and do hair and nails for the moms. What a blessing as most are single moms trying to make it. I received an adorable picture of one of our little ones blowing me kisses. And Dan was blessed when we got back that our newest kid, who has never gone to school, read Dan a paragraph. Luis learned so much while we were gone. Fabulous job by the staff!



Glasses



Mother's Day pamper day



One of the lunch shifts



Kisses from afar



Learning to read



Caroline with the kids for morning school

After a three-day delay because of cancelled flights, we returned to Ecuador Sunday afternoon on June 19th to nationwide protests. That evening we needed to return to the airport to pick up Caroline a teacher from North Carolina coming to volunteer with us for the next two weeks. Our normal 20-minute jump to the airport turned into a crazy hour drive with road closures, police, protesters and military in streets. We did pick up Caroline and made it home without incident. We praise the Lord! Monday Dan, Caroline and a few staff drove together very early to the foundation and left by noon for they could do school online with the kids. All schools are back online. Almost everything closed by Tuesday even the foundation because of the intensifying of the protests. The protesters are demanding the president lower prices of food and gas or for him to leave office. I believe the president is a decent president but what can he do with prices all over the world going up. Please pray for the country. I praise the Lord for our National Police friends as they keep us updated. They send me way too many pictures and videos of what is going on. Please pray for their safety and peace of mind for their families. Below are a few pictures of streets that we are on on a daily basis. They are streets between our home and the foundation.

Yesterday, Dan went out for a little bit to try to find some food for the families of the foundation. Hoarding is illegal so he could not buy a lot but some. Today, Wednesday, Dan, Samantha, Caroline and I met our chef at the center at 7am to distribute food to the families. One family has moved away from the center of town where the foundation is located but still normally come on the bus but the buses are not running. He walked to the Foundation this morning. It took him 2 ½ hours one way to come receive food. We were able to give each family some food and clean out the perishables in the foundation before they go bad. We made it back home by 9am and saw people just starting to come out to protest for the day and night. Bonus, they don't get up early.



Dan and Rigo preping bags for families.



Samantha and Caroline separating rice into bags.



I think of us being broken and healed this year. I look at this country and this world and know that things are broke and only the Lord can heal all of it. This country and the world need God's word and His hope. That is what our team is doing here. We know we are here for such a time as this. We are praying daily together via zoom. We are giving food when we can. We are sharing His word and His hope with those around us and through the phone. We are here to give hugs to those are scared and hurt. I pray that more come to know the Lord. I pray that He gets all the praise and glory.

1 Chronicles 29:11-13 " Yours, O Lord, is the greatness and the power and the glory and the majesty and the splendor for everything in heaven and earth is yours. Yours, O Lord, is the kingdom; you are exalted as head over all. Wealth and honor come from you; you are the ruler of all things. In your hands are strength and power to exalt and give strength to all. Now, our god, we give you thanks, and praise your glorious name."

I can't say it enough, thank you for praying and being a part of this team and making all this possible. The Lord is using all of us for His purposes in this world. Lots of love and blessings from Ecuador.

Dan, Gina and Samantha