

Day 6-7 in the DR, July 19-20, 2015

Dear friends and family in support of our DR mission trip,

This 2-in-1 blog wrapping up the week is a 2-pager, covering 2 days, and the days to come. **Ask God with us for the eyes of our hearts to see others and their circumstances as He does.**

At our farewell celebration, the community and Hands of Hope volunteers both tell of how God began and is completing a good

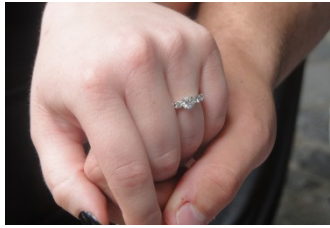
work in and through us (Phil 1:6). On the hand receiving a “high five” is the wedding ring, as Steve’s proposes to Katie (daughter of Vicki & Doug)!

They will also tell you, if honest, of the let-down after tearful hugs, the last good-bye and the Americans go home.

Hence we ask ourselves: *Upon returning home and distancing myself from this trip, just how will “the week that was” ever be sustained in all its wonder & joy, its blessing & conviction?*

ANSWER: With prayer, sincere intent and mutual accountability.

Pray for the change we want to reflect who we are, the actions our group encourages and the God’s purposes for each of us. E.g., No one is the kid-magnet that Brennen is, so we need not be like him (*to find him, look for a pile of kids and underneath the scrum there he is, or look for a ball a ball in the air...*). For more than a wordless conversation, we rely on translators (*that’s Priscilla, 1 of 9 translators, betw Lisbeth & Dietrich*).



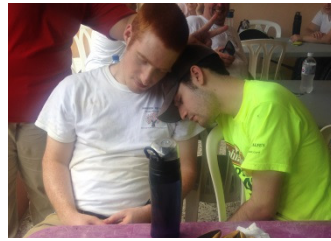
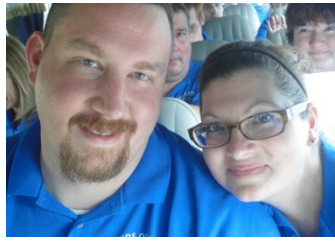
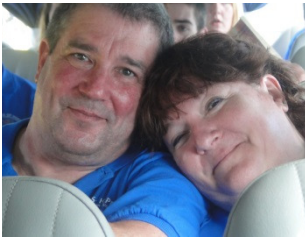
More wordless conversations with “hands of hope”: Val playing with a deaf child, David (*at left*); Betsy (*hands out*), with her hands-on games. Both communicate better than we who do not know Spanish anyway. Kids, using a hand signs of their own, flash their two forefingers, meaning “It’s cool” or “I’m OK, you’re OK.”

As a humorous example of how we need help in Spanish, Betsy meant to say “I miss you” (*te extraño*); instead she says *tu eres extraño*, which means “You are weird.” ☺ **So pray for all us weirdos to better learn our Spanish!**

Visualizing blogs is much like putting together a jigsaw puzzle without seeing the front cover of the box, but asking God to reveal the bigger picture, at least one from outside of ourselves. These blogs are made possible because people share what’s going on around them, in them, and through them. Our last two nights together (July 19-20), the Hands of Hope team share life lessons and God-moments: things we appreciate about one another, things we want to apply back home, things to start doing or do more of. **God answered that prayer....**

Here are the vows that various individuals have made, before the Lord and one another. Pray for us...

- ... To be cheerful givers, even dancing with joy, as we offer gifts to God in worship (2 Cor 8-9).
- ... To love kids even more at home, much as we do other parents' kids here in the DR.
- ... To make full eye contact with kids, and with the poor, as back home we tend to look the other way.
- ... To correspond with child sponsors, as 10 newly sponsored children were identified this week!



- ...To strengthen relationships, as did these five "couples."
- ...To let the love of Christ compel us to be ambassadors of reconciliation wherever we live and work (2 Cor 5:21).
- ... To cultivate a more disciplined walk with God.
- ... To have regular devotions with our spouse, much as we enjoyed doing each morning and evening here.
- ...To get an attitude adjustment or gut-check in dealing with differences in others.

... To get involved with short-term missions on the Global Missions Team back at HPC.

PRAISE GOD FOR: The library idea, brought to fruition as God provides \$\$, changes minds to secure a prime rental location, and gets buy-in from community—even some skeptics. This idea starts with Casey Zynda (*in blue*), who listens to her sponsored child's mom, Latisha, who wants this for the children of El Almirante, who do not even have a library in their school. As kids learn to read, they will read to learn. An education will not only help them make a living, but make a life. (L-R, below) Some paint the library, while others install shelves & books; this week's youth will install computers and fill in the mural by Andi. Pray for a ½ time librarian.



The youth (26 kids including adult sponsors from Crossroads & High Point churches) come to the DR, July 21-28, to take our place and complete more good works begun this week. **So praise God & pray for:**

- The home visit program to keep going strong, with more gifts of Bibles, books, sandals, dresses, prayers.
- Adult work crews began 6 bathrooms; the youth hope to do so, too, but just 1 of 26 has ever done this.
- 150 kids in Vacation Bible School each day; the youth will conduct their own VBS, but will "rinse & repeat" the same foot-washing service for 150+ kids.
- 128 kids vaccinated; 30 girls heard sex health talk.
- Heat & stress got to 8 adults this week, even one

had to miss tonight's recognition & appreciation event; pray for health & safety.



Tonight we transition from Doug Van Essen & Vicki Hellenbrand to Doug Ready & Brennen Weber, supporting Martires Olivera, who directs the Christian Foundation of Community Development—DR, dba in the USA as "Hands of Hope." "The harvest is plentiful, but the workers are few. Ask the Lord of the harvest, therefore, to send out workers into his harvest field (Luke 10:2). **Thanks for being senders, that we might go.** Until the next time, *a Dios, amigos. Dios te ben diga.* (God bless you, I think.)