Guatemala, Central America

"They that sow in tears shall reap in joy" Psalm 126:5.

MENNONITE Air MISSIONS

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A Day in the Life of a Nurse

5:30 . . . I awake to the sound of a truck rushing by our house. It's just beginning to get light outside.

7:25 . . . I arrive at the clinic. *"¡Buenos días!"* I greet the waiting crowd as I lift the cover off the tract rack. I unlock the door and wonder what this day holds. I prepare the consult rooms, and greet the other girls as they arrive.

8:00 . . . Kendra reads a few verses from 1 Peter for our devotional. We ask God's blessing on the day and ask for wisdom for each patient.

Norma, the secretary, hands out numbers as Tiana calls in the patients who are fasting for a blood sugar test.

I pull the first chart. Pretty simple: routine diabetic, blood sugar and blood pressure are controlled. I write the prescription for another month's supply of meds, adding calcium for leg cramps.

Patient #2 is more complicated. He has already done all the tests I think he should have for his vague symptoms, so now what? Before I can even look up information on his symptoms, Norma tells me there's an "emergency," a teenage boy with chest pain. "Send him in." After a quick assessment, I give him some medicine and tell him to rest. I know that if this medicine helps, I will have my diagnosis.

The patient with the mysterious diagnosis is soon on his way. I call in another patient. Norma notifies Kendra of another emergency. A child has something in his nose. Kendra extracts the offending leaf, and continues her other consult.

"Julia, could you come look at this patient's rash?" I take a look, and we discuss the possibilities.

The teenage boy is feeling better, and returns to the porch. I do a pregnancy test for someone, and check another patient's blood sugar so she can eat while she waits.

Meanwhile, Tiana is seeing our third "emergency" of the day: a woman with a nosebleed.

10:30 . . . A mom enters with her two little girls wielding slushies, bought from the street vendor. The two girls plop down on the floor of the consult room to eat their slushies while Mom dramatically explains her problem. Suddenly the mom exclaims and I look down to see one of the slushies dumped on the floor. The ice melts and the orange liquid runs down the cracks in the tile.

I place yet another folder in the pharmacy box. A middle-aged women calls at the door, "Can you help my girl? She is *'bien mala'* (very sick)! I need help!" I rush to follow the lady to the gate, where a young girl is sitting in the pickup with an IV in her arm. The driver is holding the bag of IV fluid. This teenage girl had taken pesticide (a common method of committing suicide). A nurse at the local Health Center had put in an IV. They were on the way to the hospital, when they noticed blood in the line. A quick glance tells me the IV site needs flushing. I run for a syringe of saline and flush the line. The fluid begins to drip. They are soon off, Mom holding the bag up out the window.

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Julia King with a patient.

Editorial

by Jeff Yoder

Who Are the Qualified?

In God's kingdom, there are many jobs. As God's workers, we have different gifts and varying tasks. We may question whether we are qualified for our role. As humans, we value visible abilities from intangible ones such as "Can I preach well?" to the very physical: "Can I replace a fan belt?" We value visible skills, but what does God value?

In all of God's kingdom work, He seeks one thing. God desires "abiding": people who are connected to the Vine. The abilities we value are secondary in God's eyes. He focuses on our relationship with Christ.

The disciples were very prepared workers. They had studied in the world's best seminary: sitting at Jesus' feet, walking at His side, and listening to His teaching. With such an education, we'd expect Christ's last instructions to be "Go ye!" But instead, Christ's last words were "Tarry ye." "Wait until the Spirit that is in Me also fills you." Christ knew they were completely inadequate without Him in them.

Christ is our perfect example of abiding. When He told the disciples to abide, He invited them to join Him in a life of dependence and yieldedness, of union with the Father. Christ was the perfect example of God working through a man totally surrendered to Him. He said, "The Son can do nothing of himself" and "The words that I speak unto you I speak not of myself: but the Father that dwelleth in me, he doeth the works." God moved and Christ spoke. God directed and Christ worked. There was perfect union between them. Whatever our job in God's kingdom, Christ desires for us the complete union He experienced and the power that it gave Him.

Christ said, "I am the vine, ye are the branches." He used the vine and its branches to illustrate union. The branch has no life without the Vine. It must be connected to the Vine. But the relationship goes beyond connection: the very life of the Vine fills the branch. The connection exists only so the life of the Vine can flow into the branch. Sometimes we desperately cling to Christ, maintaining the connection. Other times we're content with only a tenuous relationship. In either case, we haven't found the fullness of the life of the Vine that Christ desires for us. Without it, we are ineffective.

The branch is also a copy of the Vine. The Vine is the pattern for the branches. We aren't called to be good people. We're called to be copies of Christ! But imitation of Christ is impossible without Christ's life in us. We try hard to imitate Him! We improve our behavior, control our sinning, and mature in our relationships. But like the disciples before Pentecost, we come up short. We bicker among ourselves. We run when trials come. We're ashamed of Christ when we should suffer with Him. And the world looks on, wondering why Christ can't change the Christians! The life of Christ in us will change our very nature so our life is a mirror-image of His.

The life of the Vine is productive: the branch bears abundant fruit. Alone, we are never fitted for the jobs that God gives us. Christ said, "Without me, ye can do nothing." It is impossible to perform even simple tasks correctly without Christ. The more clearly we see Christ, the more we recognize our inadequacy. When we try to do His will without Him, we do it with erroneous purposes or wrong attitudes. We grow a beautiful crop of leaves, but no fruit. True fruit comes only from the True Vine.

How can we truly abide? What fits us for our role in His kingdom? The relationship with the Vine comes from the Holy Spirit. The Holy Spirit is Christ's life in us. Christ was filled with the Holy Spirit at the beginning of His ministry. The Father's life filled Christ in all its fullness through the Spirit. But how can we have the Holy Spirit in us?

The Holy Spirit is God Himself. Men don't control God; rather God moves as He wills. So we go to God to humbly ask for His filling. In Luke 11:13, Christ said, "How much more shall your heavenly Father give the Holy Spirit to them that ask him?" So we ask. Ask God to empty us of ourselves. Ask God to show us ourselves and our sin. Ask God to show us Christ, in His beauty and fullness. Above all, we ask for the Holy Spirit. And then, as Christ said to His disciples, "Tarry." God as a good Father will give us more and more of His Holy Spirit, filling us to overflowing with His Presence. Only then are we truly fitted for the tasks He has for us.

A Day in the Life of a Nurse . . . continued

"Julia, there is a patient here from last week. There are no more numbers; will you talk to her?" Sure. I discuss a different treatment option with her. New cream in hand, she leaves satisfied.

The next consult is a woman whose husband is unfaithful. I sit and listen, knowing that in spite of how late it is, this lady needs a listening ear. We finish the consult with a prayer.

I pull the last chart from the rack at 12:20. At 1:00 we close the pharmacy doors with a sigh of relief. We have an hour to rest before we reopen.

2:00 . . . We open the doors again. The once-empty porch is now full. Two dressing changes, lab results from yesterday, colds, headache, fevers, rashes. Before I know it, it's 4 o'clock. By 4:30 the last patient is waiting for his medicine and we begin to clean up.

Before I leave the clinic, my phone rings. Our neighbor man is at Judy's house looking for me. His wife went *"privada,"* meaning she did not faint but she is not talking. I take a deep breath and say, "I'll be there in a few minutes." Half the neighborhood is gathered at the neighbor's house when I arrive. Entering the dismal hut, I find the young girl lying in bed. Although her eyes follow the movements around her, she refuses to talk. I get a brief history, assess her, give her some medicine, then call the ambulance. I wait with the family until the ambulance comes. I feel sorry for this poor young lady. With two little girls and a third child on the way, she is one of those people that I struggle to know how best to help. She seems so young and naïve and poor. As the ambulance takes her away, I trudge up the hill. After stopping to check on Judy's cough, I arrive home to a waiting supper.

7:00 . . . Someone calls *"buenas"* at the door. Magali, the young widow that lives up on the hill, has a bad headache and a sore throat. Do I have anything that she can take? I find some pills and give them to her with a cup of water. She is the last patient of the day.

—Julia King

Pastor of the Month

The Diego Tzuquin family.

Diego Tziquin (64) and his wife Dominga (64) have three daughters: Catarina (41), Magdelena (36), and Maria (33) (not pictured). They live in the small village of Pachupac, which is a part of Nahuala. Diego's aunt Antonia also lived with them for many years, but is now with the Lord.

The Aposento Alto church is located near the Pan-American highway at kilometer 160 in the village of Kolcaja. Even though the family walks for an hour to get to the church, they have been faithful for over thirty years.

Diego and his wife accepted the Lord in another church, then five years later began attending the Mennonite church. On Dec 21, 1981, Diego, Dominga, Catarina, and Antonia were baptized and became members of Aposento Alto Mennonite Church. A few years later the two younger daughters also joined the church. Several years later Diego was ordained deacon and is faithfully serving the Lord in that position.

Diego and his family live in a simple adobe house. When he's not busy with church work you can find him hard at work in the corn field or chopping firewood, which the family sells as well as burns to keep the chill out of the house on cool nights.

Another source of income for the Tziquin family is a small sweater-knitting business. Using a machine, they are able to knit a sweater in a day or two, depending on the size and design.

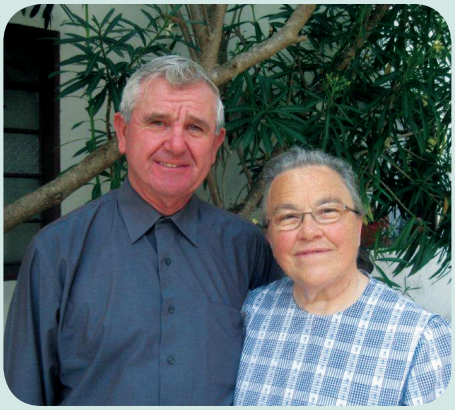
Brother Diego asks for your prayers, that God would give them the strength they need to keep serving Him faithfully here in Guatemala.

—Victor and Anita Ovalle

Church building at Nahuala.

New Personnel

Edgar and Sadie Frey, from the Woodlawn Mennonite Fellowship in Drayton, Ontario, will be serving as houseparents in El Chal for the next six months.



Edgar and Sadie Frey,
El Chal's new houseparents.

The San Cristobal church construction has been underway for almost a year, and is currently at a standstill because of a lack of building funds.

Jason Bauman, from Wellesley, Ontario, is a member of the Woodlawn Mennonite Fellowship. He is the new VS boy in El Chal, and is planning to stay for a six-month term.

Jason Bauman

Tim and Rhoda Korver arrived on October 2, and plan to serve as houseparents at headquarters for three to six months. They are from the Lighthouse Mennonite Fellowship near Bluford, Illinois.

Tim and Rhoda Korver,
houseparents at headquarters.

Guatemalans and North Americans alike will be saying good-bye to some mighty fine people on the ninth and tenth of October. **Jerry & Kaylene Hoover** are ending a two-year term as houseparents in El Chal, and **Henry & Miriam Eby** will finish another six-month term at headquarters as houseparents. God bless you for your years of service, as you settle into a "new normal" in the States.

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