

December 2010

Merry Christmas from Costa Rica! We hope this finds you doing well and enjoying a blessed holiday season. For the first time in our six years of ministry, we are staying in Costa Rica for Christmas. While we'll certainly miss seeing our families, we're very excited about celebrating in our own home and with our Costa Rican friends. It's comforting to know that the Christ Child whose birth we celebrate is called Immanuel, God-with-us, and so we all can feel God's presence wherever we may be. Part of the way we personally know He is present is through the love and support of our mission partners who help make our work possible. Our prayer for you this season is that you would know the nearness and love of the great God-with-us.

The enclosed pictures show a bit of what we've been busy with this year, but we also want to share briefly what God has been doing in our different areas of ministry. The most visible area of growth this year has been with the Methodist Children's Home. We hosted eight enthusiastic, hard-working teams from churches in the States, and they did an incredible amount of work on the project. Because of all the teams that we and our partners hosted, we can now joyfully report that the roof is on the first house and that by mid-March we plan to 'cut the ribbon' and receive the first children! Thinking back to the project's beginning in 2007, we marvel at God's faithfulness to this work and at all the progress that only He could make possible. Please pray for the next stage of construction and for new funds to keep things moving forward. We ask special prayers for the children who will come to live in the first completed house, as well as for the house parents. The name of this house will be "Casa Esperanza" ("Hope House"), and we trust that the Lord will use it to bring hope and healing to all who enter.

We've been blessed by our fourth year of children's ministry in Los Guido, though it has been a year of change. You may know that in February the clubhouse where we held our Saturday activities was torn down by city housing authorities trying to "clean up" the area. We spent a few weeks meeting on the concrete slab, but the start of the rainy season forced us to move into the local church's feeding kitchen. It was a stressful time, especially because some of the children's families lost their homes and were forced to leave. Yet the Lord was faithful to give us His peace and to guide us in preparing lessons that taught the children not to be fearful, but to trust in the Lord's presence and protection. We're now preparing for our Christmas fiesta, which concludes a month of teaching about a love so great that God would send His Son to be born in humble conditions similar to those in Los Guido. As always, we thank God for the presence of these children in our lives and for what we learn through serving them. Please keep praying for their safety, and that the lessons they learn with us can help them be a light in their community.

On the education front, Ella's work teaching English grew in new ways this year. She began with a three-month course for children in another part of Los Guido and in the fall she taught another course in Río Azul, a similarly needy community closer

to our house. She is grateful for the opportunity to be part of a ministry that shares the Gospel through teaching English and she has been blessed by the sweet, eager spirits of the children and their openness to the Bible messages she blends with the language lessons. Will's teaching at the Seminary was very rewarding this year, as always. He taught two classes on the New Testament for the newer students and finished with a class on Old Testament prophecy for the seniors, a group who will graduate next year. During this academic year, the Seminary campus was temporarily re-located to a site about an hour from our house, so we are definitely looking forward to returning to its former site at the start of next year. We thank you for your prayers for the teaching aspect of our ministry, and for the continued spiritual growth of the people we serve in this way.

As always, these few words cannot express all the joy that comes from the work the Lord has given us this year and the lessons that He continues to teach us through the Costa Rican people. Nor do we have words to express our gratitude to you for your faithful support of this work. Through your prayers and your gifts, you have truly partnered with us in ministry, and you remind us that everything we do is ultimately possible only by God's own great love and generosity. We are so thankful for you, and we would enjoy hearing how God is blessing your life.

Our prayer in these weeks is that you would know the simple joy of the shepherds, the quiet faith of Mary and Joseph, and the miraculous peace of the Christ child, Immanuel.

With great love,

Will and Ella Faircloth

Please remember to visit our website, [www.fairclothcostarica.com](http://www.fairclothcostarica.com), for regular updates and pictures, and remember to keep in touch!

Captions for the attached photos:

1. Ella with birthday girls in Los Guido
2. Progress on the first house of the Children's Home
3. Will giving a workshop on liturgy and worship
4. Will with some of his Seminary students
5. A group of our children in Los Guido
6. Ella teaching English in Río Azul
7. A team from the US hard at work on the Children's Home
8. A little boy making his Christmas craft in Los Guido
9. Ella and her helper with students in Río Azul

