

## **Swanson Scoop June, 2009**

**The Work: What a privilege it is to serve Jesus Christ in Mexico! We have been serving on the mission field for 7 years and in Colima for 3 years. In the first part of 2008 three home groups were meeting of mostly new believers. We met weekly to model how a church functions through worship, prayer, teaching the Word of God, discipleship, and observing baptism and the Lord's Supper. The new believers did struggle with marital and family issues. Spiritual and numerical growth was slow. Yet God was faithful, and several new believers were coming to know the Lord.**

**We became inspired by several other mission families to try something new that has been of great benefit to the work here. We decided to initiate a cell church model for church planting. One missionary, Ben Argil, traveled to Colima in November, 2008 to give an inspirational talk on cell church structure.**

**The result was that after 5 people were baptized in a river outside of Colima in November, we launched the start of a new cell church, Cristo Vive (Christ Lives), the following week. The people responded well to the new church structure. They continue to meet in homes during the week, and on Sunday mornings we get together in our house for a worship service. People especially like the increased opportunity for fellowship with one another from the different home groups. Most often stay after the Sunday service for 2 or 3 hours to talk and encourage one another.**

**We have been in the modeling phase of the new church start. Jeff has been training leaders for each cell group and preaching or casting vision regularly. Deliegha has been teaching Sunday school for the children. Other leaders teach in the cell groups. Just recently, we have been able to start having some of the men in the church preach.**

**There are now 4 cell groups meeting in the Colima area, and a fifth about ready to start. There is an attendance of up to 25 people on Sunday mornings. More are involved in the cell groups where we emphasize that most of the ministry is to take place.**

**Statistically, Colima has one of the highest percentages of divorced and single parent families in Mexico. We have seen the effect of this sad statistic in all of the cell groups and among neighbors around us. Marital and family counseling has been a necessary role for us in both evangelism and discipleship.**

**God did a marvelous work in the lives of one of the families in the new church. Marcos and his wife were separated and living in different cities. Marcos became a new believer as well as one of his daughters. He was**

discipled and began leading a home group. His wife returned and several months later became a new believer, after seeing his changed life. Two more of their daughters became believers in Christ and all were baptized. Marcos and his wife continue to work through some difficulties in their relationship, but their relationship has improved. And now they have the hope of God in their hearts, and a hope that their family can stay together.

God does answer prayer. Just last month, Jeff felt convicted by the Holy Spirit to challenge Marcos with Scripture to be more proactive in looking for work to provide for his family. After praying together, Marcos became convicted. Jeff agreed to help him by getting a newspaper and helping take him to look for a job the next day. That wasn't needed because God answered our prayer that very day! Marcos called an old friend, who had just got off the phone with his boss. His boss told his friend that he really needed to hire an assistant, someone he could trust, to help him out. As soon as he hung up, Marcos called asking for work. He was offered the job on the spot. Both Marcos and Jeff saw this as an answer to prayer. His boss did, too, as Marcos shared this testimony with him! He continues to share the Word of God with him.

Our family: Titus, our one year old has been doing very well. We are so grateful that his little foot has responded well to the tendon surgery, and foot brace he wears at night. He is a happy and rambunctious kid! He enjoys playing with his sisters. Charissa has completed 5th grade of home school, and Lois 1st grade. We are happy that both have made a commitment to follow Christ. Both enjoyed taking care of pet turtles and iguanas this year. A puppy for the future is a possibility. Jeff has been taking the girls to swim classes three times a week for the last few months. It has been good exercise and good father/daughter time. Deliegha has been teaching Charissa to sew, and Lois to read.

\* Pray for the church Cristo Vive to continue to grow numerically, in maturity and unity.

\* Pray for strong and healthy families in the church and community, as that is God's plan.

\* Pray for our family, for the kids to make friends their own age, and for Titus's foot to continue to form correctly.

Thank you for giving to the Lottie Moon Christmas Offering and the Cooperative Program. The Lord uses these offerings to support us and other missionaries sent out by Southern Baptist Churches.

In Christ.

Jeff, Deliegha, Charissa, Lois, and Titus Swanson  
[www.swansonscoop.com](http://www.swansonscoop.com)