

Jim and Phyllis Childress

Missionaries to Panama

February 2023

Dear praying friends and faithful rope holders,

Our time on one hand seems to be creeping along since I had to deal with a ministry changing experience.

After the mission's conference the first week of December I had to cancel all ministry activity. I had been dealing with some lethargic feelings and credited my allergies and beginnings of bronchitis as the source, but the problem turned out to be an infection in my small toe. The infection complicated things since it had reached the bone with destructive effects. My Chinese doctor was able to avoid amputation, but that was a touch and go situation for almost a month.

Since early December the doctor gave me permission to go to the clinic and the bathroom. I cheated some by going to the refrigerator. Phyllis serves as my health care giver for cleaning purposes and functions as a policewoman to assure the doctor's orders are obeyed

The situation has not been a waste. I have been able to dedicate more time to the project of upgrading Bible Institute studies that includes research data, not just lesson plans. For example, my Pastoral Epistle notes went from 22 pages to 84 pages. All of our courses are shared freely to those who desire the notes.

Cristian, now a missionary to Ecuador, is visiting us for a few weeks while he visits churches. He is staying with us and using our car while he is here. After arriving in Ecuador several years ago he shared this note: "You are special to me because you were the only person to believe in me when no one else did." He calls me "daddy" and is busy doing house repairs when not traveling to churches. Today he is repairing a leak in the bathroom. He also enjoys helping Phyllis with the daily routine of cleaning my toe - waiting for it to grow new skin. The first time he saw the toe, he said it looked like a mini slice of pepperoni pizza.

Our church continues to function without me and that is a sign we are on the right path to see the church return to national leadership. I will be starting some leadership classes with the two main leaders once I have permission to leave the house. Several members have found jobs recently so the church family is encouraged about the change in status. The church family has been active in multi church activities like a women's seminar, special youth group activities and youth camps. Phyllis is gearing up for VBS.

We are losing two long time Sunday School teachers due to health consideration, and we need several new teachers as replacements or for expansion. After 30 months since Dario died of covid, M

rs. Pizzaro will soon be leaving the pastoral house located on our complex and part of her apartment will be modified for at least one new class room while leaving space for a small family to live there.

We will be in the U.S. in mid-October to participate in a mission's conference (Cincinnati, Ohio) and will be able to visit churches in September - November. Please contact us if you would like for us to report either for a church service or a time of fellowship during the week.

Thank you for your faithful prayer and sacrificial support so we can continue our ministry in Panama.