



*... Partnering with the Holy Spirit to empower Mexican people to grasp God's full purpose*

*Dennis & Lucy Smith*

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## This Newsletter includes...

- Furlough time deepens our dependence on God
- Lucy's recovery from hip replacement surgery
- 2010 recap
- Love and Respect Conferences

### Furlough time

Taking time away from our mission field is not easy. We miss our friends and pastor partners in Mexico. At times, we are concerned we are losing precious time in our mission field and a lack of purpose. We are concerned we may lose support and the enthusiasm of our contributors. BUT, God has called us to take this time away from Mexico and we are trying our very best to be obedient. We firmly believe that the most important thing in our lives is our relationship with our Lord. We are taking purposeful steps to surrender all to Him and strengthen our relationship with Him. We trust Him for His provision as we walk in obedience. We are diligently working on the hard things and clearing out the 'weeds' in our lives. God is purifying us and we sense we are being **prepared** for something in the future. We are blessed with strong Bible teaching at our new churches and Godly wisdom from our close friends, accountability partners and pastors. God is faithful and we are so blessed to have a home in Tucson to retreat to. We are waiting to hear from the Lord what He has for us. We are committed to wait until we are sure we know how and where to step out. In the mean time, God is shaping our characters and we trust that He is molding us more into His image. That is our heart's desire and a reason for this 'furlough time'.

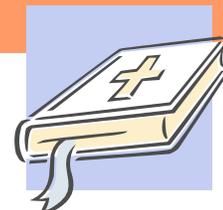
God is good...all the time! Most of our supporters have continued to support us during this time. To quote one contributor, "we admire you for taking this time to step back and deepen your relationship with God and each other. We are behind you and feel you need our support now more than ever!" Thank you, Jesus! In Christ's love, Lucy



Time in Tucson allows us to have more time with our family. Shown here with us: our daughter Megan with her fiancé, Regan, and Lucy's dad, John (who now shares our Tucson home with us).



...and lots of time to spend in our 'God Room' worshipping, praying and reading.



## Lucy recovers from Hip Replacement Surgery

God knew when He called us home from Mexico that I would need a time of rest and recuperation. After a MRI showed my right hip joint to be deteriorating and with very little cartilage, our friend and orthopedic surgeon (Dr. Berghausen) scheduled a total hip joint replacement for January 25, 2011. Dennis and I were in a bit of shock, but trusted that God would care for me and help me heal. I spent 5 days in the hospital and came home depending totally on Dennis and a walker. Dennis was the best caregiver I could have imagined: cooking, cleaning, chauffeuring, and caring for me. He has been patient and kind through it all. He is using his gift of service by serving me in this time of recuperation! I am so blessed to have Dennis as my husband! My Dad has been a wonderful help, too. He understands my limitations as he has had both knees (at the same time) and one hip replaced! Faithful friends visited to encourage me, pray with me, and bring meals. I began physical therapy one week after my surgery and have been doing the therapy exercises faithfully. I am now riding our stationary bike 40 minutes a day and can walk for 30 minutes with my trekking pole. God is SO good and our bodies heal miraculously. Check out the X-ray for the details of the titanium pin and metal ball and socket that now make up my right hip joint. I



Lucy moved from using a walker to a cane 3 weeks after her total hip replacement surgery



My close friends: Cristy, Diane, Sue and Suzanne helped me rehabilitate by bringing a wonderful lunch to my home to celebrate my 53rd birthday!

will be one that will be detained at the airport security!! I am appreciating everything so much more after not being able to do them for awhile. I am looking forward to biking, hiking and prayer walking again!

Praising God!  
... Lucy



X-ray of Lucy's new 'bionic' hip

## Praying for Mexico!

**LET'S PRAY:** Almighty God, we turn to You knowing that You alone have the power to overcome the evil forces in the Drug War. May we as a Church stand up in unity with our eyes upon You throughout the borderlands between Mexico and the United States. Pour out Your Spirit of grace and wisdom among the pastors and church leaders for the strategies to break the strongholds of corruption, addictions, greed, intimidation and violence. Protect and strengthen those who stand for justice and righteousness in the church, military, law enforcement and all governmental arenas. Send legions of angels to do Your will in this battle on the front lines. Turn the tide. Bring hope. May 'houses of prayer' arise throughout Mexico! May Your name be lifted up and exalted in our two nations. In Jesus name we pray. Amen.

# 2010 Recap: What a year!

2010 was a year full of accomplishments and challenges, joys and sorrows and endings and beginnings. As in Proverbs 24:16 states "For a righteous *man* may fall seven times And rise again, But the wicked shall fall by calamity" We have fallen and did rise again, with His help. This year, **we took less physical donations to Mexico** due to many reasons. We have found that they do not need more clothing, shoes, toys and stuffed animals! Stuffed animals and toys are not needed in even the most poorest of families. They just create more trash that is littered throughout the area. As for clothing, almost everyone coming to Penasco brings clothes for the poor and it is passed out randomly. People have so many donated clothes they set up *segundas* (yard sales) and sell clothing at extremely low prices (making it hard for the people that have clothing stores to make a living). The exceptions this year were clothing for those that were desperate and that usually was restricted to small children and infants. Also, we did provide clothing to the men and women's rehab centers and prison inmates, when needed, along with sheets, blankets, and towels to the medical clinics and those in need.



**Other donations Manos de Dios provided** were: food and financial donations to churches for food banks, 2 vehicles for pastors, school supplies to families and churches, a generator and tithed financial support to Mexican pastors who receive very little financial support. We were also able to help sponsor the annual Prison Christmas Posada for about 130 people and donated 23 Christmas food boxes (enough food to provide a dinner for a family and friends and a bag of household items) to those that would otherwise be going without a special Christmas meal.

**Other activities in 2010 were:** I delivered a message to the men and women at the Esperanza Rehab Center every Thursday; Lucy built up the woman's prison ministry and mentored a new leader; Lucy went on a mission trip with a local Mexican youth group to the community of Habana, Sonora (she also went on a mission trip to Taiwan); we took Pastor Tim (from The Rock Church of Sahuarita) to El Diamante where he gave a message to the men's fellowship group; we helped financially support a trip to Cancun by the Rehab Directors Jose and Ana (they were assisting the start up of a church and Rehab Center). We were also able to get Margarita and Alejandra into the United States and then to the Shriners' Hospital in Los Angeles for treatment for Alejandra.

In November, Lucy and I attended a **Love and Respect Conference** that was very beneficial in helping to strengthen our marriage and our relationship. It was based on Godly principles and explained how God made us different for a reason. We loved it so much and it was so helpful that we purchased the DVD set and have incorporated it into our mission. We are holding conferences in order to bring God's message of 'Love and Respect' to others. Hopefully, the conference will be coming out in Spanish soon and we plan on presenting it to our friends in Mexico.

(recap con't on next page)

## 2010 Recap (con't)

We have made many friends, increased relationships, mentored, prayed with and for those hurting, and brought the Word of God to those who would listen during the past year. We were blessed to be able to be His hands and feet. However, it was not a year without some down times and some bruises.



**The sad times we faced were few but powerful.** While working on our first project in Peñasco many years ago (building an office for the Women's Rehab Center) we met a woman and her 3 children. Socorro and her children Juan Ramon, Yada and Fatama (shown here) were the first family we built a relationship with. They were

all killed in an auto accident in Hermosillo last summer. They will be missed. Also, two pastors have fallen away from Jesus' teachings and are in the need of support, prayer and forgiveness as do many couples struggling with their marriage, problems with children and the many temptations they face.

**One of the trials we personally have endured was a parting of ways with our home Tucson church.** We have been hurt, but are choosing not to hold onto offenses AND have learned from this process. God has used this difficult time to lead us to new opportunities to grow! We are now being exposed to powerful Bible teaching twice a week at our new churches. We are growing spiritually as we study The Word corporately and individually. We have strengthen wonderful friendships and met new friends. We have opportunities for "iron sharpening" conversations. God is leading us toward different possibilities for ministering and partnering with these new churches. We share this to encourage you as you face trials. **We pray that you will,** as we have, find that God works through the difficult times and that we come out on the other side stronger and in a wonderful new place. God is good and works all together for good for those who love Him and are called according to His purpose! (Romans 8:28)

Another set of challenges we are currently facing is the **increase of violence in Peñasco** and northern Sonora resulting in less tourists supporting the area (very few jobs available and many businesses closing). Add to that, the severe economic problems we are having in America and the fact that some people in the US are reluctant to support missions in Mexico because of all the negative press Mexicans are getting concerning the violence and illegal immigration. These factors have resulted in a reduction in financial support to Manos de Dios in the past couple years (and I'm sure for other missionaries in Mexico, as well). The funding for our mission activities is very low but we will continue to serve Him for as long as we have the ability.

Starting off this year we **ask you to pray for us.** Please pray for clarity and focus on what the Holy Spirit calls us to do; for the financial support needed to accomplish those activities; for joy and unity in our marriage and mission; and for people to work together as we serve our brothers and sisters to the south and not condemn them all because of the actions of some.

**Dios te bendiga, Dennis**



Dennis & Lucy, joined by close friends Suzanne & Kent, facilitated two Love & Respect Conferences in January

## Love & Respect Conferences

Being God's hands and feet in ministry includes not only helping those in need in Mexico, but also encouraging positive relationships here in the US. We facilitated two DVD conferences in Tucson in January and have two more scheduled at churches in March. We look forward to receiving the DVD in Spanish soon and including the presentation of this marriage-changing material in Spanish speaking venues.

**"We believe love best motivates a woman and respect most powerfully motivates a man."** Dr. Emerson Eggerichs, pastor and leader of the Love & Respect conferences

The message of this conference was well received by the twenty-seven attendees in January. We enjoyed wonderful fellowship and heard powerful testimonies of marriages being encouraged.



Love & Respect DVD Conference being shown in a home

# This is what we are doing...

## Dennis

Discerning, praying, studying the Word of God, and serving is what I have been doing. Praying comes first, then the studying and discerning what it is that the Holy Spirit is calling me to do and the direction I am to go in. Confusion started many months ago when well meaning (but misdirected) people started giving advice as to what I should be doing. The problem was that the Holy Spirit had not been invited into the equation. This caused hardship in many areas of my life and mission. However, patience and perseverance is paying off. After much study as to what the scripture states about such matters, wise council from those that have had experience in these matters and some excellent teaching I have received from the Calvary Pastors and Leaders Conference I just attended, I am confident that clarity will prevail.

I also have had the opportunity to: deliver clothing, books, study material, blankets and towels to a rehab center in Nogales; make donations of blankets, towels, school supplies and a bicycle to a missionary family\* serving in Mexico (see photo below); and take a pastor and 3 men from a church in Las Vegas to Puerto Peñasco where they talked with a pastor for whom they are considering building a church.

I have also played 'nurse' for 5 weeks of Lucy's recovery from total hip replacement surgery. I am happy to say last Saturday she was able to vacuum the living room rug again! Physical Therapy is a wonderful tool.

I am re-reading Kings and Priests and just finished Calvary Distinctives by Pastor Chuck Smith. The term "firstfruits" has been on my mind for the past few days. I don't know what that means or if it has something to do with the direction of my walk or mission, so I will just have to wait for clarity and direction from the Holy Spirit, then I will take it from there.

*Peace & blessings, Dennis*



\*We met Terry and Renee Reed, & their daughters Laura and Erica when they were in Tucson for a few days. They are serving the Guarijio People of Northern Mexico by translating the New Testament into their language!

## Lucy

Loving God with all my heart, soul, mind and strength. **Worshipping my Lord Jesus** and thanking Him for saving

my soul from sin and from an eternity apart from Him.

**Waiting on God** for His guidance for our lives and our mission. **Praying for people** God brings across my path or brings to my mind. **Sharing the Good News** of salvation with those who need to hear it!

God is so good! As we take time to 'be still and know that He is God' He reveals His heart to us. Most of all He communicates how much He loves us. And then, how He wants us to share His love with others. I am not sure yet how God wants us to proceed in our mission of Manos de Dios, but know He is shaping my character and transforming me by changing the way I think through His Spirit (Romans 12:2 NLT). Dennis and I are purposefully taking time to talk about hard things and learning to dialog using good listening techniques. As we draw closer to God, He is drawing us closer to each other. As we humble ourselves and admit our weaknesses, fears and faults God is so good to forgive us and guide us in necessary changes. I pray that He will embolden me to share my faith, to encourage others, and to allow His light to shine out through my life more. I trust that God is preparing us for more Kingdom work and desire to be used by Him in anyway and anywhere He desires!

I'm worshipping with Hillsong's ***A Beautiful Exchange***. My daily devotional readings are from My Utmost for His Highest by Oswald Chambers. My constant prayer companions as I read the Bible are YWAM's Personal Prayer Diary and Beth Moore's Praying God's Word. I am currently reading Redeemed and Restored, the stories of Twelve Ordinary Women Transformed by God's Extraordinary Power. (Compiled by Hesterly & MacIntosh)

*"I pray that from His glorious, unlimited resources He will empower you with inner strength through his Spirit. Then Christ will make His home in your hearts as you trust in Him. Your roots will grow down into God's love and keep you strong. And may you have the power to understand, as all God's people should, how wide, how long, how high, and how deep His love is. May you experience the love of Christ, though it is too great to understand fully. Then you will be made complete with all the fullness of life and power that comes from God."* Ephesians 3:16-19 (NLT)

### Manos de Dios Missions to Mexico

We covet your prayers & support. Make tax deductible contributions at [ManosdeDios.org/donations.html](http://ManosdeDios.org/donations.html)

Contact us: [GetInvolved@ManosdeDios.org](mailto:GetInvolved@ManosdeDios.org)

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