



NEW HOPE

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HERALD

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Editorial

By BARBARA BARAHONA

Not too long ago, they were all small children, our four biological children and our two foster boys, Juan Carlos and Rodolfo. Those were very busy years as the ministry of Nueva Esperanza was growing along with our family. The time has flown by and it's hard to believe that our youngest, Michael, has just graduated from high school. We helped pack his personal belongings and said goodbye to him as he moved to the USA, working and preparing to enter Cedarville University as a freshman this fall.

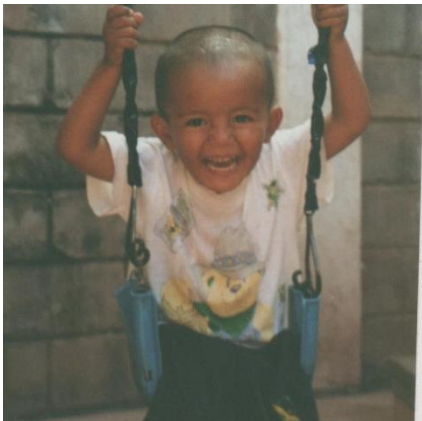
It was a special graduation ceremony for Carlos and I, not just because our youngest was finishing high school, but because Rodolfo was also part of that 2017 graduating class! Some of you who have followed Nueva Esperanza over the years may remember that the ministry enrolled Rodolfo as an at-risk two year old. Shortly afterwards, his mother asked Carlos and I if we would care for him 24/7.

Many different people helped raise him, and we are thrilled that he was officially adopted by a wonderful missionary couple who have poured out their love to him. Rodolfo also recently left for the USA and

attending college on the West Coast. As we reflect on the Goodness of God in the life of Rodolfo, we are reminded that we are not always to know God's future plan, but we are called to trust Him and obey his calling to reach out to those in need.

As for the Barahona children (now young adults), all four of them are currently in Ohio working for the summer. Elisa, plans to continue her Biology degree in New York City this fall; Amanda is studying Elementary education and will be a junior at Cedarville University; Carlos, will be a sophomore studying IT Management at Cedarville; Michael will be there as well, as he plans to get a Math Education degree. Juan Carlos, the foster child I took in when I first moved to Honduras, is serving in missions with YWAM in Costa Rica. God has blessed us over the years, and as Carlos and I begin this new stage of life without any children in our home (for the first time in our married life!), we continue to trust God in our lives and our future.

July 7, 2017 will mark **25 years** since I boarded an airplane to come to Honduras to live, and on August 3rd, Nueva Esperanza will celebrate its 25th anniversary. As we take time in the next few months to reflect on the last 25 years, we can truly say that God has been Good and his blessings are abundant! Please join with us in giving thanks to our Mighty God, and be on the lookout for more opportunities to celebrate with us.



What is a Family?

A Reflection by Liz Lovejoy

Over the past month at Nueva Esperanza, we have had the joy to hold several family celebrations. Our youth had the chance to celebrate Mother's Day by inviting their mothers to come to Nueva Esperanza the Friday before Mother's Day, and enjoyed games in the soccer area, as well as the time to reflect on the families they have, and eat dinner as a family. It was a great time for our youth and their mothers to share laughs and encouragement.

For our children's ministry program, namely our pre-school and elementary children, we didn't celebrate Mother's Day. This was intentional, seeing as many of our children don't live with their mothers and we didn't want to make them feel bad about the family structure they have at home. Instead, with our children we celebrated what we called "Family Day" the Friday following our Mother's Day celebration. Each child was encouraged to invite one adult from their family to come play games, eat cake, and participate in various other activities with them. We saw our children bring in a wide

range of family members: mothers, fathers, grandparents, aunts, uncles, cousins, and siblings. It was fun to see families come together and support their children here at the ministry.

However, while celebrations at Nueva Esperanza are a wonderful time to encourage families: it brings up a very harsh reality. The vast majority of the children and teenagers involved in this ministry are not being raised in homes with a mother and a father. Many are raised by single mothers, while others are cared for by single grandparents, aunts, uncles, surrogate parents; and in many cases, older siblings. It is sad to know that we have many children who have never met their biological fathers, and although broken families exist everywhere in the world, it is very clear that here in Honduras it is rare for our children to live with and be raised by both of their parents.

In many instances, we have been able to observe the consequence of sin on relationships as the reason for many broken families in existence. Maybe it was addiction or temptation, but many of the children's parents had something that led to the failure of their relationships and the forsaking of their responsibility. For other parents, however, it is simply a case of repeating the mistakes their parents made when they were younger. Whatever the case may be, at Nueva Esperanza, we pray that no matter what type of family a child may come from, they are able to find themselves a part of the family of God. We pray that they involve themselves in groups, such as churches that are able to demonstrate what healthy relationships look like. We pray that their family ties would begin to change towards mimicking Christ, to the way he called us to live with one another. We hope our children can see our staff as an example of Christ-like behavior, and we continue to pray that our children can one day grow up to be examples for others.



High School Program

At Nueva Esperanza, we remain incredibly grateful for God's faithfulness, especially as the program continues to grow. Our youth is now enjoying and thriving in the new house provided by the Nueva Esperanza ministry. As part of the restructuring process in the youth ministry program, we have undergone changes in hopes of continued improvement. Among all the new things happening, we have hired Erick, Zulman's husband, as a teacher and he is now a new addition to our team. Erick is very experienced with teenagers, as he has worked with the youth ministry at his church in the past; we remain confident that he will be an asset to the team, as well as blessing to all our young ones.

On the other hand, we are also starting to implement a new study program for our youth that will look a lot more like the one in Honduran colleges. Our high school teens will now have the opportunity to pick out their class schedule, and those with the highest grades will have the option to choose the classes that they want to take each semester. Our goal is encourage a desire to attend our ministry every day, as well as to provide an opportunity for them to prepare for college, work, and the world outside of high school. We continue to pray and trust that God will soon provide us with the resources and the team needed to allow our high school children the opportunity to stay at Nueva Esperanza longer, ensuring their academic and spiritual growth.



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