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Newsletter: 10

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*Hello once again from Ecuador! We are in the middle of the main school holidays, (I can't call them the summer holidays, as it isn't summer here) which means an even busier time for myself and Fabiola here in the church. In between all of that, here's what has been going on, and what you can pray for.*

## **Furlough**

Although it seems off in the distant past now, it was good to be back in the UK and Ireland, and great to be able to speak to various churches and groups. As well as sharing about the past year or so, it was also useful to be able to share about hopes and plans for the next year. As I said in my presentations, it was the first time I had not just given a report of work I had done, but also shared about what I would be going back to, and what people could watch out for and pray for. Presentations like these are always so important to remind us of the importance of partnerships and links between churches, and the many things we share and have in common.

I also presented gifts sent from The Methodist Church in Ecuador to various churches and offices in both the UK and Ireland, one of which included the Methodist Church in Ireland, shown here being received by the General Secretary, the Rev Dr Heather Morris.



## **School holidays**

As I mentioned, as we are in the main school holidays, we currently have a busy schedule. The community feeding programme has taken on a different form, as it is now part of the Holiday Bible Club (VBS for the Americans out there) and Wednesday Youth Club. Instead of a week-long Holiday Bible Club, it is held every Monday and Wednesday, in order to merge with the already existing lunch programme. There are around 25 children coming each week, along with the small group of teenagers who come to the Youth

Club that I have been organising. On Wednesdays we overlap with the children (and have lunch too), and on Fridays we have the church building to ourselves (but sadly, no lunch). It's very informal, with games, activities, and a short Bible study, and really a start-up idea to provide something for teenagers during the holidays.

### **Ongota update**

Many of you will have heard of the church plant just outside Tena. What we hold on a Saturday morning is really a Children's Club, but many of the children are accompanied by older siblings or parents, so while Fabiola continues to take the children, I am now taking the 'older ones'. Initially, this was intended as a teenage group, but really includes anyone over the age of 12, which is usually around 5 – 10 teenagers and parents. It's very informal and simple, but it feels good to be able to offer something other than the children's activities to this group.



The beautiful view of Ongota (the Andes in the background)



Pastora Fabiola serves lunch from a very large pot of rice (which I helped cook)

We are also still in the hunt for a suitable piece of land to buy for the church's use. Currently, we borrow someone's patio, which we're very grateful for, but ideally we would like to have our own property as soon as possible. We have already seen two plots, one of which was in the ideal location, but was too small, and the other was a good size, but was too far off the road. Please pray we find somewhere suitable soon.

**And finally!** A quick introduction to Grace – Grace is from the Philippines, and is part of the Global Mission Fellow programme run by the United Methodist Church worldwide. She works in a Methodist school about 5 hours away from where I live, but recently I visited her, which turned out to be her first time speaking in church, and we went to see Quilotoa volcanic crater lake at 4000m above sea level (right).



### **Prayer points**

- For good health and protection, especially during the rainy season and the associated increased level of mosquitoes
- Energy, ideas and resources for the school holiday activities
- All the ongoing activities – evangelism in Shiripuno, English classes, church plant in Ongota, youth club (Wednesdays and Fridays), Holiday Bible Club (Mondays and Wednesdays – Pastora Fabiola)
- Church plant in Ongota, and continued search for suitable land to buy
- The youth meeting and all the young people

*Wishing you God's richest blessing, Melissa*

