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Newsletter: 6

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September was a quiet month, which was very welcome after, especially as it did seem to spend a bit too much time watching the famous 'Queue' in London. October, however, saw new activities, which you can read about below. I've been in Ecuador for almost nine months now, and it's been a rollercoaster of exciting new places, people and experiences, and at times, frustrations and culture shocks. But God is faithful, and I have already seen this clearly in my life here in Ecuador, and in the prayers of so many people at home and across the world. As Psalm 91 reminds us "Whoever dwells in the shelter of the Most High will rest in the shadow of the Almighty. I will say of the LORD, "He is my refuge and my fortress, my God, in whom I trust."

### **English class and discipleship in El Esfuerzo**

In my last newsletter, I wrote that a new English class had started in a village outside of Santo Domingo. I'm pleased to say that class is going very well, with around 25 teenagers coming every week, from various church backgrounds. Working alongside a lady from the church there, we want to make the most of the young people's attendance, so she begins with a short devotion (in Spanish), and then I give the English class. I also taught a prayer in English, with varying levels of success! On the last Wednesday in October, we had a fun afternoon (not that English isn't fun!) at the river with games and a picnic, and, using our picnic at the side of the river, I led a talk on the Feeding of the Five Thousand, challenging the young people to give what we have to Jesus.



### **English 'Graduation 1'**

As one English class was beginning, the classes in Santo Domingo which began in April celebrated an 'end of course' day, with certificates and a party. They are a great group, who have been attending nearly every Saturday morning since April, so it was good to celebrate their dedication and achievements. They are enjoying a short break, before we recommence in November.



### **Ladies' prayer meeting**

One of the new activities in October was a ladies' prayer meeting on Zoom. Although meeting in person is ideal, Zoom allows us to meet at night, and mothers with small children are able to attend (in many Latin American countries, it falls to the women to care all the time for their children, and wherever they go, they have to bring their children). We are currently doing a short study on the theme of 'Women in the Bible', and then spending time in prayer. For a long time, there has been no ladies' meeting, and although it got off to an encouraging start, it is still a novelty. Please pray that the ladies will remain dedicated, and continue to attend, and that over time, more of them can get involved, and hopefully plan and lead the meeting, and lead the study.



Church on a Sunday morning

**Worship devotional :** Another new activity was a six-week devotional course exploring what worship is, how it affects our everyday lives, and what it means to 'lead worship'. The church in Santo Domingo has a talented music group, and I hope this course will help them to use their talents to the glory of God. Currently we are meeting at 8.30am on a Sunday morning, first to have breakfast, and then the devotion – a challenge for me and my levels of



Spanish, especially the morning we looked at worship in the Old Testament, and the sacrifices in the Temple, at 8.30am on a Sunday morning!



### **Meeting of Pastors (and Mission Partners!)**

On 29<sup>th</sup> September, I attended a meeting of all the pastors (and full-time mission workers) of the Methodist Church in Ecuador. It was a wonderful opportunity to meet the pastors, and each person was asked to speak a little about what is going on in their church, but the biggest encouragement was hearing about the many different ideas of outreach and mission which is going on across the country. You can read a full report of the meeting here: <https://irishmethodist.org/world-mission-news/meeting-of-pastors-in-ecuador>



### **And finally... The Road to Quito**

*Some of you may wonder why I always ask for prayer for safety in travel. The road from Santo Domingo to Quito is a good example. It's an amazing journey from the warm coastal region to the mountains, a road, which over around 2 hours rises more than 2000m, beginning at around 550m above sea level, reaching heights of over 3100m, and then descending to around 2850m into Quito itself. The scenery is breath-taking, there are incredible waterfalls along the way, and on a clear day, you can see the snow-covered Cotopaxi volcano in the distance, but the many hairpin bends which snake through the Andes, and the mist which settles in the afternoon as the hot air from the coast meets the cold air from the mountains make it a good test in your prayer life as well!*



### **Prayer points**

- For God's protection, and shelter, in daily life, travel and health
- For preparations for Christmas, both in the church, and for me, as I'll be celebrating in Ecuador for the first time
- For peace and safety in Santo Domingo after recent unrest in the city
- For fellow mission workers from UK who work in Santo Domingo with other organisations. And missionaries from USA and Bolivia who work with the Methodist Church. That we would be a support to each other in our work.



*Wishing you God's richest blessings,  
Until next time! Melissa*

