

May 2011

I always struggle with how to begin these email updates. “Dear friends and family.” No, too generic.

“It’s been awhile since you’ve heard from me.” How boring.

“Things have been really busy here the last couple months.” I’m snoozing already.

So how do I begin? It’s always a conundrum and it will many times actually keep me away from the computer because I just *hate* beginning a letter. Once I get into it, it usually goes pretty fast as there is always a lot to say. But the beginning...it’s just a struggle and it makes me use words like “conundrum.”

I mean, who does that?

Does anyone share my aversion to beginning letters? If there are any suggestions out there I’d love to hear them.

Well, now that I got that out of the way, I guess I can just jump right in. Since, officially, the letter has begun...

Since it is now on the record that I’m not fond of beginnings, let it be known that I love endings! Finishing an email update/prayer letter and getting it sent to the over 400 people on my email list is almost exhilarating.

We have also come to the end of our construction on the 2<sup>nd</sup> dorm at the camp. And I am thrilled! It’s just always so rewarding to see an unfinished structure finally come together...to see it finally come to an end when you’ve been working on it for a year. In my last letter I mentioned that we were putting down tile in our bathrooms but that we were about out of money. I was kind of embarrassed because I was going to have a beautifully tiled bathroom...with no toilets. Pretty, yes. Practical, no. I mean, I should have calculated a little better, considered function first. But sometimes I’m not so good at that, and God knows me pretty well by now. So He wasn’t caught off guard.

In my last email update, I made one offhand comment about donating toilets and I got an amazing response. I was blown away by you all. When it was all said and done, the Lord gave me (through you) a little over \$3000 to be able to finish the bathrooms (toilets, sinks and all), buy the water tank and purchase the mattresses for the newly built bunk beds. A team from First Baptist Church of Prescott, AZ, the Church I grew up in, came the last 10 days of March to build bunk beds and put up wall divisions in the dorm. It was really the last major work to be done.

So we now have capabilities for 128 people in our dorms. Last weekend was our 2<sup>nd</sup> Annual Men’s Conference, and the first event for which we were able to use our new dorms. Though the attendance of the men’s conference was not what we were hoping for (we were expecting about 120 and only 60 showed up), it was still a major blessing for the men that participated.

The good news is that the camp is almost all booked up through July! And we’ve had almost constant groups since the end of January. It has been amazing to see it get used and be a blessing to many. We don’t even know how people know of us since we’ve never done any advertising. But we

have really prayed that it would be a place of salvation, dedication and redemption and God has really been answering our prayer and using the camp to impact people's lives for His Kingdom.

The 15<sup>th</sup> Annual National Women's Conference was the first weekend in March and was held in a campground near Comayagua. We had over 150 women in attendance and it was a real sweet time together with women from all over Honduras. Our theme was "Arraigados en Cristo" (Rooted in Christ). Thanks to all of you who prayed for this event. We know of at least one woman who came to Christ at the event.

I've got 2 upcoming conferences in the next couple of months. The first one is for the disabled coming up May 20-21. The second one is also for the disabled, June 10-11. The conferences for the disabled always require a lot of help from volunteers. Some teachers from the International School, a private bilingual Christian school down here, will be assisting me in the first one. Then I have a Korean team coming down from Seoul Baptist Church in Houston to help direct the 2<sup>nd</sup> conference in June. These are conferences I always look forward to. Please pray that God would really touch the lives of these precious disabled people. I know that they exist for His glory.

In a cool side note, about a month ago, I got a letter from my cousin Jalynn who has Downs Syndrome.

Here is what her letter said: "Dear Cousin Michelle, I want to be a missionary. I love Jesus and want to tell others. I want to help people and pray for them. I want to follow Jesus like you. Please pray for me. I will pray God will guide you and keep you safe. I hope you have a happy life. In heaven I will see Jesus and my mom. If you can help me be a missionary I would like it very much. I love you. Your my best cousin. Jalynn"

So tears came immediately to my eyes. I haven't seen Jalynn in at least 6 years. But the last time I saw her, her childlike faith in Jesus inspired me. She kept asking me, "Michelle, do you love Jesus?"

"Yes, Jalynn, I love Jesus."

"Oh good," she'd answer. "I do too. One day I'm going to see Jesus in heaven and my mom is going to be there." (Her mom, my aunt, died when she was just a baby).

Then she would ask me again, "Michelle, do you love Jesus?"

"Yes, Jalynn, I love Jesus." And I turned my head as tears stung my eyes because I've never been so obsessed by Him as she was at that time.

So something kind of jumped in me when I got her letter. I mean, obviously God has put this desire in her heart, and how "convenient" that I, her cousin, am a missionary 1000 miles away trying to start a camping ministry with the disabled. It just reeks of God.

And then, several years ago, I remember one instance that God deeply impressed on me the possibility of a ministry for the disabled. Not just *to* the disabled. *For* the disabled. Something that they can do to minister to others. A prayer ministry. A choir. A service to the Church. A hugging ministry. I don't even know. But I remember where I was when the Lord placed this on me. And I remember telling Him at the time, "Lord, I am willing to follow You in this. But You know I have no idea what to do. You have to lead this and make it obvious to me every step of the way. I will not step out in this until You do."

So when I got this letter, I felt like God was taking a step. So I feel like I have to take a step. So I am currently working with my cousins to see how I can get her down here to participate in a retreat like I mentioned above. I can see her praying for people. Singing to the Lord. Assisting her disabled peers. And just being a testimony to others of a simple heart who loves Jesus.

Beautiful.

Would you please be in prayer over all of this? I have written to her church in the States and we are waiting to see if they will assist in sending her out, both financially and in praying over her before she comes. She will need to travel with somebody and I currently have a friend who is willing to come down with her, but we are waiting on the Lord and His timing. This might not happen until next year, but I do believe that it will happen. So please pray for Jalynn, that the Lord will continue to “fan into flame” the work of God in her life.

Well, I think it is time. Time to close. Time to end another email epistle (because they are long...not because they are inspired). There is so much more to tell you but I guess we will save it for another occasion...

Oh, but I cannot end without telling you that I think I am going to be getting my first missionary teammates...after over 9 years of being a lone missionary on the field! Tim & Jennie Czelusniak have just been accepted with International Teams to join me in Honduras as Camp Directors at the camp! They came down in March for a vision trip and we instantly bonded so I am greatly looking forward to them joining the team. Please be in prayer for them (and their 7 children!) as they begin to raise support and make the transition. Because of the need to go to language school, I don't expect that they will get here until the middle to end of 2012. But please be praying for them. And if anyone out there is dying to support another missionary in Honduras, just let me know...I'll hook you up to these great people.

There are also a few other couples/individuals out there that might also be interested in work at the camp. So weird...nothing for over 9 years and now all this interest all at once. God is at work! We are in an exciting phase!

Thanks for your participation in it all! Many blessings to you in Christ.

Michelle