

AUGUST 2016

The first two weeks of August are a blur. Our “to do” list seemed to grow with each passing day. Tying up loose ends is complicated when preparing to move to another country. Michael’s last day of work for Michelin was August 3<sup>rd</sup>, the end of a twenty-two year relationship. That weekend we travelled to Kentucky to share our Honduras vision with a mission committee there. On the way up, we got news that we could add our things to a truckload heading soon to Honduras. This led to our packing up the house the following week and driving a moving truck to Ohio the next weekend. God provided friends and church family to make all of that possible. We were thoroughly exhausted, but thankful for the opportunity.

After saying our final goodbyes to friends and family in Lexington, we flew to Honduras connecting with our niece Brittany in Houston, on August 16<sup>th</sup>. We arrived safely and enjoyed a week of rest before heading out again for our language studies. We left on Sunday morning the 22<sup>nd</sup> and drove to Antigua, Guatemala, a place not too far outside of Guatemala City. The town is surrounded by beautiful mountains and volcanoes, some active and some dormant. We walk to language school each morning along the peaceful cobblestone streets with the sight of the dormant volcano always in our view.

We completed our first week of language classes and enjoyed them thoroughly! We begin each morning at 8:00 and end at 5:00 pm with a two-hour break for lunch. Classes are held in a garden setting with individual classrooms arranged around the perimeter. Each of us has our own teacher that we work with for the whole week. Every week we will change teachers, unless we request the same teacher for an additional week. This provides a great opportunity to learn Spanish from a variety of teaching styles and with different speech patterns and accents. We are extremely blessed to be able to study here. Each of us was able to share our faith in different ways with our teachers this week and we are praying that God allows us more opportunities for sharing as we continue to learn the language.

Sunday morning we met with the Antigua Iglesia de Cristo (Church of Christ). We really enjoyed the fellowship of our Guatemalan brothers and sisters. It was wonderful to discover that we were able to understand and follow a lot of what was taught in our class and during the sermon hour. We have a long way to go, but it’s encouraging to see the progress we have made so far. We look forward to meeting with this congregation on Sundays while we are here.

We ask that you continue to lift us up before the Father. Please pray that we are able to learn Spanish in order to adequately communicate the Good News of Christ.

\*\*Kaylee’s Korner (A new addition to our newsletter)

My loving mother has enlisted me to write this section of the newsletter. (Though considering the name, it would be kind of awkward if anyone else were to be writing Kaylee’s Korner.) In this part of the newsletter, I will be doing my best to describe my thoughts and opinions on life here.

After arriving in Honduras, we spent a little less than a week decompressing after months of high stress scrambling to get done everything that needed getting done in order to go to Honduras. My parents also had a good chunk of time-sensitive administrative details to work

out during that time. Brittany, my cousin, and I spent most of that week processing the fact that we are now living in a new country, drinking coffee, writing emails, reading, praying, etc.

The day before we left for Guatemala was the day Matt and Hannah officially told everyone of their engagement. There was a little surprise announcement party with all of the gringos in Santa Rosa de Copán.

The next morning, we, with an AIMER named Kyle Frazier, were on our way to Guatemala to begin our language training. The drive, in total, was about nine hours. The drive *should* have taken about seven and a half, but for two of those hours we were following in the steps of Thomas Edison: “We were not lost, we found one hundred ways *not* to reach Antigua, Guatemala.”

We have currently completed our first week of language school. I loved my teacher, and am going to be quite sad when I have to change teachers. (Though I am determined to repeat her as often as possible!) Her name is Señora Flori, well, its actually a much longer four word, ten plus syllable name that I can't remember, but she goes by Flori. I feel like I have learned so much in just one week of Spanish. However, our first church service with the congregation in Guatemala assures me that I still have a long way to go.

I pray that God continues to bless our efforts to learn Spanish and equip us with the tools we will need to do his will. I thank Him for everyone who is supporting us; either monetarily or with prayers, both are much needed and appreciated! \*\*

Because of Jesus,  
Michael, Kris and Kaylee Bridges