



# News from Sara and Dakin

United Methodist Missionaries

November 2014

## THANKSGIVING

As we finish up the hustle and bustle of summer, we have a few days to pause, give thanks and write to our friends and family and to the churches that accompany us in mission. We give thanks for the lives of all of you and your commitment to God's mission, accompanying us in Ecuador and elsewhere, you are a very important part of our ministries.

We would like to thank all those that during our iteration in the US this year received us, helped organize our visits, and took care of us. Between April and June we visited some 30 churches and events as well as visiting family and friends. We want to thank the pastors, mission committees, UMW circles, Sunday school classes - all those who helped motivate their churches for mission, not just in their own communities, but all over the world. We especially appreciate all the families that opened their homes to us and provided us a place to rest and prepare, who shared their lives and faith with us as we shared with you. We thank you for your homes and lives and giving of time and yourselves, you remain in our prayers.



Mission Committee, First UMC, Kerrville, Texas

We give thanks for all the churches and people that give their offerings and support our work and presence as missionaries in Ecuador and in Latin America. Without your faithful support it would not be possible for us to help other people and communities. We want to encourage you to continue your support and if you don't already have a Covenant Relationship with us, to consider taking that step of commitment.

We give thanks to God for all the people who make possible Volunteer in Mission teams, working together it is not about our mission or the team's mission, it is God's mission that we are called to be a part of. It is the mission that God has entrusted to the Methodist Church in Ecuador and in which we all have the honor of participating. God continues to bless these bonds of love and commitment in the Body of Christ. Your presence not only transforms the places of mission, but transforms relationships and gives hope, value and sense to life, in the love of our Lord Jesus Christ.

We give thanks to God because God's works are great as is the transformation they provoke in our lives. Humbly, we say that we put our lives and our gifts in God's hands that he may continue using us. When we recognize the image of God in others, it triggers the presence of the Holy Spirit amongst us.



VIM Team with Congregation

## NATIONAL ENCOUNTER OF ECUADOREAN METHODIST WOMEN

In September Sara participated in a national Encounter for Women organized by the Ecuadorean Methodist Women's Association that included women from all of the Ecuadorean Methodist churches. Leaders and church members, women from all walks of life came together joyfully, challenged by the Word of God, just as the women leaders in the Old and New Testaments and Meth-



odist women in mission throughout our history. A prominent theologian from the Methodist Church in Brazil came and shared her testimony and the history of women in God's mission in the Bible. These Methodist women came together to value and to strengthen each other's lives and ministries as living testimony of the love of God. They affirmed the importance of gathering the testimony of women in the history of our churches, testimony of faithful servants of the Lord that have sustained God's mission in Ecuador.



In a session of Community Therapy they found that many shared the same pains and sorrows in their lives and their families but in community they also found strength and courage to continue on. As Lamentations 3:21-21 says: "But this I call to mind, and therefore I have hope: The steadfast love of the LORD never ceases, his mercies never come to an end..."

Following the Encounter, various churches that did not have formal women's groups have now started to organize local Methodist Women's Associations to meet on a regular basis. We thank all who supported this event and the ministry of the Methodist Women in Ecuador.



## REGIONAL AUDITORS TRAINING EVENT

In September Dakin attended a regional auditor training event that brought together all 5 Global Ministries regional auditors, 2 members of the Director's audit committee and staff from Global Ministries Financial Services unit. The event was led by a British audit firm that consults for Global Ministries and has extensive auditing experience around the world. This is the first time that this kind of event has been held which brought together all of the different stakeholders related to the internal auditing function of Global Ministries.



The purpose of the training event was to develop standardized reports, work papers and auditing procedures so that audit reports can be more easily understood by all those who receive and use these valuable tools. The Global Ministries Audit Committee is an independent committee made up of 7 members, most of whom are professional accountants and auditors who review, approve and take any necessary actions for all the audit reports. This event gave the Regional Auditors and Audit Committee members a chance to meet for three days face to face to better understand the conditions in the field, the expectations of the Audit Committee and how the Committee, regional auditors and staff can all work together to see accurate and standardized audit reports that help to ensure that mission funds are used as intended.



The internal auditing function of Global Ministries carries out audits of our partner churches and organizations, as well as Central Conferences of the United Methodist Church that receive Global Ministries' funds. Our current system utilizes 5 regional auditors based in the regions they serve who each conduct 10 – 12 audits a year.

The audits carried out by these regional auditors include evaluating accounting systems used by our partners to account for funds with

special attention to internal controls - the policies and procedures which help to ensure that funds are not lost or put at risk of loss or misuse. The auditors also visit projects on a regular basis which helps to verify that the projects indeed exist, are legitimate and carry out their work as stated.

Most people do not automatically think of ministry when they think of auditing, we usually think about specific projects and funding for programs, salaries and scholarships as ministry. However, the internal audit function of Global Ministries is a vital and necessary part of ensuring that ministry is carried out as effectively as possible and that it complies with financial accounting norms and legal obligations, obligations such as ensuring that 100% of Advance funds arrive and are used by the project as described. These factors are essential to carrying out ministry.

Visiting projects not only provides an opportunity to evaluate the work, but also give Dakin an opportunity to witness the work of the Church in the world. This means meeting fellow Christians who give testimony to the life abundant that Jesus assured us he had come to give, people and projects who are actively building the Kingdom of God in so many different ways all over God's creation. These visits not only provide information and help empower people the world over, but also strengthen the faith of all involved - those in the project, the donors and Dakin.



## DON'T FORGET — GIVING TUESDAY

On Tuesday, December 2nd, 2014, **The Advance**, a UMC program is offering to match gifts made online so we have a wonderful opportunity to double your donations. With your contribution the church will be able to provide:

[Pastoral Support in Ecuador – Project #3021092](#)  
[Integral Ministry for Children - Project #3021530](#)  
[Building Churches and Parsonages - #3021546](#)

In order to double your online donation, remember to do it on Dec. 2<sup>nd</sup>, just click on a link:

[https://secure3.convio.net/gbgm/site/SPageNavigator/gbgm\\_donate.html?type=1001&project=3021092](https://secure3.convio.net/gbgm/site/SPageNavigator/gbgm_donate.html?type=1001&project=3021092)

[https://secure3.convio.net/gbgm/site/SPageNavigator/gbgm\\_donate.html?type=1001&project=3021546](https://secure3.convio.net/gbgm/site/SPageNavigator/gbgm_donate.html?type=1001&project=3021546)

[https://secure3.convio.net/gbgm/site/SPageNavigator/gbgm\\_donate.html?type=1001&project=3021530](https://secure3.convio.net/gbgm/site/SPageNavigator/gbgm_donate.html?type=1001&project=3021530)

### E Mail Contacts

Sara  
 ssdd16@hotmail.com  
 Dakin  
 dakincook@gmail.com

Thank you for supporting our ministries  
 You are a part of God's mission in Ecuador and Latin America  
 Pray for the Methodist Church in Ecuador and that God may renew our strength each day  
 Please continue to support the Advance projects on the right

### Advance Projects to support

Pastor's Salaries # 3021092  
 Integral Ministry for Children # 3021546  
 Missionary Support through the Advance  
 Sara Flores # 13988Z  
 Dakin Cook # 11919Z

Send your gifts through The Advance to your conference treasurer or to Advance GCFA, PO Box 9068, New York, NY. 10087-9068 with the Advance number clearly designated on your check. For more information about developing a Covenant Relationship. Visit [www.advancinghope.org](http://www.advancinghope.org)