



# The Ministry Newsletter of Ron & Peg Smith

## Merry Christmas from Costa Rica ..... NOT!



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The Smith family sends Christmas greetings once again from our temporary home in Bradenton, Florida. We will be here for a few months more – at least – because we didn't reach our support need this year as we had hoped.

Nevertheless, we are still firmly committed to our calling and we will continue speaking to churches and individuals at every opportunity, confident that God will bring in the remaining support need in His timing and according to His plan.

We have some important and exciting stories to share in this Christmas letter. I hope the news items will encourage you in your prayers for us, for our teammates and for Missions in Guayaquil.

#### News From the Field . . . .

Mark and Tara Weathers are celebrating the birth of child number two born during their two-year tour with MTW - Impact! Just imagine what it must be like to be in a foreign country with its strange sounds and SMELLS and to be pregnant almost the whole time! But God's grace has sustained Tara; and God has given both Mark and Tara a fruitful ministry at Iglesia Reformada Presbiteriana San Agustín.

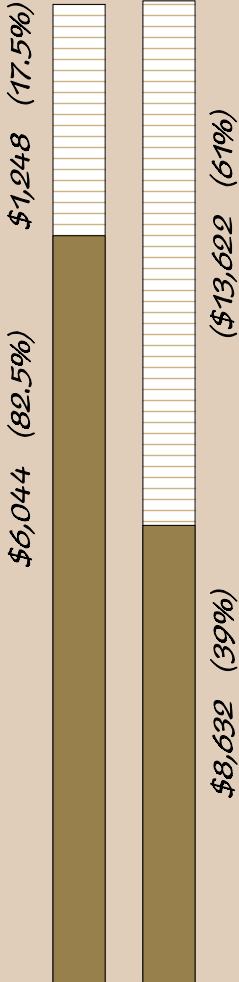
Bill and Sharon Allen and their two children are closing down their time in Guayaquil and are returning to the States this month (!) for their Home Missions Assignment. The Guayaquil team will miss their spiritual gifts, selfless dedication and hard work.

For the past several years, Bill has been the team's key teacher and mentor for men who

are preparing to pastor and plant churches. Thanks in large part to the quality of his courses, Christian men began seeking us out, asking that the Guayaquil Presbytery train them in the Scriptures and prepare them for ministry as Pastor/Church Planters. The new Reformed Bible Institute is an outgrowth of Bill's fruitful labors. But just as the new Reformed Bible Institute is being formed, Bill is leaving for the States, and the person who is supposed to take up his mantle (me!!) is still in the States, still raising support.

In other news, Bill Allen brings an encouraging report from one of our newer churches, Rosa de Saron. Bill has been training the leadership in the Scriptures, the Reformed Faith and Evangelism. Bill writes that this little mission congregation is already looking at property to buy; please pray for God's direction!

We're getting close to our "Monthly Support" goal; We still have a substantial "One-Time" need.



Monthly Support Goal: \$7,322

One-Time Expenses: \$22,260

## Transitions . . . .

Members of the Guayaquil Church Planting Team are in various transitions, and we hope that you will remember them in prayer:

Bill and Sharon Allen and their two children are returning to the States this month for Home Missions Assignment. They'll spend a month in the St. Louis area, then settle in Charlotte, NC. They ask that we pray particularly for the children, Karen and Robert, as they adjust to the States; Bill writes, "Our kids really are more Ecuadorian than American."

Jim Tate, our Team leader, is returning to



**Guayaquil Team Retreat – 2001**

Guayaquil in January with his wife, Caty, and their two children. They have a home waiting for them, but they'll be jumping right into ministry with little time for readjustment.

Mike and Robin McMahan are in their second quarter of Spanish classes in Costa Rica. Their four kids are attending a school for Missionary Kids, and are learning Spanish also. They are rejoicing in God's "awesome grace," but homesickness strikes them on occasion.

Carissa Cox has just arrived in San Jose, Costa Rica, to begin her language training. Please pray for her as she experiences cultural adjustments.

Craig and Stacey Pohl are closing in on their support goal and hope to be ready to leave for Guayaquil real soon. Please join us in praising God for sustaining Craig through his ordination exams.

## Team Vision . . . .

The Guayaquil Team missionaries are excited about what the future holds for the Church in Ecuador. From what we have seen happening among the people these last few years, we believe we are looking toward the dawn of a "great awakening" there.

Our team vision is to see the light of the Reformation come to Ecuador through the multiplication of Presbyterian churches, beginning in Guayaquil and extending to the whole country. One ministry component that will take us toward that goal is the Reformed Bible Institute. Team Leader Jim Tate has asked me

to make RBI the main focus of my ministry when we return to the field.

It will be a great privilege to serve on the "front lines" of the Reformation, teaching, training and mentoring national pastors and church planters through the Reformed Bible Institute that is being established. We want graduates who will be servant-leaders committed to evangelising, enfolding and equipping believers who will then reach

their neighbors by modeling a Reformed world and life view.

### Smith Family Prayer Requests:

- That we may find our remaining support in new contacts with churches and individuals
- That we may have many opportunities in the New Year to speak about church planting in Guayaquil
- That the Lord will show us His mercy and grace as our travels begin later this month
- That we may be encouraged in our faith, so that we may encourage others to trust God more and serve Him better