

Letter to National UCC

May 17, 2010

Greetings from Puerto Cabezas,

It is very hot. For the past two weeks the temperature has gone up about 5 degrees, which means it is really hot. I ran out of clean shirts this week because even when sitting the sweat runs down your face. We have had no real rain since the end of January. So it is also dusty. Most of the roads are made of red clay and when it dries out wearing a bandana over your mouth is essential. The dust coats every thing. Our well was dry for about two weeks but the municipal water supply came on so we have water again. However the municipal water is very unpredictable so many people still don't have water.

This week one of the elders of the church died. She led the prayer group, never missed Bible study and sang in the choir. She has served as an Elder and a Trustee in the past. Her name is Miss Pat. She remembered me from 20 years ago so she had a special place in my heart. The wake lasted all night with food at midnight. At one pm the service started at her house. Rev. Stedman led that part of the funeral. Then we all walked to the church and I led the church service. Several members of the choir spoke or sang to honour her. Her choir robe still hangs on her chair in the front row of seats. Then we walked to the cemetery and sang as they closed up the tomb. It was a sad day for the whole congregation.

I have teaching at Doris Robb Gaby primary school. The Board of Directors are all members of our church. I teach kindergarten to 6th grade on Wednesday, Thursday and Friday mornings. Some of the challenges are language because many of the children in the kindergarten do not speak Spanish. Many speak Miskito so translating things into Spanish to facilitate learning doesn't work. Lack of supplies and poor nutrition further complicates the situation. School starts at 7:15 am so I finish by 10 am. On the bright side the kids are enthusiastic and adorable. The other thing we have just started is an English Club for the community. This is for folks over 10 years old. So we have 31 people registered and a long waiting list. Several youth from our school are in the class. The ages range from 10 to Adults. I am working with the fifth grade teacher Simon and another volunteer. The class is two hours long and the first day (last Saturday) some of the students asked us to go longer than two hours. So I guess they were enjoying themselves.

Don is still working at ADSIM and enjoying himself. He is feeling better than ever. Our Young Adult group is doing well and the Women's Fellowship decided to meet twice a month instead of once a month. This Saturday I am giving a workshop on pastoral visiting and listening and confirmation classes continue. Also this Saturday is the last cooking lesson for the UN project. All of the participants have really enjoyed themselves. The women really find it funny that Don is in the class and having a good time. They tease him quite a bit. I usually show up

just in time to eat so I get teased as well. They are going to pick a date to have one last meal together with each of them cooking one Creole dish.

We have been contacted by one of our new partners in Canada and it is fun exchanging messages. I have sent a message of a number of ways in which we could be in relationship so I am waiting to hear back from them.

We are both learning a lot and this place has become home. Our ministry is bringing us both great joy and blessings.

In Christ's name,

Deborah and Donald