



 **Your Partnership Allows Amazing Things to Happen** 

1 message



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**September 2019**

**Your partnership is allowing amazing things to happen around the world!**



The home of Iris and her two young sons. (Story below.)

**Engaging Around the Globe // Short-Term Teams to Support Long-Term Workers**

This year I've been serving as the Interim Global Engagement Coordinator with our US Home Office and learning a lot! I am continuing in this capacity until November. As my teammate David and I continue walking alongside groups from the US heading out to serve globally, we also get to follow up with our communities and teams *after* their mission trips and hear firsthand stories of God at work. **Your support allows me to support teams partnering with long-term workers globally, transforming lives around the world!** The following is a testimony written by the team leaders of a group we sent to Puerto Rico this summer as a part of ongoing relief efforts:

### **The God Who Sees // Vega Alta, Puerto Rico**

*Our team of seven arrived in Puerto Rico ready and willing to do whatever was needed. After a good night's sleep, we showed up at what would become more than just our work site--it would become a place for us to truly encounter "The God Who Sees." The home we would be working on housed a single mother and her two sons, ages 9 and 10. As we arrived, this sweet mother, Iris, was on the phone in tears. **A social worker had told her if she didn't get her home repaired, her boys would be removed from her care.** The community leader Carlos assured her that we were there to help.*

*We went to work--there was much to do. We tore off the roof, tore down the ceiling, took the walls down to the studs, discovered issues with the plumbing and dangerous issues with the electricity. As we worked, we realized that our team of seven (two men, five women) along with Carlos and his friend (who became our friend, too), had the perfect set of skills to complete the construction and painting portions. Skills we didn't have, we learned. When we needed an electrician, **God provided the perfect one--a man with an amazing heart and amazing skills.***

*Iris and her boys painted alongside us when they could. We fell in love with them. **They freely shared what little they had with us and taught us much about hospitality and generosity.***

*The fifth and final day of our work project, we were afraid we might not get everything completed. However, God went above and beyond what we could have asked or imagined and provided a family from Texas who felt "prompted" to check out Carlos's work that very day. Also on that day, a couple from Virginia sent Carlos a text to see if they could come join him for the day on a project. Guess what skills that man had? Plumbing!! **By mid-afternoon, Iris and her boys had a beautiful, livable home.***

*It was on that same day--the fifth and final day--that we learned more about the first day we had showed up. On day one, the social worker had not only told Iris that her boys would be removed if she didn't get her house fixed, she had also given her five days to fix her home. **Five days.** We worked on her home for five days--the exact five days that determined whether or not she would keep her children. The social worker came to see if improvements had been made on the house. She cried. Then she and Iris hugged and cried together as the social worker told her, "Don't worry anymore."*

*We cried too--all of us amazed at the goodness of God. **He saw Iris,** He knew her situation, He allowed us to be part of his redeeming work, He brought extra hands when needed--at one point there were at least five different Christian denominations represented in her little home on a remote mountainside in Puerto Rico--all of us*

*united in the work of His kingdom. **He sees! He cares!** He orchestrates moments that change lives forever. We all gave him our “yes”, a family stayed together, we are forever connected, and **we will never be the same!***

--- Laura Gamble & Luanne Marshall, 1st Baptist Church - Casper, Wyoming



**Catalyst-in-Training // November & Beyond**

As I shared in the spring, I'm preparing to move into a longer-term role known as a *Catalyst*. A Catalyst serves as the leader of One Collective initiatives in a community and is responsible for bringing people together to see lives and communities transformed. While Catalysts can work in many different areas, we are encouraged to start with one or two passions and see where God leads. **Foster care and family/marriage continue to weigh heavy on my heart.** I have started networking with other catalysts and meeting regularly with my Area Director Aaron to learn the ropes. In the month of November, Aaron and a One Collective Vice-President will be traveling to Honduras to explore ministry here and officially approve San Pedro Sula as a One Collective community, hopefully effective January 1st!





### **Ramirez Family Updates // Marriage & Parenthood**

This summer, my husband and I celebrated our faith/religious wedding, which is a very sacred part of the Latino culture. Unlike our small civil wedding last fall, my parents, siblings, grandparents, Nicaraguan teammates, and dear friends from North America were able to join us this time! Possibly the most special part of it all was sharing it with my 85- and 87-year-old grandparents. **This was the first time my family from the US got to meet my husband.** No words can really describe that moment... seven years after we first met!

In late June, we were able to bring our foster daughter home to live with us. Becoming parents is never easy, but being newlywed parents to a teenager who has experienced trauma, in a home with two cultures and languages, has been a season of immense learning for all three of us. **Angie is learning her worth and value, being liberated from chains that previously held her captive, and starting to understand her identity in Christ.** Even in the most challenging moments, we have no doubt that God has called us to be her *mami* and *papi*. Our family and church has showered her with so much love, which has been the greatest gift of all.





A couple of the families who make up a Saturday night marriage small group we host in our home!

**YOU Can Change the Lives of the Oppressed // Support Raising**

Everything that we do at One Collective is made possible by the support of faithful givers who believe in the community transformation work we are engaged in. In leaving Nicaragua and starting over in Honduras, support has fallen off significantly. **To continue serving, I need to raise \$800 in new monthly partnership.**

If you are reading this email, there's a good chance you believe in the ways that Jesus can change hearts and lives. God is calling me to go deeper in relationships here, but I can *only* continue doing that with your help. So many of you have been incredibly faithful in partnership so far, and I am trusting that you will continue doing so or jump in for the first time now!

**Will you [join my monthly support team](#), or consider re-initiating your giving if you have previously been a partner?**

Thank you! ♥

**Impact the Lives of the Oppressed Today**

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