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Lubeck Locator

Bible Translators to the Chortí People of Guatemala

Divine Encounters

Summer 2019

Over the years God has blessed John and me with divine encounters. When our children were young teens we had backyard Bible studies on Friday evenings. One little neighbor boy came to accompany his sister who was his excuse for coming even though he was the one who wanted to come. Now that little boy is all grown up and is a successful pastor of a local church, and his wife, unbeknown to me, was named Diana after a missionary



happened to be a pastor's son. This young man completely stole our hearts. He was smart and a hard worker, and with a little help, he studied diligently and today he is also a pastor with two university degrees and has a wonderful wife and family. We had the honor of giving this couple premarital counseling and doing their wedding.

And then another encounter was with a newly married couple who came to our town to start a church. He is Guatemalan and she is from California. She needed a mama and I needed a daughter to fill my empty nest. A great fit. They now have five gorgeous children and have started many churches and are pillars in the community.

And being available to give premarital counsel-

ing has brought some couples our way who are absolutely priceless, precious princes and princesses, who have made our lives delightful and have enhanced our existence with love from every side. This extraordinary group contains doctors, dentists, pastors, Guatemalan missionaries, and business owners, who have each made their own special place in our hearts. We call this group our Thanksgiving family, because every year at Thanksgiving all these peo-

ple come and sit around our table. And this group is growing all the time. The fellowship and intimacy is absolutely a little piece of heaven.

Well, on Mother's Day evening, our Thanksgiving family planned and brought a delicious Mother's Day supper to our home. We were going to eat at a large extended table in our prayer garden, but because of a sudden rain storm, we had to crowd into our country kitchen and had some very close fellowship. The food was wonderful, but the honor I felt from the special words said to me was off the charts. Blessings from above fell on me like the rain that soaked our prayer garden. John and I are blessed beyond words to have these outstanding human beings in our lives. And just think, they all call us Mama Diana and Papa Juan.



(me) that had come to town a few years before this baby girl was born.

Another encounter was with a shoeshine boy who



John's Call to Christian Service

As we continue to serve the Lord here in Guatemala among the Chortí people, at times we reminisce about how we got here. And sometimes people ask us about how we ended up working with the Chortí people.

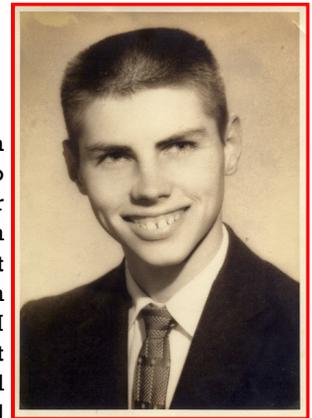
Well, the answer is that it took quite a few years for it all to come together, but it all started when I received the Lord Jesus Christ as my Savior on February 14, 1961. Everything started happening in my life at that point. And in the next few months many of life's questions were answered for me by the Lord. And I learned that I had a heart for serving the Lord wherever He would send me, but I didn't know what His will was for my life. But several things happened very soon that cleared that all up. A missionary came to our church who threw out a challenge to the young people that if we would be willing to serve the Lord with

our whole lives—whether on the foreign mission field or as a pastor, if He called us—would we stand up and say so to the Lord. So I stood up. I didn't think the Lord would call me, but I was willing to serve Him if He did. I didn't know how He would call me, but I figured He would get my attention one way or another.

About a month later I was taking a drive one night with three other young people, going down to the beach in southern California to check out a restaurant they were investigating for an upcoming event. And all was well and we were enjoying our drive together on the way home, when all of a sudden I found myself about to have a head-on collision with an on-coming car. I swerved and jammed on the brakes, and miraculously missed the other car. When I finally got the car stopped (it seemed

like it took a long time to get the car stopped with all that adrenaline in my blood), I realized that the Lord had just saved

our lives. We were impossibly close to have missed the head-on accident. And then I remembered what I had prayed that night, that if He called me I would serve him the rest of my life. And since I wouldn't even have any more life if the Lord hadn't saved us from that wreck, I realized that the purpose of the rest of my life was all for His service, wherever He would send me.



Baptist Choir

We came to Guatemala in 1973. My goodness, that is 46 years ago. Those first few years we shopped for groceries just once a month and the products that were available were much different than those that we were used to in the US. Through God's grace, I became quite proficient in creating dishes from what we had on hand. The miracle was that they almost always turned out quite yummy, and sometimes, when it was really extra delicious, my children would say, "Yum yum, write that one down, Mommy." It blessed my heart to know that my kids were extra pleased with something that I created out of almost nothing. Praise God.

Recently, after teaching a group of precious Chortí children in a village about a half hour's drive from home, that thought kept running through my mind, "Write that one down, Mommy." What happened on that Monday afternoon so touched my heart that I just had to write it down.

You see, this group of 30 to 40 children meet in a little Baptist Church with a precious little Chortí lady, Felipa, waiting to help Willie and me unload the stools, sound equipment, snacks, and



my teaching materials from our pickup. The kids all pitch in to help, and they're always happy to see us come. Most of the children don't attend the church and so the only Bible teaching they receive is on Monday afternoons from 2:00 o'clock until 4:00 o'clock. I have had trouble keeping track of their names because the group keeps changing. But for several days the Lord had been laying it on my heart to make a large attendance chart with just their first names on it and a place to put a sticker to show that they were present. Well, I did that right away, and that Monday while they were coloring their handout pages and drinking their cold pineapple punch that I brought them, I called them one by one to come up and tell me their name and I wrote it on the chart.

I'm having trouble putting into words

how thrilled these children were to see their names written on the chart, and they also got to choose a sticker to show that they were there. They had great joy in making sure that I spelled their names correctly and then choosing the right sticker. About 15 kids pressed in on me so they could watch the whole process for each child. It seemed to touch their hearts that I cared enough to want, not just know their names, but to write them down as well. One little girl, who is always carrying around her 10 month old baby sister, wanted her sister's name on the chart too. So everyone giggled when I wrote it down. Why was this so important and delightful and just downright fun for all these children? I'm still pondering about that. But I see part of it in Psalm 139:16, which says: "You saw me

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Supervisor's Visit to the Mountaintop Village School

The rains have begun. About two weeks ago the sky in our whole area filled with clouds. Now, where I grew up in Southern California, rain was rare, but when it did rain it was with cold wind and cold rain. It was a time of baking cookies or putting on raingear and walking through puddles. Not so here in Eastern Guatemala. The heat index rises for a couple of days and then the clouds start rolling in like the foam on the yeast that I am getting ready to pour into my dough for the bread I'm making. Enough rain fell the last two weeks that the ground is eager to receive the seed with the promise of a good harvest. We had a good rain on Friday and the heat kept rising and the clouds kept foaming with their promise of rain, but none came until last night which was Tuesday. The skies opened up and dumped several inches in just a few hours and it rained



most of the night.

Now enough of this weather report. The rain is a blessing and is needed for a good harvest. But why does it almost always rain on Tuesday night or early on Wednesday morning when yours truly along with Willie, Javier, and my driver Miguel Angel load up his pickup. This is in preparation for the adventurous drive

up to the top of the mountain and down the other side to my favorite village school to teach the Bible to the Chortí children there. Today was one of those days. Our alarm sounded off at 4:30 a.m., but I was already up and looking forward to today's adventures. Willie was concerned that maybe the road was impassable so I called the director of the school. But he assured me that all the teachers were already in the back of a pickup ready to head up the mountain. Can you just imagine holding on for dear life in the back of a pickup for that hour-long ride?

So we loaded up as well (only I get to sit in the front seat) and started driving up the bumpy, rutted, slippery mountain road to the village school. On arrival, after over an hour on the road, the director, Professor Dickie, greeted me saying, "I have two favors to ask of you." He explained that he needed me to join the two classes together since the supervisor of the Department of Education was visiting to evaluate his school. I quickly asked if he thought that I shouldn't give my class today. But he quickly responded that he was proud that I was there to teach the Bible in Chortí as this would show the supervisor that he is encouraging the children to use their mother-tongue language besides Spanish which the teachers speak. So the director said, "My supervisor needs to observe what teaching Chortí children in their own language does for them." In essence he was saying, "Mama Diana, do your thing." No pressure. So with God's help I pulled out all the stops with songs, Scripture memory, Scripture games, and the dramatized story of "Daniel and the Lion's Den." The kids got with the program and were great, participating in the songs and games. They loved holding the lion



posters and the Daniel poster and we even had one little boy dressed as King Darius, with a crown and a tunic.

To say the least, the supervisor loved it all and took pictures and videos. He was thrilled to see how the children obeyed and responded. What a gracious man. He was so encouraging to the children and told them how important it is to be bilingual. He also showed great respect for the director and the other teachers.

The second favor the director asked of me was that we give the supervisor a ride to another school, which was right on our way home. As it happens, I teach at that school on Thursdays. So I said, of course, and we waited until he was finished with his interviews with the teachers and then we headed down the mountain, answering question after question from our new friend. What a blessing to meet educators that love the children like we do and wish the best for them.

That morning was definitely a divine appointment. So even with Tuesday night rains, our Lord was guiding our steps, and kept us safe on the road. Thank you, Jesus.

(Continued from page 2)
before I was born. Every day of my life was recorded in your book. Every moment was laid out before a single day had passed."

These children are so precious and they love it that I know them by name.

How much more important it is for these little ones to realize that God also knows their names and that He loves them. And my responsibility is to make sure that the names of these Chortí children are written, not only on my poster, but that their names are written in the

Book of Life. Revelation 3:5 says: "All who are victorious will be clothed in white. I will never erase their names from the Book of Life, but I will announce before my Father and his angels that they are mine."

The Call of Diana and Giuliano

As missionary parents, it's always a joy to have your children follow in your footsteps. Our son Jamey served with his wife Dana and their three sons for 10 years here in Guatemala. Betsy and her husband Darrell came to Guatemala for two years and started a church that continues to thrive to this day. And our daughter Kathy, 30 years ago, married the love of her life, Dr. Joel Quijada, and she, although not a missionary, has a wonderful ministry here in Guatemala. She ministers in her local church by singing and teaching ladies. And she ministers to us constantly with love and care. It is a huge blessing to have her close by, even though it is a winding mountain road that takes us to her house in 30 minutes. We often go have coffee with her.



Recently our granddaughter Diana and her husband Giuliano have moved to Argentina to serve the Lord there. Giuliano is from Argentina and came to Guatemala to study at the Central American Theological Seminary in Guatemala City. He and Diana met at a church conference several years ago in Guatemala City and then they got married last November (2018). Diana has always wanted to be a missionary. These are her very words from her personal testimony:

"Since I was very young, I was always passionate about wanting to serve God and looking for ways to do so. Soon I had the opportunity to sing with the worship team at church, and when I got a little older I started teaching Sunday School to a group of 40 children from the ages of four to seven. Because of this and several dreams that the Lord gave me, I dedicated my life to serve Him. And this was so important to me that my friends at school would often call me

"Pastor" because I was always talking about the Lord. And at church, whenever there was a missionary call, I was the first one down to the altar. I often experienced the power of the Holy Spirit when I counseled and prayed for my classmates (often leading them to the Lord). And then later, remembering those times really helped me when I went through difficult and dry times in my Christian life."

Diana's husband, Giuliano, stole all of our hearts long before they married. He loves the Lord and comes from a wonderful Christian family. He shared these words in his testimony:

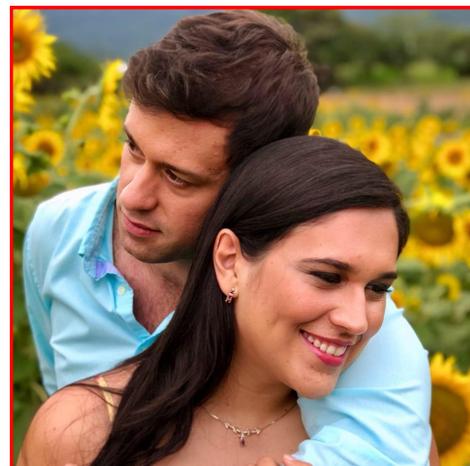
"I was born in Argentina in a Christian home where God was the center of our family, and I was privileged to be raised with good moral values. I always had an awareness that God was in my life, and that gave me a reason to stay on the straight and narrow, steering clear of anything that would lead me astray. I am the youngest of three children in my family. My older siblings, Analía and Walter, always treated me with love. And so, looking back on my childhood, I am grateful to God for my loving family."

This wonderful Christian foundation prepared Giuliano for his strong Christian walk with the Lord, and his close relationship with Jesus helped him through the loss of his mother when he was only 19 years old, and only two months later his father died and joined his mother in heaven. At such a young age to lose both parents so close together was an extremely heavy burden to bear. But in his own words, he expresses how the Lord helped him. Giuliano says:

"So by the time I was 19 years old, I had lost both of my parents. But all of this made me want to walk closer to the Lord and to be in His presence constantly.

"These difficult circumstances coupled with my faith in God have molded me into the man I am today. There are times when we do not understand why things happen as they do, but I always knew that God was the One who was holding me in the hollow of his hand."

To say the least, John and I are very happy that Diana and Giuliano are following in our footsteps as missionaries. When they got back from their honey-



moon in Argentina, we had the joy of picking them up from the airport and hearing how they felt God's call to return. The passion in their voices as they saw the great need for discipleship and Christian growth in the churches touched our hearts. Their preparation is a perfect fit for the need there in Argentina. Giuliano, with his degree in theology, and Diana's degree in clinical psychology can be powerfully used by the Lord.

I remember our first year here in Guatemala. So many drastic changes happened in our lives so quickly. But the prayers of God's people took us through. Diana and Giuliano need lots of prayer as they adjust to many changes in their lives and their struggle to make a living until they get established in the work God has called them to do. Please pray for them as they weather the storms and persevere to find God's will in the ministry he has planned for them, as the missionary call goes on to the next generation.



Getting a Scripture Portion Ready for Publishing

Willie, Olga, and I have been working on several books during the last year or two. We finished 1 and 2 Samuel, did Malachi, and then Daniel. After they are translated and revised to our satisfaction, I have to do what is called a “back translation.” And I have to do that because all translated materials have to be checked and approved by a translation consultant. But the consultant doesn’t speak Chortí, so the back translation I do is from our Chortí translation back to English so the consultant can see and understand how we translated the various passages. Then he asks exegetical and comprehension questions and gives suggestions where appropriate so we can improve our translation and be sure it is correct.

Then the whole “clean up” process begins. Since we have this great program called ParaText which was written by the United Bible Societies and the Summer Institute of Linguistics, we are able to use all kinds of built-in checks to help us correct any errors. One is for checking parallel passages for both the Old and New Testaments. This is so we

can compare the passages to make sure that there are no contradictions. Another is a form of spell check, but for Chortí. But we are the ones that have to say if a word is spelled correctly or not. And there is a wordlist option that shows each word in isolation to make sure that it is spelled right. And this option allows us to go to the verses where the word is used to see the context. And if we see that it is spelled wrong, then the program allows us to see all the verses where that word is used so they can all be corrected. It’s a long process, but very worthwhile. We spent over two weeks working on just this check for the Old Testament books we are about to print. Then there are all kinds of punctuation checks, beginning and ending quote marks, capitalized letters at the beginning of sentences, what words can be repeated together, and numbers whether they should be written out or left as numerals.

Then when it is all cleaned up, we get help from a Wycliffe Bible Translators expert who will format the book for us so we can take it to a printer. Then there is



the cover to design, the title page to prepare, credits given for drawings, copyright, dates, how many copies were printed at this time, and any indices included with a Scripture portion. We are fortunate to have a relative of our son-in-law who is our printer. He does a good job and gives us special prices.

We love what we do. It is very detailed and demanding, but that is what the Lord prepared me to do, and called me to do. “Yes Lord, we are here to do your will.”

Angel Choir Sings at the Tabernacle



Friday is my favorite day of the week for my ministry with children. It is the day of my Angel Choir rehearsal. Yesterday, there were 28 children and teens singing and reciting Scripture with all their hearts. They don’t have to beajoled to do their best. Their best is what

they constantly give. Tears of joy flowed as I listened to them sing praises to their Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ. I also taught the lesson about the Holy Spirit which they received with open hearts. Working with them renews my energy for all my other children’s ministries. They were preparing to sing at the Friends Church Tabernacle in Chiquimula.

We had been practicing for weeks for this event, realizing what a great honor it was to be invited to sing there. The children were asked to sing four songs and they also recited Psalms 8:2 which says: “From the lips of children and infants you have ordained praise because of your enemies, to silence the foe and the avenger,” and Psalms 23:1 which says: “The Lord is my Shepherd, I shall not want,” but in Chortí and Spanish. They sang the old hymn, “Where Could I Go?” in three languages, Chortí, Spanish, and English. They also sang a round, “The Lord is my Shepherd, I’ll Trust in Him Always.” And by the time they sang the last song, “I Surrender All”, many listening were touched by the Holy Spirit and were



weeping. John created a presentation for the congregation to project the words in Spanish while the children were singing in Chortí.

Our day had begun before 4:00 AM, gathering the children in their village at 6:00 AM, loading them up in a pickup and our car to take them to our house for breakfast, and then taking them by bus to Chiquimula, arriving by 8:30 to do a practice and sound check at the church. There were 29 children and teens, mostly girls with three very brave little boys. The pastor of the village church where we practice also traveled with us. Four of his children are in the choir and

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Evangel Bible Translators

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they are outstanding members. His oldest daughter is the student leader of our group. We were so proud of how the children not only sang, but also how polite and obedient they were.

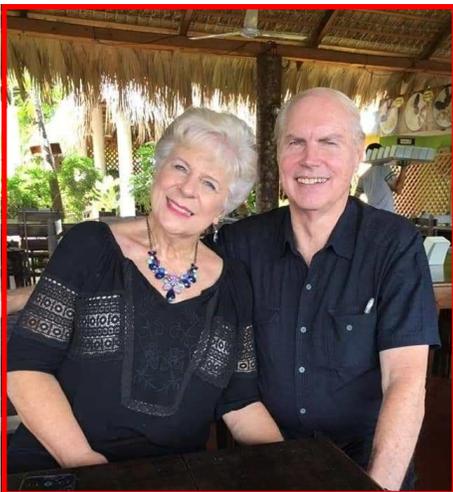
After their practice and before the service started, all the children knelt at the altar and John led them in an echo prayer which means that they repeated what John prayed as he asked the Lord to fill them with His Spirit and use them for His honor and glory.

The church served us all a wonderful lunch and even had a bag of candy and chips for each child. The choir members were delighted. After lunch the choir sang a special song in Spanish and Chortí to express their gratitude.

Then at 1:30 the bus came to take us back to our house for ice cream and games. At 3:30 the pickup came to take this bunch of tired, but very happy kids home. What a wonderful day!



Prayer and Praise



We praise God for you all who are God's blessings to us because your gifts and prayers keep us here doing what God has called us to do.

1. Please pray for our good health and longevity to continue so we

can finish the whole Bible for the Chortí people.

2. Please pray for the continued revision of the Old Testament. Right now John, Olga, and Willie are working on preparing 1 and 2 Samuel, Daniel, and Malachi for printing. The plan is to print 1st and 2nd Samuel in small book form, and Daniel and Malachi in another small book. We are praying that we will be able to publish these small books before leaving for furlough in late August.

3. We praise God for the more than 500 children who are learning God's Word each week from Mama Diana.

4. Pray for all these children that they will make a lifetime commitment to our Lord Jesus Christ.

5. Praise God for the gifts that have been received to be able to put a roof on our conference room. We will start "raising the roof" right away.

6. Pray that God will provide the needed funds to complete the conference room. This will include flooring, doors and windows, plastering, painting, and lighting.

7. Pray for our time in the US from August 28 to November 6. We will be in Texas, Arkansas, Illinois, Indiana, and Ohio. We can always be reached by email or Messenger.

We are blessed and filled with joy that we have the privilege of ministering for our Lord. Every day we awaken with expectation for what God is going to do today. Thank you for your partnership as we perform this holy task of reaching the Chortí people for Jesus.

Joyfully in Jesus,

John & Diana Lubeck