



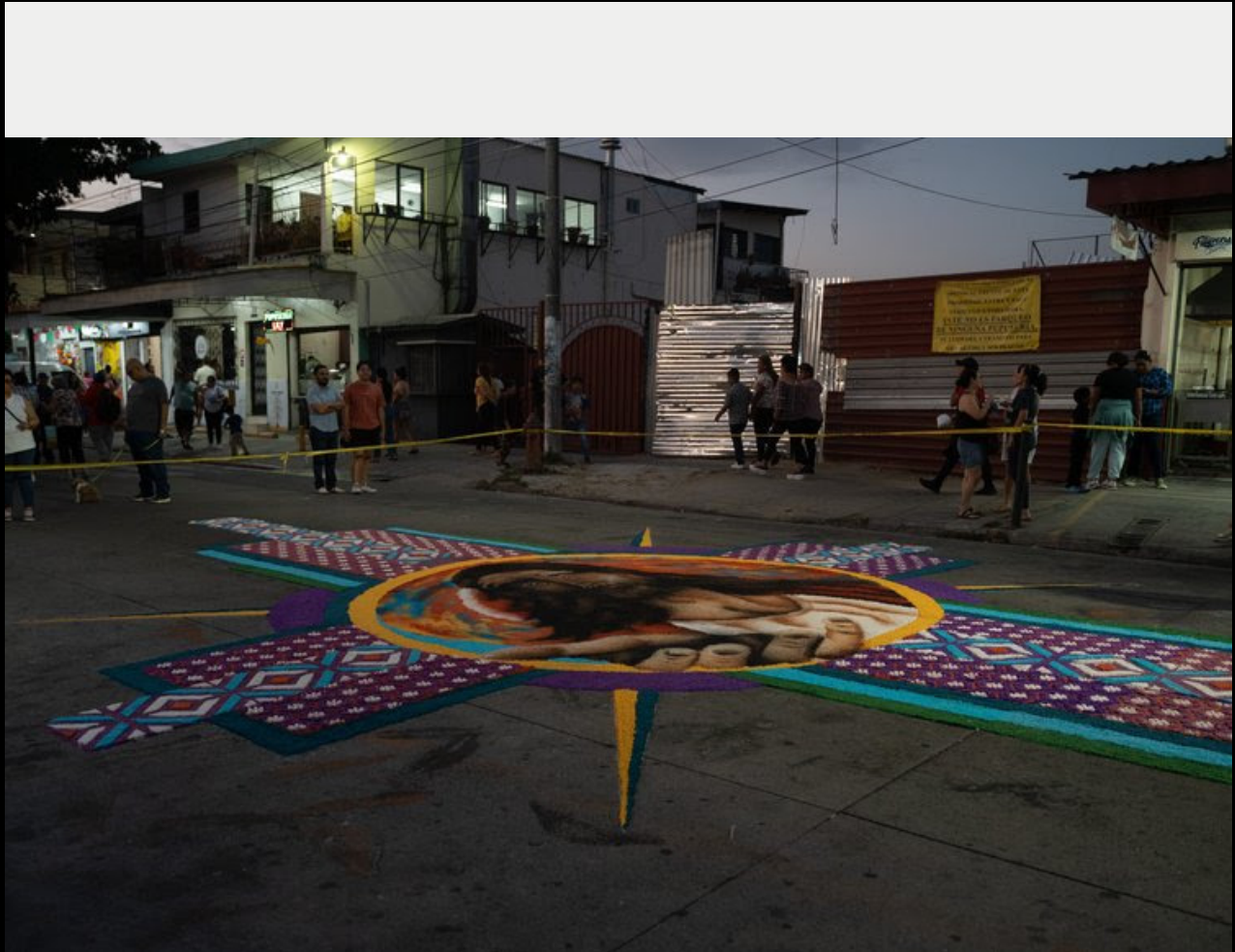
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Missions Update

1 message

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To: info@monclovabaptist.org

Fri, Apr 12, 2024 at 8:51 AM



FIRST QUARTER 2024

JANUARY - MARCH 2024

Lydia Parish – Missions Update

1 T I M O T H Y 3 : 5

“For if someone does not know how to manage his own household, how will he care for God's church?”

REFLECTION

The beginning of the year was a blessing. I was surrounded with friends and family, which renewed motivation and joy to continue stewarding the relationships I have been given in my life. This life I chose requires increased intentionality to maintain and build relationships because of the long-distance factor of my current role. Over the last few years, I have realized the value of keeping my heart open to old and new friendships, including family. People are my everything, and I am so thankful that through this journey God has given me a heart of love and compassion for them. I have not been perfect at this, but I realize the importance of my relationships and seek to continue building them <3

Also, I cannot express enough to you how valuable having a Christian community is. What I have learned: You can live in a community and not be part of a community.

Why do we need Christian Community?

God created us to be in a relationship. As we read the beginning of Genesis, it is clear that God created us to be in a relationship with himself and with those around us. A community is built on relationships.

We live in a world that is opposed to our Christian beliefs. The world wants to ignore the truth of the Bible and will mock those who hold to that. The world does not have the same values. Living in this environment, we need a Christian community to encourage us to hold fast to the truth.

We are called to live with one another and so we must live in a community. Through the New Testament there are various commands of how we are to live and relate to one another – serve one another, love one another, care for one another, and more. Living in Christian Community is a way we can obey these commands.

What is the foundation for Christian Community?

The foundation for our community must be God. That is what makes this community different from other “social clubs.” God gives us an example of what it means to live

relationally. God's Word gives us the principles for how to relate to one another.

The example of how we should live in a community comes from Jesus' ministry here on earth.

The early church gives us an example as well. They had everything in common. They were meeting one another's needs and sharing among themselves. Acts 4:32 says, "There was not a needy person among them." (ESV). This is a challenge for us to live our lives in that type of community.

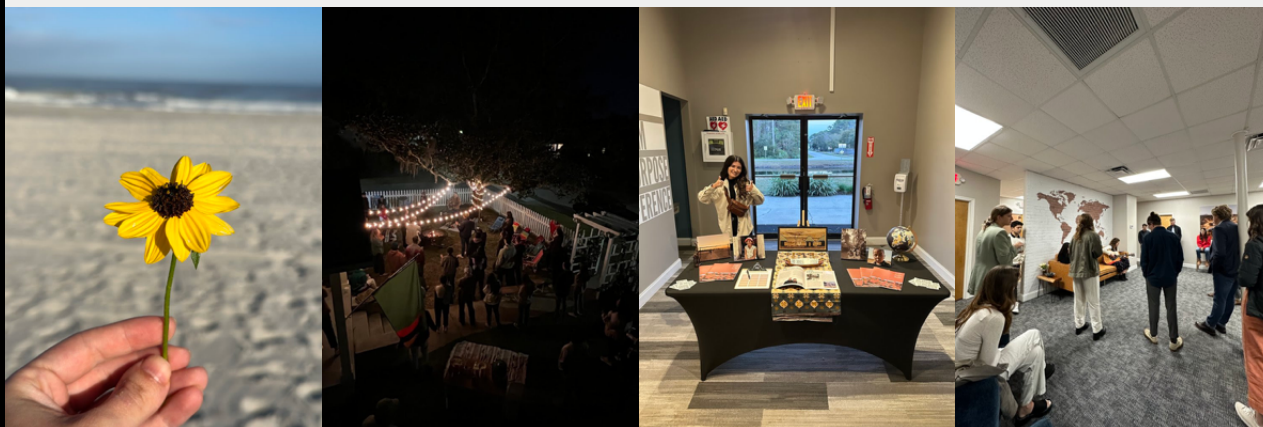
The Goal of the Christian Community

The Christian community should be encouraging one another (Hebrews 10:24). We need encouragement to continue to walk with God even when it is difficult. We need other Christians to walk beside us encouraging us to continue on.

The Christian community does not exist just so each individual has their needs met and can live happily ever after. As a community, we need to proclaim the gospel to those who need to hear. The gospel is proclaimed through our words and our deeds.

Our love and care for one another will be a testimony to the world. Some of Jesus' final words were, "By this all people will know that you are my disciples, if you have love for one another." John 13:35 (ESV).

If anyone is curious, I have recently written out a priority list in regards to my relationships. The Bible does not lay out a step-by-step order. However, you can find general principles for prioritizing family relationships. I found this extremely helpful in making decisions while maintaining personal relationships from a distance, and I pray this inspires you to think actively about your priorities as well.



JANUARY

In short, this month was filled with travel. The first week I was still in Ohio, and then I drove myself back to Jacksonville, Florida for Overland's annual conference and staff meetings. Our conference was five days long with sessions throughout the day. We had some interesting speakers, and my favorite one is always Dr. Leon Van Rooyen who is on our board of directors and is the president of Global Ministries/Global Theological University, which I am pursuing my theology degree through.

After we had our staff meetings/retreat celebrating Overland's 25th anniversary, which was about a week long. From there, the Expedition Department traveled to our main office in Cocoa Beach, Florida for our annual few day intensive training (a review on policy, building expedition team budgets in various countries, driving overseas, communication breakdowns, medical overviews, etc.).



FEBRUARY

This was a typical month of recruiting in Jacksonville except that the Colorado team joined us for several days on campus' in Florida. It was a sweet time seeing those guys. Aaaand all of my teams but August Zambia were filled with team members who were excited to minister overseas.

Also, I took a three day course to get my motorcycle endorsement! I looked hilarious at Harley Davidson cause I was on my tip-toes with the shortest seat and a Street 500 bike; but hey, I passed first try. If you're wondering, the only reason I took the class is because it is a now a requirement made by Overland's Expedition Department to obtain a motorcycle endorsement if you lead expeditions in SE Asia, which I do. LOL.



MARCH

More traveling!

Arrived back to Ohio at the beginning of the month to do some needed fundraising and meetings with current supporters. Had some wonderful opportunities to share at a conference and TCS's chapel during their Spiritual Emphasis Week. Also, it was wonderful to spend time with my family before making the jump back overseas. Then, on the twenty-third, I adventured many flights to El Salvador for an extremely ministry-packed recon.



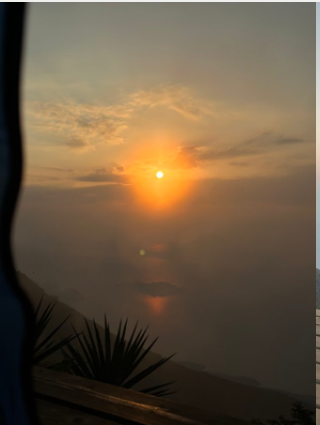
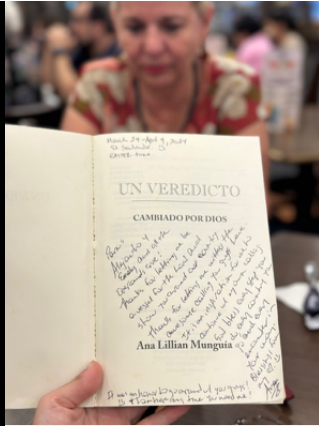
EL SALVADOR

This was one of the most fruitful and ministry-packed recons I have ever been on. All of our meetings were pre-planned with our ministry connection, Ana – she loves networking and is very connected to various ministries throughout the country. We met with different ministries/organizations every day while having meetings with pastors and their congregations to see what ministry is like in this country, because Overland is seeking to launch a full-time team in Central America.

I loved seeing what God is doing in El Salvador and participating in that. On two occasions we were able to do some neighborhood evangelism with churches while also participating in a village ministry event. Also later in the week, we were invited to share at a pastor's conference, teaching on evangelism. Many different denominations were represented, and it was encouraging to see.

Even though we were extremely busy, we had a “fun day” and spontaneously decided to visit a volcano with an incredible view. Upon arriving to the top, other people told us the sunrise is AMAZING to experience. Sooooo of course we decided to rent cheap camping gear (a tent and a questionable sleeping bag) and stay for the sunrise with just the sweaty clothes we had on. The temperature was consistently in the upper ninety degrees fahrenheit.

One of the coolest experiences I have ever had overseas was in this country. We were there over Easter, and the Catholics in the country hold a parade in every city on Good Friday to celebrate Jesus' death on the cross. It's very interesting, but I loved it because of the salt murals that covered the “blocked off” streets. It takes hours during the hot day to construct. At the end of the day, the parade walks through holding a casket with a plastic Jesus while destroying the murals. My favorite one is featured at the top of my newsletter. It is so beautiful and intricate.



WHAT'S NEXT

April 4th-6th: turn around from El Salvador

April 8th: Arrived in Siem Reap, Cambodia

April 13th: Khmer New Year with the team

Mid April: Cambodia recon

April 26th: Border run to Vietnam

May 1st-13th: Cambodia expedition in Preah Vihear

May 26th: Border run to Thailand

June 15th-29th: Cambodia expedition in Siem Reap

PLEASE PRAY FOR

- Adjusting to life back overseas
- My sister Sophia's adjustment into college (she's graduating HS in May)
- Smooth communication with team members
- Safe travel

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