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June 8, 2008

The Dye's Update

It wasn't an "Amening Church" that invited Roger to preach Sunday night, but there was plenty of noise including a drunk man in the back who was politely asked to leave so that the rest could hear. The praise time was led by the main instruments in most Latin American churches, the drums and guitar. This particular drummer knew just how to hold back his enthusiasm. The guitarist was a smileless girl with a heavy brow who crept up to her chair with most of her back to the congregation. I didn't expect much and wondered how the drums would lead the singing. What came out of her fingers was not smileless but full of joy and professional expertise. I sang but glanced regularly at her with amazement. I have become used to this familiar experience in Chile being surprised by otherwise solemn folks and the heart that pours out in their music, poetry and politics. Ay, their politics, but we won't go there!

The pastor led the congregation through praise, confession and assurance of God's forgiveness. The congregation seemed to go through the motions silently. With the benches close together, the elder behind me bowed his head close to my ear. He didn't utter a sound until the pastor prayed, "We have sinned against You and only You, God Almighty." I heard him draw his breath quietly. He too was guilty.

This was one of the elders who many years ago asked for someone to come organize a small group of believers into a church. John and Cathy Rug came. Strangely enough no one played any musical instruments so John learned to play the guitar and led the music. When John and Cathy left there was still no one to play the guitar so John taught this elder to play the guitar, who taught his son. I am not sure how Gabriela became one of the guitarists of the church, but I could hardly wait to tell her how much I enjoyed her playing. I asked the elder who she was. He explained that she had grown up in the church as a baby and that I should be sure to look at her hands.

I made my way over to the musicians. Gabriela was playing the drums now and the drummer was playing the guitar. They stopped when they saw me hovering and smiled big smiles. I began talking and telling them both how much I enjoyed the music. I asked to see Gabriela's hands. Horror, amazement, incredulous! She was missing most of her fingers. She giggled and covered her mouth as if she never considered missing fingers a deterrent to playing the guitar.

Know of our prayers for you all tonight, especially Rob Korn of Winnsboro, SC who had a stroke this week.

Laura Dye for Roger and the kids, CHILE