

Steve & Amy Robertson  
Robertson Review, May, June and July 2008  
Church Planting with MTW in Guadalajara, Mexico  
July 29, 2008

Dear Praying Friends,

Right now is a wonderful time to live in Guadalajara. The rains started just over a month ago, and now the city is at its greenest. The temperatures have cooled (highs are in the low 80's, lows in the low 60's), and the dust has been washed away. It's the height of fruit season, and strawberries, oranges, mangos and so many other wonderful things are in abundance and cheap! For about 50 cents, you can get a bag of chopped mango with lemon and chili sauce poured over it. A few weeks ago a colibri (hummingbird) decided to build its nest on the light socket hanging above our washing machine. We took out the bulb so we wouldn't accidentally burn it, but maybe the colibri knew what it was doing and wanted the heat for an incubator. A week ago two baby colibris hatched and it has been so amazing to see the mother feed them (it's a little scary too because when we have go out there she swoops down and hovers just in front of our faces) and to see them start to stretch their tiny wings. The rains cause their share of problems but we are so thankful for the benefits that we don't really mind that the streets flood, traffic is even worse, and our dehumidifiers take about 12 gallons of water a day out of the air in our house.

Much has happened since we last wrote. We are encouraged about what the Lord is doing in and through us, and we are grateful for his continued mercies. A few notable events and activities over the past couple of months: the rains have come! the kids are out of school, Steve has been back in school (getting some more Spanish training), our Bible Study continues, our overall health is improving, there have been many teaching and preaching opportunities, and we are getting to know the neighbors more and finally are being more and more accepted by them. The Lord has given us some new connections and contacts over the past 10 days or so, and we are especially excited to see some spiritual interest and openness in our neighbors. Please pray that we will be good and faithful witnesses and that the Lord will bring them into his church.

We are thankful that God has been expanding the scope of the ministry here. Our team's first church was established about 12 years ago. The first daughter church came out of that church in 2002. Now a daughter church is coming out of the daughter church in a poor community on the outskirts of town! It's probably inaccurate to call it a church yet, but we have a handful of committed believers who want to see their community transformed for Christ, a large group of kids who are so happy to be loved and to be taught about the one who loves them most, a piece of property, and a Mexican church member who will be leading the work. Please pray that God prospers this fledgling group! In addition to advances on the outskirts of the city, we are also seeing some in its center, as one of our teammates is working downtown with drug addicts, prostitutes and bikers. A few Sundays ago we had about 15 members of the Guerreros (Warriors) and Amazonas (Amazons) biker gangs come to church, and this coming Sunday we'll be dedicating a building in the historic downtown for ministry. Closer to our home, we had our first neighbor come to our Bible Study last week. Pray that he would continue and that many more would follow.

Some quick updates/prayer requests:

- Please continue to pray for our health.
- A few days ago the kids were working with some language software on the computer when they burst out laughing. They called us in so that we could hear the awful American accent that the software had! It's a major step forward that they can even identify a horrible accent, let alone find it humorous. Just now, they had some friends over, and we could hear them jabbering away (not always correctly) in Spanish. We are grateful for their improvement and ask you to pray that they would continue to progress.
- Sunday after I had preached in Spanish a friend of mine in the congregation approached me. He made a few kind comments about the sermon and my progress in Spanish, but then asked, "What did you mean by this?" and showed me his bulletin where he had written down a sentence I had used. Apparently, I completely made up a word. It was actually quite a useful word – it just doesn't exist in Spanish. So, please pray for Amy and me too as we work on Spanish.
- I have the opportunity to give Bible instruction to all the teachers at our kids' school as part of their teacher orientation. It will be a bilingual class for 1 hour and 20 minutes each day for a week. The teachers are Christians from a wide range of backgrounds. Pray that this goes well and that the Lord would use me to encourage and instruct.
- We are thankful to have had some visitors and would love to have more!

This month's (three months') cultural tidbit:

Tipping is a big part of the culture. There are many jobs that are unpaid or mostly unpaid, where people depend on tips. Some of these are helpful – grocery baggers, garbage men, waiters at restaurants; some are not – guys with whistles trying to help you park or unpark but who actually get in the way and make it harder for you. There's this awful feeling you get when you're in the checkout line and realize that you have no spare change. Do you stiff the 70 year old man who just bagged all your groceries, or do you give him a 100 peso (10 dollar) tip?

Please let us know how you are doing and how we can be praying for you in the coming weeks.

In Christ Jesus,

***Steve*** (for the Robertsons)

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