



# ...by *Faith* ...not by sight

July 2020

Hi, Brothers and Sisters in Christ!

What a pleasure to tell you what God has been doing in Arraigados Church and in the ministries where I have been serving these past five months since moving to Nagarote, Nicaragua.

As I told you before, Nagarote reminds me so much of the place where I grew up and my parents come from with humble people and kids always playing in the street. When I see that, it makes me feel like I understand the people here and what it is like to live in a tiny place with just enough money for what is needed for that day. It reminds me how God has guarded our lives many times as a family by providing us food and sending people to tell us about the gospel.

When I was a kid I used to see different missionaries coming to my hometown in Bolivia to share how God changed their lives and showing us the gospel in many ways. Now that I'm one of those missionaries, I feel so thankful to the Lord, and I can see that same look on every kid's face here that I used to have on my face when I was a child listening to the missionaries—a look of thankfulness and joy knowing other people from other countries were showing us kindness and love from God. It also makes me think that any of those kids could be a potential missionary. So, whatever I do here I trust

It will bear fruit in God's timing.

I'm still learning about the culture, making friends, meeting people, and getting to know the leadership from the church and how they work.

One of the things that I've been spending time with is discipleship in the worship band. Some weeks after I arrived, two girls, Victoria and Cynthia, asked me to teach them guitar, so I took that as an opportunity to also share the Bible with them. We spend every week learning the Bible and practicing the guitar. Three months later we are developing a good friendship and I am seeing them getting interested in the Bible which is encouraging. They are also very happy with learning and improving on the guitar, which makes me happy as well.

Another discipleship opportunity I have is with Juanita. She is a woman who doesn't attend our church, but she enjoyed and was so encouraged by the last group from the U.S. who visited Arraigados this past January. Once she knew I disciplined people she phoned me and asked if she could be disciplined, so of course I said "yes"! We spend nice times together learning the Bible. It is my desire to one day see these women serving in the church with a committed heart.

A big desire I have for the worship band here is to build a team that brings the church into the presence of God

through the songs based on the Word of God, but also to challenge them to live their lives always worshipping God. The past few months it has been hard for the group to get together because of the virus, but it is nice to see very talented people in the group. Something that brings joy to my heart is to see more people interested in learning to play an instrument. Maynor, who plays the piano, started to teach two young guys, and I started to teach the guitar to three young people and one little girl. If the group keeps growing, we will need another guitar. I pray God will use this group for His work and glory.

A month ago we got together with our leaders from Arraigados to spend a time in the Bible and to evaluate the ministries and where they are so far. It was good to hear that everyone is being challenged in their ministry as a leader, and also in dependence on God, as they are experiencing their first year being in charge of a ministry. We pray that they really get committed with the Lord and with the ministry.

Milo, Raquel, and I felt so sad because a group from the U.S. was supposed to come in July, but the trip was canceled because of the pandemic. It is always nice to receive these groups because they are such an encouragement to the local people but also to the missionaries. They

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A reunion 2.6 and Fe Hierro Ministry



Kids' Ministry on Facebook live during the quarantine



Lily with Cynthia

are a great help to the church not only in the ministries but to continue building the church. We were planning to finish the host house and the downstairs side, but for now we will wait. May our God keep providing the people and the money to finish the construction project.

Good news for us as a team is that Aaron, Raquel's big brother, is planning to come to Nagarote to work alongside us for a period of time, as he plans to eventually go to Honduras as a new missionary from GMI. We are also excited to receive Matt and April Sykes—we hope the Lord sends them all very soon.

I'm more than grateful to the Lord for letting me be part of this amazing work here in Nagarote. There are so many things to do, to accomplish, like the construction (classrooms, office, and the auditorium). We are praying for a pastor and preparing more leaders. It is our goal to one day see the locals leading the Arraigados Church. Thank God that we are starting to have more people attending the church, in different ministries, after the "quarantine" we had here.

Finally, I want to be honest with you, because you are a part of this journey and I want you to be a great support with your

prayers. I don't want to hide some frustrations I have with the culture, leading ministry, and being far away from home, as I'm experiencing my first year as a single missionary. I want to be really committed and strong and it is just hard when some things don't go as you plan. **But this is what I want to highlight:** I can be strong in God's hand and the love of God embraces my heart with His Word during hard times, and I don't have anything else better than his presence. From Him I can have what I need. He knows better than me—many times I find myself worshiping His Holy Name for all that He is doing in my life and through it. These verses have been a great encouragement and reminder of whom I'm here for:

*"...Do not fear, for I have redeemed you; I have summoned you by name; you are mine. When you pass through the waters, I will be with you; and when you pass through the rivers, they will not sweep over you. When you walk through the fire, you will not be burned; the flames will not set you ablaze" Isaiah 43:1-2.*

Please help us to pray for this:

- Wisdom to keep teaching and being a good example at all times.
- For my residency. I don't know how long I have to wait with the situation now but it probably takes longer than normal.
- Cynthia, Victoria, and Juanita—may our God keep working in their hearts.
- For the people who are learning to play an instrument that they seek God with all their hearts first.
- That God would keep raising up good leaders with passionate hearts for His Word and the ministry in Nagarote.

Thank you so much for being a part of this journey, with your prayers and your financial support.

God with us, your sister in Christ,

Lily



Lily with Victoria



Our 3rd anniversary as Arraigados Church



Sigueme Ministry - 9-12 year olds