



# Greetings from Connie

## October/2015

Iglesia Evangélica Dominicana  
Apartado 42 Barahona, Dominican Republic

### 'Celebrate Jesus Celebration'

How can I even begin to put into words this wonderful event we experienced here in La Hoya? After a year of planning, praying, waiting, anticipating, 'worrying', and more planning, it was finally here. Our wonderful team arrived on Tuesday. There were ten participants from Florida led by Icel Rodriguez. They are originally from Puerto Rico, Cuba, Columbia and Salvador. During the week they, along with members of our church, visited every house in La Hoya inviting the families to come to our 'Celebrate Jesus' activity. They also asked for prayer requests and offered to pray on the spot with them. The residents were very open to the visits and prayers were gladly accepted. All of the team members are Spanish speakers by birth and that made a huge impact.

I will admit I was really anxious about a 'children's party' around the central park (which was in absolute ruins since the politicians who started the renovation stopped at the destruction stage.) This was held from 4 to 6 pm. We tried to think of as many games as we could and spread them out around the park wherever we could find a spot of shade. The neighbors were very gracious and offered anything and everything we needed.



Face painting was the favorite. We had 6 people painting and each had lines of 20 or more children waiting the whole time.



We had games, popcorn, juice and sandwiches. The real challenge came when it was time to give each child a small gift, but again, thanks to neighbors that came to help, we made it through this phase.

As one member of the community said, "Never has any church or even political group done anything like this festival for the children until now."



The Celebrate Jesus Service was next and was, as I was confident it would be, a wonderful time. The band of musicians from Bombita led by Fermin was as wonderful as they always are. The message by Pastor Amparito Garay was amazing and all the rented chairs were filled, neighbors brought their own chairs and many were standing around the borders. The bar owners complained later and asked why we had to do this on a night they were open as none of their clients came as they were all at the Celebrate Jesus service. Praise the Lord!!! I had thought of this earlier but decided that life is full of choices and each would make their own choice.



The only complaint I heard was "why was this only for one night." About an hour after we finished the skies opened up and we received some much needed rain. We were so thankful that God held the rains back until the service was over. The skies had darkened and many prayers went up!!!!



I want to thank Icel Rodriguez, Director of Global Missions of the Florida Conference, for her vision of a Celebrate Jesus campaign for La Hoya. Thank you to the Florida Conference for supporting her in this vision and for all who came to participate. To Garay and Amparito, Ivonne, German and Sonia, Luz, Alexia, Griesel, Rebecca and Icel and all those from LaHoya who shared in the vision and work of this special day. It truly was a beautiful example of what we can do when we work together. And of course, mostly I want to thank God for the wonderful ways God is always faithful. Now we will continue to work to nurture the seeds that have been planted and to nourish the fruit that has blossomed.

As I spend time now visiting and listening to comments by members of the village, I revel in the blessings of God. One young adult spoke of how he had to work but he could hear Fermin from where he was. He told of how he senses the presence of God as Fermin speaks, as though God is speaking through him. And yes, this is exactly what is happening.

I thank God for each of you for helping and praying for our ministry here in the Dominican Republic.

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