Monthly News
And Updates for
Partners of
The Drum Family

March
2018

Slow down. Invest time.



Teens gathering on our rooftop for firepit time

this issue

Give it time. P.1

Prayers and Praises P.2

Scenes from Life in Antequera P.3

Become a partner now. P.4

Preparing for Semana Santa (Holy Week)

Traditional church celebrations and seasons have always been difficult times for me as a cross-cultural worker. Back in Texas, Easter and Christmas are pretty huge. In Spain, neither one is celebrated in many protestant churches, mostly because "it looks too Catholic" (I kid you not, that's the reason). In a country that lived under forced Catholicism for centuries, the protestant church is always looking to break the mould. Sadly, that means throwing out the proverbial baby with the bathwater and squelching all traditions that we might have in common. But, in the spirit of unity and 'loving our neighbor' and learning, we have decided to embrace the differences and spend this month learning about those customs and traditions. So we will be talking with neighbors, visiting churches, and reporting back. Stay tuned.



Convento de Belen prepares one of the 'tronos' for the Holy Week processionals.

Want the very best results? Give it time.

"These are the best scones I've ever had! They are just perfect – just the right consistency and flavor, density and fluffiness. Amazing, Carmen!" Those were my exact words to a friend recently as we visited them in their home for breakfast. I've only tried to make scones a couple of times, but they just seemed crumbly and dry and less-than-awesome. I decided that I wasn't cut out for scone baking, or that the fault was in the difference in local ingredients for the recipe. Yet, here was my friend using those same local ingredients and getting great results. What's up? Where was I going wrong?

"I think the trick is in the timing of the dough. Honestly, this is the first time they have been this good for me. But I gave them the appropriate amount of rest this time. Usually I'm in a big hurry and I need results quick, so I skip the rest period for the dough, or I cut it short and only give them a little 10-minute quick rest instead of the 30-40 minute suggested period. That's the only thing I did differently, and it really seems to have made a difference!", Carmen recalled.

Not being too knowledgeable of a baker when it comes to dough products, I accepted this explanation as truth. "Good to know!"

But Carmen's husband stepped up to the plate, no pun intended, and explained in a little more depth. "The reason for the 'rest' is that the ingredients need to spend some time together. They are all mixed up together, but they haven't truly had any time to incorporate with each other. They need time for the transformation to start occurring. The water molecules need a little time to truly be absorbed by the flour, and the dough needs a chance to relax. When you mix it up and knead it together, you have put it under some 'stress' by forcing the ingredients to mix. When you give it some time, it relaxes, it gets softer, it becomes more pliable and tender and the ingredients start to work together and become one. If you rush that process, you get tough dough or chewy dough or dough that is too crumbly and falls apart. Some things you just can't rush." Okay, point taken. Juan had activated my science brain and this was making loads of sense now. Both Carmen and I are pretty results-oriented and efficiency-driven. If you can do something with fewer steps or in less time, we are going to figure out how. But this dough situation, this was something that needed more time and couldn't be rushed. This was about chemistry. And the proof was right there in front of us on the plate.

I continued to think on the science of the dough during the following week.

On Thursday, we hosted our weekly breakfast fellowship and bible study. Daniela was discussing how close she has become with the women in her gym class. This is a huge celebration, for many reasons. Spanish culture has pretty tight friendship circles. Most people in our small town have known each other all of their lives. Children start school together at the age of 3 and they remain with the same classmates in the same class all the way through to high

Continued on page 2...

school graduation, with very few exceptions. Communities and neighborhoods are close-knit networks. Family fabric is woven tight. Therefore, women in their 40s or 50s have been with their same friend group since they were toddlers! This makes it hard to 'break in' to a friend group and find true acceptance and community. Daniela is an "outsider", like myself. She moved here the same year we did – 2013. Not only is she and newcomer, but she is not a Spaniard. Making friends can be really tough. But Dani has done it, and done it quite well. She is not only accepted in this group of women, but she is sought after. They miss her and check on her when she misses class. They ask her advice on things. They text like their thumbs are on fire. They go out on coffee dates. Some have even started to have breakthrough conversations regarding faith. And not only in this group is Dani experiencing this kind of progress with relationships. She has become an active part of the school parent groups, too, and is now friends with many parents and teachers in the school and is becoming a respected leader in that circle.

But all of this took time. A LOT of time. Four years of time. So this is truly something to celebrate! And it suddenly dawned on me… this is exactly what our work in Spain is like. This is what living life in community in Europe is like. It's like baker's dough.

People need time to be together. Relationships are formed through time. People need time with together, time to absorb the essence of each other, time for the chemistry of each other's personalities to meld together and find a place of understanding. It takes time to build trust. It takes time to let down the guard. Remember the dough? Remember what happens without the time element? The dough stays stressed and tough or it falls apart. But if you give it time, it relaxes, it gets softer, and it transforms in to something more delicate and tender.

So often, we have watched workers come to Europe with efficiency and agendas on their mind. They have a plan and they are driven for quick numbers. We have witnessed the pressures of sponsors and churches and agencies who want to see results. But that's just not how the Kingdom works. And that's certainly not how life in Spain or Europe works! Because relationship takes time. Yeast takes time to rise and do it's work. Trust and community takes time to build. The way I see it, if Jesus could spend three years walking alongside the disciples and teaching and hanging out sharing meals and being a living breathing example, showing them all the things he did, and yet they STILL were questioning and wondering and trying to understand him and his life – well then, I think Jesus probably understands that we can't rush relationships and faith, either.

"Religion - Many Europeans are proud of it. Some think it is too bad. However, both agree: Europe is a secularized continent. Europeans do not go to church anymore, they do not believe in God anymore, and they do not seem to be religious at all. Are these assumptions true?" To find out more, go to the European Values Study at www.europeanvaluesstudy.eu

"It is obvious that a vast majority of all the Europeans nominate themselves as religious persons. There are even more people who consider themselves as religious as there are people who attend church. It is a kind of 'believing without belonging'. People pick and choose religious beliefs, doctrines and practices and they are mixing and matching them, as they would select food in a cafeteria. Sociologists talk about this trend as a 'cafeteria religion', or as 'church-free spirituality'. Europeans remain religious, their approach is eclectic, and they borrow ideas from several traditions. Meanwhile many institutionalized churches, especially in the West, are running empty."

Some other findings regarding Spain:

- While a majority of Spaniards believe that there is a god or supreme being, only 50% of Spaniards felt that God holds any importance in their lives.
- Only 10-19% of Spaniards feel happy with their life
- In studies related to tolerance, people in the European South would rather have criminals and heavy drinkers for neighbors than Roma people (Gypsies) - a population that numbers 1 million in Spain. Among the 12 categories given, only drug addicts outranked the Roma as unwanted neighbors.

This Month's Prayer Requests

Praises! We have hosted several gatherings of neighbors and friends in our home over the past two months. This was exactly why we made the decision to move in to the center of town and in to this house in particular. Our first neighbor gathering was to celebrate Billy's birthday. The neighbors showed up at 9:30pm and didn't leave until well after midnight! Life in Spain… We also have had a couple of good ol' Texas cookouts, complete with Texas barbeque and smoked brisket. Billy is a master! These times are big relationship builders and times to rest and relax and grow with our neighbors (see the article above "Want the very best results? Give it time.")

A big praise is the fact that, as I write this, 14 youth from the school are downstairs with Sarah. So much laughter! And I think I forgot how LOUD a bunch of 9th graders are! This is the 5th time in the past month that they have congregated here to do school projects, practice music, play games, hang out, and EAT! Man, can teenagers eat! We are now 'the house', the preferred place for school kid gatherings. We couldn't be happier with that! The more they are here, the more they are exposed to healthy values and a loving environment, and the more we get to love our neighbors (and the kids of our neighbors).

Prayers:

- Laurie's father died in February. Please keep her siblings and this time of grief in your prayers.
- For the first time in 11 years, our ministry account in running at a deficit - $362 shortfall per month. If you can help with this, please use the gift card on the back of this newsletter or go online at www.tms-global.org/give and make a gift to our Drum acct #0321. We cannot do our work without partners like you!

Scenes from Life in Antequera



We have had an unusually cold and wet winter. Hoping to repair our fireplace before next winter so we won't be so cold!



Some of Sarah's classmates hanging out at our house and practicing for a school musical. (see Prayers & Praises pg. 2)



Teammates Axel and Delilah during our weekly meeting and study time. We are currently studying the book of Mark, as well as doing some training and coaching with them during this season.



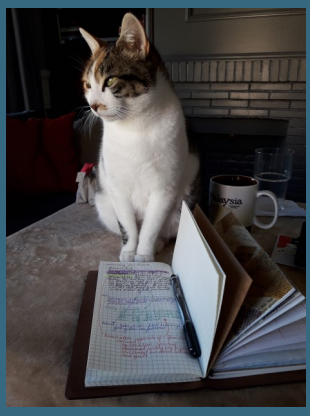
One of the many olive groves near us. In the early morning when we take the dogs to run, there is often frost and amazing light!



Sarah and her training horse, Looney. She is still a little bit shy of saving enough to buy a new horse. While she waits, twenty-year old Looney has been a great friend.



Billy's 55th birthday party with the neighbors. We had a great evening of food and conversation and laughter. They even brought over a bottle of their own homemade wine.



The Case of the Missing Cat...

When we moved from the country in to town, we brought our three cats. Knowing that cats have a mind of their own, we weren't sure how they would take the transition. Within the first couple of weeks, our oldest cat disappeared. The other two seemed to settle in well and we figured we had successfully completed the transition. But one night last month, the little mama cat didn't show up for dinner. She had been with us all day, but when dinner rolled around, she was no where to be found. Of course, we thought the worst. So off we went on the search for the missing cat. We walked all over the streets of town calling her name, not just once, but several times. We even took the dogs out to search, since one of them is particularly nosey and a shepherd and looks for all lost things. To no avail. Sarah posted missing cat messages on Facebook and with her friend's text groups. Nothing. Friends all over town were keeping a watchful eye out for our little mama cat, but we continued to be without. And the little boy cat paced and meowed for her all day. So sad.

Well… time for the truth. When Sarah went out to feed animals the next night - a full 24 hours later - mama cat waltzes out of the closet on the patio. Evidently, the night before, Billy had accidently shut her in the closet when he fed the animals! And there she stayed, with plenty of food and shelter.

Case closed! Ha ha! ☺

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- Sharing the Love of Christ with the least, the lost, and the left out… immigrants, displaced peoples, the lonely, the abandoned, those who need a friend.
- Nurturing and developing people to be healthy spiritually, physically, emotionally, and relationally - because "care" is not just an emotional feeling word, "care" is a verb - an action. That's who we are… the care-givers!



Sunday morning in Centro Cristiano

Become a Partner! We would love to have you on our team!

Mail to The Drums:
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29200 Antequera, Malaga
España

Contact The Drums:
Skype billy.drum
USA ph# 979-985-5238
(rings through to Spain)

Whatsapp: #34 652 144 783

Dear Billy and Laurie,

☐ I will pray for you.
☐ As God provides, I plan to partner with you by giving $_____Per month / year.
Special note:_____

Name (PLEASE PRINT) _____
Address:_____
City:_____ St ._____Zip_____
Phone:_____ Home Church:_____
Email Address: _____

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