Monthly News
And Updates for
Partners of
The Drum Family

October
2018

It's Fall, Y'all!



Billy was able to visit family in Texas during a flight layover in September.

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Sarah and Looney

It's time for an update on Sarah and her horse. Most of you recall that Sarah lost her beloved equine friend and teammate 18 months ago to a terminal illness. Many of you sent your condolences and prayers, and some sent in special funds to help Sarah replace her horse and continue show jumping and riding. The owners of the stables where Sarah rides had provided a lovely mount for us to borrow until we found a new home — the loaner horse's name is Looney. He is a dream, full of personality, and he adores Sarah. He only has eyes for her, and he shows his love by placing his big forehead on hers every day in a horse-hug, or rubbing his head on her with affection. We have been searching and trying to purchase a new horse since Looney has been on loan to us. But Sarah was often in tears over having to one day give up Looney. Well, long story short, the stable owner has made Looney available to be Sarah's forever horse. No longer a loaner, Sarah and Looney are now forever family! Thank you VERY much to all who helped provide for Looney and for Sarah's continued ability to ride and do the sport she loves!



Pruning Time

We grew grapes for the first time ever this summer!

We went to the nursery looking for a vine for the patio garden. We didn't much care if the vine actually produced anything. We just wanted a vine that would grow on the patio and be green and help the space to feel a little softer and more nature-like. We settled on a grape vine, with it's nice shaped leaves and a little variation of color as the season progresses. It was so fun to watch the vines grow up the post on our rooftop patio, and then begin producing grapes! At first, the tiny little grapes were like those little balls on the heads my grandmother's sewing pins. So teeny! But soon they were swelling and turning to the nicest purply blue color. And then they were so big and so full that they weighed down the vine and we feared it would break from the weight of the fruit!

I have always hated pruning time. Billy, being a horticulture major (Texas A&M – WHOOP!), has always been the one to tend the gardens. He has to be the pruner, for sure, because I just can't bring myself to do it. The plant always looks really great to me – right now, in the moment - but Billy seems to have this sense about what needs to happen for the plant's future best growth. He always tells me that while the plant looks good, it is actually using lots of energy trying to grow in places it shouldn't. And while it is producing lots of flowers or fruit, they are inferior. And so, he gets out his pruners and he goes to work. I can't even watch. It is almost physically painful for me to see all those branches and leaves, and sometimes fruit, go tumbling to the ground and end up swept in to a big trash pile. When it's over, I always feel so sad for the poor plant. And Billy smiles and shakes his head every time and says, "Just watch. In a few weeks, it is going to be so much better and healthier. Just give it time."

And, after 32 years of cringing through this process, I know he is right. It always works out for the better. The plants are always beautiful. But oh, how it still hurts me to watch the process!

For us, it has been a season of metaphorical pruning. We have come to a season when our outward appearance and work looks quite full and fruitful, but it is difficult (or impossible) to sustain at this level. Like the circus act when the man spins plates or juggles balls… the crowd is amazed at his ability to keep it all going, and then someone throws him one more. Wow! Awesome! Throw him another one!

But we all know how this ends.

And so, we are in a season of discernment with our team and our mentors and with God. There are loads of good things going on. Tons of things to still be

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done. Bucoos of possibilities. But we just can't do it all. We are that plant that is growing and putting on flowers and fruit, but maybe we have too much going on and we need to strategically focus our energies in order to produce superior fruit.

I'll be honest. This process is causing me more than a few tears and heartache. Saying no is not my strong suit. Cutting back is really hard for me. But I also believe in the process, and I believe that focusing my skills and efforts in strategic places will yield better, stronger people this season.

For me, I'm focusing in on Development this season. Our Europe region has grown from 16 CCWs to 41 CCWs (adult workers and families) in just a few months and that is going to take some focus on my part as Regional Consultant for Europe. Also, we added two TMS families to our team in Spain, so we now have 3 families working in Antequera. This will require a good deal of team formation and development over the course of the next year. And it's no secret that Neighboring Initiatives are very important to me. Loving my neighbors and those around me well and building community and relationships in Antequera is never going away.

So, what's getting pruned? It's more a matter of me having to say no when I'm asked to do things outside of my focus. More accurately, it's me having to TELL MYSELF NO when I see something that I could do. It's me being okay with juggling just three plates, and not allowing more plates or balls to be thrown in to the mix.
When my head says "Hey, it would be really cool if …", It means having grace with myself and reminding myself that yes – that would be cool, and yes – you have the right skills for that, but no – not in this season… maybe later, or maybe that's a vision to pitch to someone else. I need to have a season of pruning back and focusing my energies on these few things that are going to reap big dividends, things that have the potential to have wide and far-reaching effects. Whew, y'all! That's HARD! Because I want to do it all. Like, ALL. OF. IT.



So, pray for my pruning process. And pray that I "abide in Him and Him in me, so that I may bear good fruit."

John 15:1-9
15 "I am the true vine, and my Father is the vinedresser. 2 Every branch in me that does not bear fruit he takes away, and every branch that does bear fruit he prunes, that it may bear more fruit. 3 Already you are clean because of the word that I have spoken to you. 4 Abide in me, and I in you. As the branch cannot bear fruit by itself, unless it abides in the vine, neither can you, unless you abide in me. 5 I am the vine; you are the branches. Whoever abides in me and I in him, he it is that bears much fruit, for apart from me you can do nothing. 6 If anyone does not abide in me he is thrown away like a branch and withers; and the branches are gathered, thrown into the fire, and burned. 7 If you abide in me, and my words abide in you, ask whatever you wish, and it will be done for you. 8 By this my Father is glorified, that you bear much fruit and so prove to be my disciples. 9 As the Father has loved me, so have I loved you. Abide in my love.

Prayers: Please pray for our team as we learn to live and work together. This first year of forming a team will be important for development and team building so we can withstand the test of time and be effective in our service in Spain. We serve with some really GREAT people! Pray for us to build a GREAT team!

Prayers for our refugee and immigrant friends. Pray that they feel loved and cared for in their new homes and situations.

Pray for TMS Europe. Of the eight countries that we serve, seven of them are considered Least reached / Unreached countries. Europe is a hard place due to history and a lack of interest in institutional church or anything about faith. Pray for CCWs to love others well and be a light in Europe. Pray for the influx of immigrants and refugees in Europe, and for CCWs to be people of peace and hope to those who seek respite and refuge from oppression.

Prayers for the local church that we help serve, and for Kingdom transformation in our community. Help us pray for Centro Cristiano and for our town of Antequera.

Pray for all of our partners and support team (ALL OF YOU!!!). We can't do any of this work without you. You are vital to the mission in Spain and in the world! Thank you for being an integral part of Kingdom work.

For I was hungry and you gave me something to eat, I was thirsty and you gave me something to drink, I was a stranger and you invited me in.

~Matthew 25:35

As Italy and Greece and other European countries have worked to seal their borders, Spain has become Europe's number one destination for immigrants, refugees, and asylum seekers. Numbers of arrivals have more than tripled during the first half of 2018, and still a steady stream of people arrive by land and sea every day.

Billy attended the meeting for Coordination of Immigrant Services this week in our pueblo. Antequera is currently the settling point for 2413 immigrants. In little Antequera, our neighbors include people from Afghanistan, Albania, Argentina, Brazil, China, Colombia, Ecuador, Guatemala, Kenya, Morocco, Nicaragua, Pakistan, Paraguay, Poland, Romania, Russia, Senegal, Serbia, Syria, Ukraine, Uruguay, Venezuela, and Yemen… and that is just to name a few! In all, there are 74 nationalities represented in Antequera as immigrants and refugees.

Neighboring initiatives are really important to us! Jesus says there are two biggies that we need to focus on. In Matthew 22:37-39 he says, "'**Love** the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind.' This is the first and greatest commandment. And the second is like it: '**Love** your neighbor as yourself.'" Well, the way we see it, this 'love your neighbor' business must be pretty important! And obviously, in Antequera, our neighbors include a pretty big population of immigrants and refugees.



Billy using his Bible in Spanish, English and Arabic to help out a friend.

We have a neighbor who received asylum in July. (*name withheld to protect his identity and security)* He is new, he is alone, and he needs friends. He speaks zero English and zero Spanish. He speaks a very specific dialect of Arabic. We were connected to him via cross-cultural worker connections in other countries and agencies— they knew him and knew that he was being resettled in our town, so they sent us his name and contact info. He joins us for church, he comes to our young adult group, and we share a cup of tea and occasional meals together. Yes, we have our communication issues - he is beginning to learn Spanish, and we have become pretty efficient at using translator apps to fill in the gaps. But even with language struggles, this relationship is so worth it!!! He is a blessing to our lives! Being able to be "family" for him is a privilege!

This is just one example of what loving our neighbors looks like. This is normal in our house. Last night, we had people from 5 different countries around our table. Our life is enriched by all of these friends and their cultures. Life spent with them is beautiful and precious! Try it… go out and love your neighbor. I promise, it will be the experience of a lifetime. Jesus said so!

Never a Dull Moment!

Any time you live and work in another culture and language, you are going to come up against challenges. A lot of them are really pretty funny. Embarrassing, but funny. And you just have to laugh and learn from it, because if you are too serious and beat yourself up about it, you won't make it out here in the big world of cross-cultural service. Here's one recent example:

In a meeting of church leadership, I (Laurie) said, "We need people to be cheerleaders (*porristas*) for the event and encourage people." Others at the table responded with strange looks and gasps.

Then one leader said, "What do you mean by *porristas*?"



"Cheerleaders… you know, people who encourage you and give energy to the event. Like in sports on the sidelines? (odd looks) Like in High School Musical? (ah ha! Clarity registered on their faces.) *The whole time I'm waving my arms and making cheer moves from my high school days.*

Then the founding pastor said, "we don't use that word here. Where did you learn that word?"

"Mexico, Costa Rica, Peru."

He says, "Oh. Latin America. Well, we don't say that. *Porristas* are people who smoke marijuana. We don't need that at this event."

Oops… note to self… no *porristas* at church events. Noted.

TMS Global

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TMS GLOBAL

- 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!



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

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Dear Billy and Laurie,

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