



March
April
2017

Monthly
News and Updates
for Partners of
The Drum Family

Simplify

A Great Loss in the family

Sad news from our home. We had to put Sarah's horse, Rompeolas, to sleep. She was not eating well and losing weight. The vet had done blood tests and found a problem with her liver, which we had hoped to combat with a special diet and some medication. But it turned out to be a terminal condition. She was very weak and was obviously not well. On a Friday morning in March, we went to the stalls to find she was having trouble breathing and was in shock. Her body was shutting down. The vet came and gave us no option but to do the humane thing. We went to get Sarah from school so she could say goodbye and hold her as they gave her the injections to put her to sleep. Very sad time around here. Lots of tears. Lots of grief. Sarah has lost her best friend and teammate and is now without her much loved buddy and her sport. She had saved her money for 10 years to buy her horse and is now starting over after only having Rompeolas for one year. Please remember Sarah in your prayers.



this issue

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Dinner in the Desert

We recently spent some time in Jordan so we could get face-to-face with the work going on there, and to visit and encourage our peers. We visited a clinic run by dear friends. The clinic serves many refugee communities. We also visited a school run by other peers. The school serves as a hub for people in the community to come and learn not only English, but to also study holy books together. We also went to several historical sites and had some cultural learning time.

One of my dearest friends in the area told me to call her buddy, Mohammed, and get him to take us around Petra. Mohammed is Bdoule (a Bedouin tribal people) who was born in a cave in the ancient city of Petra. The Bdoule around Petra hail from the Huwaitat tribe, direct descendants of the Nabateans and therefore are the rightful heirs to Petra and this land. However, since UNESCO awarded Petra with world heritage status in 1985, the Jordanian government removed the Bdoule from the archaeological site and their land in order to protect it. The mountains continue to be inhabited by Bdoule people today, although most have been moved to a nearby community that was specifically built for them by the government, known as *Umm Sayhoun*. Many continue to practice their cultural way of life, choosing to sleep in the desert caves and herd sheep and goats in the surrounding hills.

My friend gave me Mohammed's contact information and said, "Give him a call! He's the best! You'll love him! Tell him *Karen sent you, we're good friends." All the while, I'm thinking that this sounds unreal. Am I really going to call up a random Bedouin guy and tell him *Karen sent me? And then meet up with him, sight unseen, and go off in to the Jordanian desert on a donkey? Evidently so.

We did call Mohammed and I had my doubts. What are the odds that Mohammed the Bedouin guy is going to actually be there when we arrive at the designated meeting spot? What are the odds that he is trustworthy and safe – safe enough to just jump on donkeys and head off in to the desert with him? Rest assured - after a day full of hiking and riding donkeys in the desert, learning about the history of the area and seeing these amazing historical sights through the eyes of a true local, a man who was actually born and raised in this very spot, we were more than pleased to have met Mohammed! *Karen's friend was a gem and we had a wonderful day with him in his element.

When it was time to head home at the end of the day, Mohammed said, "I'll take you home the back way. We will ride out the other side of Petra and take the donkeys home. This is the area no tourists get to see." So off we went, through more rugged terrain, more caves, and more desert. We came out in *Umm Sayhoun*, the community where many of the Bdoule now live. We dismounted our trusty donkey mounts and they all turned their faces toward home and walked themselves through the streets. Mohammed said, "They know where they live. They'll go home

alone.” Mohammed put us in his truck and drove us back to the place where we were spending the night. Before we got out of the truck, Mohammed asked what we were doing for dinner. We hadn’t made plans yet, so he invited us to go out in to the desert with him again, to watch the sunset over Petra, and to enjoy a traditional Bedouin meal. If Billy Drum has a life motto, it is probably, “Never turn down a traditional meal, especially not one cooked on a campfire under the stars!”

By far, this was our favorite part of the day. First of all, you just can’t beat a sunset... never, on any given day, can you do better than a God-breathed sunset! And to watch it while standing in the desert mountains between Petra and the *Jabal Haroun* ("Aaron's Mountain") was priceless. After sunset, we went to sit around the campfire, where we met up with Mohammed’s brother and two other men of the family. One of them looked like he could have been Moses’ brother, quite elderly (yet still able to sit fully cross-legged on a rock) and smoking. Both of these men were fully dressed in the traditional heavy full-length Bedouin *dishdash* robe and headscarf.

We were immediately given glasses of hot tea with mint that had just come from the kettle on the fire. I’m positive that our glasses were refilled at least three times - I thought I might float away on mint tea! Then they took our glasses and served tea for themselves. Guests first - Hospitality first, always. I so love the emphasis on hospitality in this culture. As we warmed ourselves by the fire and waited for dinner to cook, we talked with Mohammed and his brother, Abraham. Mohammed had talked with us freely all day long, but in his brother’s presence, he was subdued and took his place in the family as second in line. Abraham was the leader of conversation for the night.

We discussed life in Petra, life as a Bedouin, and life in general. Abraham entertained us with history and shared stories with us about ancient times in the area. We were sitting in the desert below the area where it is believed that Aaron, Moses’ brother, died and was buried. And that began quite a conversation – a conversation that I never dreamed I would have! Never would I have ever believed it possible to sit around a campfire with several Jordanian Bedouin men and discuss stories from our holy heritage, but there we were, doing just that!

Abraham asked us if we knew of Moses.

“Yes”, we said. “We know stories of Moses. These stories are in our holy book.”

“Yes they are”, replied Abraham. They are in your Book of Exodus. We also have stories of Moses and Aaron in our book.” We responded, “We have many stories in common. Many of our prophets are also prophets in your Quran. And your name-sake, Abraham, is in our book.”

He smiled. “Yes, and your name, Sarah (pointing at our Sarah), is from that same story.”

And so the door was open, and we went on in to the evening, discussing Moses and Aaron and many other stories that we have in common. We are trained for these conversations, we study for these conversations, we always hope for an open door to these conversations, but it is still amazing and breathtaking when we actually find ourselves sitting IN THESE CONVERSATIONS! Divine appointments and blessed interactions. Two different faith foundations finding common ground and building bridges together.

We dined on an absolutely amazing meal of chicken, potatoes, eggplant, onions, and whole heads of garlic, all cooked under the campfire; literally, under the campfire in a pit that was covered with wood and set ablaze an hour ago. We sat on the ground, cross-legged, and ate with our hands straight from the pit that cooked our meal. It was glorious!

After dinner, as the fire died down and the evening was coming to a close, I asked Abraham one last question. “What do you like the most about Bedouin life and culture?”

Without hesitation, he responded, “That’s simple. We live a simple life. The more simple your life, the more happiness in your heart. We are simple people. We have only a few things, not many things. We live simply. This makes us very happy. It’s good to live a simple life.”

Amen!



Simply opening our home

In our initial training so many years ago, we are told to live out our lives as a witness. I've always admired St. Frances who said *'Preach the Gospel at all times, and when necessary use words.'* The way we live speaks so much louder than our actual words. I try to do that, but sometimes I let life get in the way. I unintentionally ignore my neighbor. I get frustrated at someone in traffic and respond in a way that is not appealing. I say things that I wouldn't want my children hearing or repeating. No, I am not perfect. I don't think any of us are.

There are those times, though, when something does shine through; where you do make a difference; where you do exemplify the gospel through living your life well.

I got a glimpse of this in action this month. It happened during a time of prayer. Actually it began before that. I was preparing breakfast and I received a message on WhatsApp. "Hola" (Hello) was all it said and no name was associated with it, so I was suspicious. Then I noticed that the number was from Peru and I thought that maybe it was someone I knew from our time there, so I asked "who is this?". I was not prepared for what followed.

The message was from a former neighbor. We knew him during the time we lived in Huancayo. He is now 14 years old, but when we lived next door to him, he was around 5 or 6 years old. He used to come over and play with Sarah at our house. We always fixed a snack for the kids and had backyard play time together.

In the subsequent messages, he told me how he was hoping for a better life and how hard it was for his family now - his younger brother and his mother. A few years

ago, his mother took the kids and fled from the father due to the abuse. We had suspected that was happening all those years ago, but the system in Peru is not in favor of interfering in family violence cases and there was nothing we could do. There was physical and emotional abuse and oppression. His mom was not permitted to earn an education because the father said she couldn't. They now live in a small one room apartment with her working at whatever she can find.

He told me how much it had meant those many years ago to play at our house with Sarah. His words were "I felt safe. I knew that you cared". It struck me that all these years later this young man took the time to contact me. I know that during that time many years ago, I probably did not say anything intelligible to him in Spanish! It was our first year on the field and we were still working hard to learn the language. In fact, I probably didn't say a lot to him at all, as he was busy playing and running around the house. The thing that I did do is live out the gospel for him. He saw a glimpse of the Kingdom in our family and it was something that he liked. He saw kindness and 'love your neighbor' acted out daily.

During our text chat I was able to counsel him some and to pray for him. I now have a chance to stay in touch and in some way continue what God started in him almost 10 years ago. We have texted back and forth quite a lot over the past month. Who knew that my Whatsapp texting app on my phone would become such a link between worlds?! Josue has started asking me deeper questions about faith and life. He's open and he's seeking and he needs someone who feels safe and will talk to him. So, I'm here, on Whatsapp on my cell phone, connecting to Peru and to Josue and a relationship that was started 10 years ago over toys and games and cookies and juice.

~Billy

*A few photos from our service in the Moria refugee camp in Lesbos, Greece (*no names for security reasons):*



This Month's Prayer Requests

Please pray for Sarah as she grieves the loss of her horse (see pg. 1) and as she tries to regroup and find a way to continue to practice her sport. **Pray for us** as we continue to serve the local church, the local community, and serve as leaders and care professionals for other workers around the globe. Pray that we find ways for **rest, renewal and restoration** in the midst of our workload. **Pray for our refugee friends. Pray for Peace.**

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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!



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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 / quarter / year for _____ years.



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