

September 26, 2017

Dear First Church of New Knoxville,

This is my 9th month of ministry on the field! It's crazy to believe that I only have two more months to go! This month my team has partnered with Pastor Rey with the church named Creo here in San Jose, Costa Rica. Pastor Rey receives no income as a pastor since his church does not receive enough offerings each week to be able to pay him a salary. Instead, the offerings cover the rent for the church. He runs a church of around 60 people. Catholicism is really big in Costa Rica.

Rey's wife Megan works as a hairstylist. When we came to Costa Rica, Megan was running her hair salon in her home. Megan & Rey decided to rent a two room place so that Megan could have her own salon. It's really close to their church! Our ministry for the month consisted of painting Megan's new studio. Megan uses the income from her salon to provide for her family since Pastor Rey is not paid as Pastor. Megan also gives part of her salary to the Adventures In Missions Base (where World Race operated) here in Costa Rica which also feeds children that come to the base.

This month, we also painted a mural in the new children's room at the church and a mural in the main sanctuary. Every Thursday evening there was a prayer & worship service that we attended. We would pray over members of Pastor Rey's church. The last two Sundays we've had the opportunity to preach at church. I even had the opportunity to share a message at youth group this month. I shared about what it means to be a disciple of Christ and how I've been learning on the World Race what that looks like. At the end of the month we attended a camp that Pastor Rey put on for the church that was based on Freedom & unity within the church.

Pastor Rey & Megan are some of the most giving people that I have ever met. It seems every week that they were inviting us to dinner at their home, or inviting us to come hangout with them. The very first day we were here, they blessed us with air mattresses, pillows, and blankets to sleep on. It really was a blessing. Megan even offered to dye or cut our hair at the end of the month simply because she wanted to bless us for doing painting and putting her studio together. I've really seen my hosts live out Matthew 10:8. "Freely you have received; freely give." This family knows what it's like to live in poverty. It has been amazing to see them live out freely I receive, so freely I give. This has encouraged me in my walk to be more giving to those around me. I want to have a generous heart like Pastor Rey & Megan.

Fun Facts about this month! We went to an inactive Volcano crater this month. Two days after our visit, the Volcano exploded! That's Crazy! Out of all the countries I've been to, Costa Rica has been the most Western. I was overjoyed when I found out there was a Wal-Mart just a ten minute walk from where we were staying. I was also ecstatic when I found out there was a Taco Bell. I haven't seen a Taco Bell since I left America. It's the small things that bless us on the race. It's nice to see something familiar. This month has been full of many blessings!

I've been reflecting on the past 9 months of the World Race and thinking about all that I've learned so far. My hopes is that I will continue to have perseverance for the last two months of the race, and that I will really press into what the Lord wants to teach and grow me in. While I have ministered to many people on the race, I must admit to that this journey has also been one full of personal growth. I have been challenged in many ways I didn't expect but I know that there

looks like instead of self righteously serving other people. I have been learning how to serve those around me. I have also been learning about how powerful vulnerability can be by simply bringing our struggles into the light of Christian community.

My team heads to Nicaragua in just a few short days. We will be partnered with an organization called Arms of Love. “The mission of Arms of Love is to give abandoned and abused children in Nicaragua and the Philippines a home, a family, and a future, with the hope that they will become leaders of tomorrow in their communities and churches”. They help vulnerable children in local neighborhoods who deal with illness, hunger, lack of education, trafficking, and exploitation. They provide children a home, a family, and a future. The children receive food and shelter along with comprehensive care. They want children to discover their gifts and passions and encourage them to pursue higher education by attending college or a trade school.

I’m excited to be partnered with this organization that helps the least of these and empowers them to pursue dreams and a life with Christ. I’m not sure what our ministry will look like this month but I’m excited to help out in any way that I can.

I want to say thanks again to each and every one of you who supports me as a missionary. I’ll be home in two short months and I can’t wait to be able to see each of you at church when I’m home.. I will be coming home on November 20th. I have seen God’s provision and love for me through First church. It means so much to me.

*Blessings, Shannon Roediger*



Top Left: Our Mission Team serving in Costa Rica

Bottom Left: Pastor Rey

Top Right: Painting in Megan’s new studio

Bottom Right: Pastor Rey’s wife Megan