

Feliz Navidad,  
Merry Christmas,

May the presence of the Savior, whose birth we celebrated be with you into the next year. It has been a quick five months for us here in Nicaragua. Through the blessings and many struggles we have felt God's love for us. The following is a reflection on the first semester this school year.

Our biggest struggles have been the knee injuries and car trouble. First, Jeff's recovery has been great. He has begun participating in some recreational ultimate frisbee and volleyball and continues to work on his therapy to strengthen the muscles. He is also experiencing the blessing of an accountability partner, who encourages him to stay focused on God and resist discouragement in life present struggles. Branden however has not been progressing as well. In November, Branden was able to start activities, but suffered a set back! It has been tough as parents to watch him struggle in his recovery. He is unable to straighten his knee at this time and is doing stretching and strengthening therapy. He has had to discontinue sports and PE. We would appreciate prayers for healing!

Secondly, "Oh no the Car is broken down again!". We have been without a vehicle three different stretches since August. The first time was to replace the radiator, the second time was to replace the rear differential and third was the clutch. During the stretches without a car, we have been relying on friends to help us get around and some walking. A true blessing of this community is the feeling of family and willingness to help each other. We only missed a few things because we didn't have a way to get there. Monday we were happy to have our car back!!

Blessings have been having Stacey here volunteering with the school, Rachele's thriving in middle school, and Christy seeing the growth in language learning for the preschoolers and herself. First, It has been a joy to watch Stacey take a teaching role and love on the students under her care. She has built trusting and loving bonds with her students and fellow volunteers. She made the deadline for early application for Moody and hopes to hear from them mid January. Then it will be decision-making time between Moody and Dordt. The second blessing has been watching Rachele thrive in the tough transition to middle school. She has had opportunity to shine on the volleyball court and as a class representative for student council. Both girls are having a great year! The third blessing is the quick improvement of English learning by the preschoolers. They are amazing! They have begun using English and helping each other when there is confusion. They have also been excited to learn about God and His prophets this year. Christy has enjoyed their Bible time and is amazed at how much they remember when the topics have been a bit harder for little ones. Christy has a personal tutor to improve in Spanish. She has learned so much, but it is hard to remember everything when trying to practice. It is amazing to hear some of our students that are trilingual.

In sharing this path God has put us on with other missionaries around the globe, we constantly experience God's faithfulness through both the good and challenging times. He is faithful and truly the light to our path's ups and downs. He constantly and gently teaches everyone of us what is ultimately important. When we don't have the desired things such as a phone, a car that works, and reliable hot water and electricity, and have the not so desired things like ants, tarantulas, 4 inch scorpions and whipped tailed scorpions, we remember to give thanks in all things.

We approached the advent season with joy and we desire to be like the disciples as they stood looking to the heavens on the day of ascension full of expectations for his second coming. As, 2018 begins may we all turn our focus on Christ and His will for our lives. May you hear His voice and be aware of opportunities He has for you to spread His love and share His grace. We thank you for your present prayers and support and covet them as we continue our work in Nicaragua. Oh how we would love to hear from you as well.

In His Service with love,

Jeff, Christy, Stacey, Branden, Rachelle and Oliver (our pet monkey)

Family Christmas Picture





Thanksgiving

### Central Americans Games

We were able to see Beach Volleyball, Soccer, Basketball, Volleyball, Boxing, and Baseball



Stacey with fellow volunteers and one of her students.



Christy on a field trip to the beach with her Pre-schoolers



Car problems this year.

