

Wheelock Family

Church Planting in Guayaquil, Ecuador



March 2024

It is not always easy to remember to pray, and sometimes we pray without much faith. But Jesus said, “And I say unto you, Ask, and it shall be given you; seek, and ye shall find; knock, and it shall be opened unto you. For every one that asketh receiveth; and he that seeketh findeth; and to him that knocketh it shall be opened.” (Luke 11:9-10). What encouraging words from our Savior! We have asked for you all to pray for some things, and I am thankful to report that God is at work and we have received, we have found and some doors have been opened.

At the end of November, Ecuador’s new president was inaugurated. Right away, he began to try to bring order to the prison system where a lot of the violence around the country originated. The gangs responded to this pressure and in January they coordinated several public attacks in our city and around the country. The president placed the country in a state of emergency. He named the gangs as terrorist organizations and called out the military to patrol and establish order. There were some very scary days in January because of the unrest and violence, but the situation is slowly improving. The violent death rate has dropped, but the number of reported kidnappings and extortion has skyrocketed. The police report capturing repeat offenders who are quickly released from jail again. This highlights the need for change to happen at all levels. Thankfully, the justice department is taking on the corruption in the courts. Several ongoing cases have directly named district attorneys, judges and politicians who have allegedly had a hand in the payoffs from the drug gangs. The corruption runs deep, and we are praying for God to use this government to continue to work for justice for so many Ecuadorians. Ask. Seek. Knock.

Another area of prayer has been for Majo to be able to receive her U.S. visa so that we can travel as a family this year. The earliest appointment we were able to set was in September. We sent emails and made contact with anyone we could in the consulate to have her appointment moved up, but while everyone said we just had to wait, God was not done! He opened up an appointment for her for March 15th. While the answer was not exactly what we would have hoped, her visa was approved for one visit to the US. We are so thankful that we were able to get an answer regarding her visa so much earlier. Ask. Seek. Knock. I know many of you have been praying for this request, and we are so thankful to have this opportunity to travel. We continue to “Ask”, “Seek” and “Knock” that based on this response we will be able to make wise decisions regarding her future.

We are taking steps towards Faith Baptist Church hiring an assistant pastor. This is the initial phase of officially moving towards a national pastor at the church. I believe it will still be a couple of years before the pastoral position is filled, but it is an exciting moment for us as missionaries and as a church. We have been “Asking”, “Seeking” and “Knocking” for this from the very beginning of the church, and will continue to do so until the church is finally in Ecuadorian hands. Please pray for Paco and his family as they take steps of faith to fill this role in preparation for the future, and for the church to be in tune with the Spirit’s direction as we move forward.

We are so thankful for our army of prayer warriors who faithfully “Ask”, “Seek” and “Knock” on our behalf. We appreciate those who give so faithfully so that we can continue on in the work here in Guayaquil. We have received several messages of encouragement and support lately, which is such a blessing. Thank you to each one who has an active role in our ministry and family.

In Christ’s Service,

Ken, Heather, Sam, Emily, Sofia & Majo